



MAJURO COOPERATIVE SCHOOL
MARSHALL ISLANDS

Behavior Policy

We believe that the experience at Co-op aims to develop the whole student – physically, socially, emotionally and academically. Social and emotional learning underpins a student’s success in other areas. Each student is unique in his/her social and emotional development and is profoundly influenced by their upbringing, culture and previous school experiences.

At Co-op we recognize that expectations for behavior drive from, and are implicit in school ethos. Ethos is felt in every interaction between members of a school community; students learn from what adults and peers do as much as from what they say. Nevertheless, sensitivity about the use of language, how words are spoken and what is said has a great impact upon ethos.

Through our ethos we demonstrate whether we truly believe that all students can be successful and whether we trust students, colleagues or administration. When trust permeates the school community the predominate ethic is not one of control and command. Behavioral learning is viewed as a means to empower students to make wise decisions. Rather than setting out rules and consequences for each action, behavioral learning supports children in learning how to think about and control their own behavior. Students understand that in learning to manage behavior they are as diverse as they are in their academic abilities – when teachers build a supportive classroom community of learners, students are taught how to offer support to peers who have greater challenges in the area of behavior.

Co-op has a responsibility to infuse social and emotional learning throughout the curriculum.

Mechanisms for implementing this responsibility include:

- Personal, social and emotional skills are integrated into all subject areas.
- Classroom organization, routines and the practice of class/school democracy.
- Specific teaching of appropriate language patterns for successful social interaction.
- Well-supervised transitions, recreation and travel times by trained and involved staff.
- Individual personal counseling when needed.
- Staff that is well informed about students’ personal and cultural histories. Staff responds individually and empathetically to the students’ emotional needs.

As Educators we understand that:

- If we build friendly and respectful relationships with a student, he/she is more likely to be responsive to guidance when behavior goes astray.
- If we place students in learning situations where they have no chance to be successful, they are likely to misbehave.
- If we do not follow through consistently on what we have agreed, or if we ignore behavior that undermines our expectations, we can expect student behavior will decline.
- If students see us communicating frequently with their parents and others in the school community about their wellbeing, they will understand we care about them as individuals.

In order to implement the intentions in these guidelines Co-op will:

- At the start of the school year and/or when the student begins at Co-op, teachers will address behavioral expectations **with** their students.
- Strategies students should use when they are experiencing difficulty will be shared, discussed, and where appropriate role-play will be used to help students understand these strategies.
- Hold PD sessions for faculty on personal, social and emotional education and conflict resolution strategies.
- Give time for staff reflection on the social and emotional climate of the school and consistency of the staff approach towards student behavior.



Success for students in learning to manage their behavior can happen when:

- All staff members understand and support Co-op behavior guidelines in a consistent manner. Staff is highly observant of students in all settings, including during non-class time and transitional times.
- At the start of the school year, time is allocated for teachers to build class and school community agreements. It is understood, students will contribute to setting out expectations and everyone in the school has time to learn, practice and implement their agreements for how we treat each other at school.
- Administration and teachers provide parents with clear information about the school's approach to behavior.
- The school makes suggestions for counseling support and access to appropriate therapies for students outside of school time.
- The admissions coordinator seeks out and makes available (on a need to know basis) any relevant information about a student that may have an impact upon his/her behavior at the beginning of the admissions process. The class teachers will keep all involved staff members aware of any behavior issues.

At the start of the school year we:

- Build a relationship with each student.
- Facilitate a class community and include routines that allow for regular sharing of information and ideas.
- Ensure that every student is viewed by peers as a valued class member.
- Create a class environment where students know it's a safe place to be – speak kindly to each other with no put-downs, no unkind words, and without excluding others.
- Develop essential agreements with students about the importance of a safe and friendly learning environment.
- Review and reflect on agreements regularly.
- Seek students' ideas on how to help adhere to the agreements more effectively.
- Teach social skills explicitly, especially with elementary students.
- Create a positive atmosphere in the class where students feel safe to share, discuss and take risks.

When a new child arrives at Co-op we:

- Facilitate an orientation by peers to the space, routines and class agreements.
- Welcome new students to the wider community.
- Assign a class buddy to any new elementary student.
- Assign a class companion to any new MS/HS student.

When a student has difficulty in managing his/her behavior we:

- Take him/her to a safe place if the behavior might harm other people or him/herself.
- State clearly what the unacceptable behavior is.
- Regard the unacceptable behavior as a problem to be solved with the student, *not* a behavior to be punished.
- Listen to the student's perception of the situation.
- Support the student in thinking through the feelings associated with the behavior and the antecedents to the behavior and encourage him/her to listen to alternative points of view.
- Teach and support the student in using conflict resolution strategies.
- Seek and listen to advice from families and implement the strategies that are successful at home.
- Look for environmental factors in the classroom/playground that may provoke the behavior.
- Consider whether the student might have learning needs that are not being met .
- Consider whether the student might not be academically challenged enough or that the material is too challenging.
- Serious behavior and any physical aggression will be documented on the schools Renweb system and is automatically emailed to parents, homeroom teachers and administrators to ensure everybody is aware of the student's issue and to support them when they are experiencing difficulty at school.

Reporting Behavior Incidents



When a behavior incident occurs, teachers must determine the degree of severity of the choice the student made in the given situation. All school staff personnel are responsible for reporting behavior issues to the appropriate people. Behavior issues on campus, on the bus or off campus at school activities must be reported.

Emailing the principal and less serious incident reporting (for student files) is completed by the teacher/staff member who eye-witnessed the incident.

Reporting via Email

Email reporting occurs when there is a/an:

- Physical act against another person
- Extreme or repeated violation of Essential Agreements

Reporting in Student Files

Teachers use their professionalism and discretion as to which issues require recording. ALL physical acts must be recorded in a student's file. These issues must be kept in the student files and used for meetings with the principal of the coordinating section of the school when discussing individual students. These notes will also be used to determine plans, aid in meetings with parents and specialists, determine patterns with behavior/choices and to track the social aspect of a student's growth.

If Persistent Behavior Issues Continue:

If a student's issues persist over time, or happen across a range of school activities and environments; it is the responsibility of the class teacher to ask for a review meeting involving the Student Support Team (SST). This team may include the Head of School, appropriate Level Coordinator, Student Support Coordinator, teachers who directly work with the student and the parents. When appropriate, the student will also be invited.

When the Student Support Team (SST) meets to discuss the student, it will:

- 1) Discuss and determine the nature of issue, when and where the incidents occur, antecedents, and possible environmental factors, learning needs or social/emotional factors that are influencing the student's behavior.
- 2) A behavior plan is developed (when appropriate) with the involvement of the student. This plan is reviewed/revised by the SST for an agreed period of time and a future meeting time is set. All professionals who work with the student implement the Behavior Plan.
- 3) Parents and involved staff members agree upon the behavior plan. When appropriate and/or, if the student is old enough to understand they will be involved in the process and agree to follow the Behavior Plan. If the behavior issues increase or show little improvement over the agreed upon time frame stated in the Behavior Plan, the SST will meet again to determine whether Co-op is an appropriate placement for the student.
- 4) In extreme cases, the school board is notified to help determine next steps.

This Behavior Policy should be considered alongside all other relevant Co-op policies and procedures in particular the Co-op Anti-Bullying Policy and the Student Support Services Policy.

