

*Montessori Primary*

ESSORI  
ARY

Discipline, School Policies and Class  
Management  
Philosophy 3



*Addla Montessori*

Montessori Primary: Philosophy 3

## Discipline, School Policies and Class Management

### Discipline

Discipline and how to maintain it in the classroom is always an important factor with teachers and the education sector as a whole.

I believe this is something that the Montessori Way has a lot to offer and bring to the table.

It is important to understand Montessori's view on this important issue.

Maria Montessori writes in *The Discovery of the Child*

... in our classes of small children, which number up to forty or even fifty pupils, there prevails a more perfect *discipline* than in ordinary schools.

Why is this so, you may rightly ask?

First of all let us define **discipline**.

The Oxford dictionary says: Discipline is the practice of training people to either obey rules, or a code of behaviour, it also refers to using punishment to correct disobedience.

This is the general understanding of the meaning of discipline.

# Discipline, School Policies and Class Management

But what is the real meaning? The word discipline is much more complicated and distinct than the above definitions given.

Discipline means the ability of a person to control themselves and do the right thing without prompting or fear. This is true discipline.

Your goal as a Montessorian is to get your children to this point. In fact our goal as a parent, teacher or educator should be the above: to get each child to a point where they take that right step of doing the right thing themselves because they want to, not because you told them or forced them or they are scared of you, want to win your favour or get a gift, present or reward.

Think about it, the so called well-disciplined children are they actually disciplined?

Disciplined children are not a product of fear, caning, whipping, slapping, re-wiring of the brain or shouting. They are a product of years of training, patience, practice, repeated training and great role models.

If we refuse to do what is right do not expect to produce children who would do the right thing too.

Children do what they see us do, they will not necessarily do what we told them to do, especially if we are then doing the opposite.

Do not expect that the normalized child in your 6 to 12 class will be disciplined. They are still developing the will, their understanding of right from wrong, making the right choices, justice in the world, social skills, how to develop friendships and their place in the big wide universe.

# Discipline, School Policies and Class Management

Discipline takes time. Invest time and you will reap the rewards.

To become a disciplined young mind ready for Secondary School children need

1. Freedom of choice, they will make mistakes, if it is not a life threatening issue please let them be, with guidance! They will learn.
2. Discussions on issues, debates so they can hear the pros and cons. Do not assume that they know, guide them by discussing with them about their beliefs, justice, cheating, stealing, helping others, learning disabilities, etc.
3. They should be allowed to learn and grow in knowledge themselves. Please do not spoon feed them with information and facts, this does not help intelligence and it will make the child frustrated and rebellious.
4. Remember they are reasoning beings, let them have the practical concrete experiences and then ask questions to inspire thought and deeper understanding.

As the child undergoes this process of learning and understanding life, they become better at controlling themselves. Self-discipline should be the real goal of the educator of a child.

## School Policies and Classroom Management

It is essential for you to discuss the following with your staff and have an agreement on policies concerning the following issues. Ensure that you are aligning all important issues that will affect the working operations of a Montessori Setting with your policies. They are rules which will help to define what needs to be consistently adhered to and which ones you can make adjustments to if need be.

# Discipline, School Policies and Class Management

Here are a couple of things to consider:

1. Where do the children do their work? Mats, rugs, table, inside or outside etc.
2. When do the children need to use aprons?
3. When and where should hand washing take place?
4. How do we handle snacks and lunch?
5. What do you do when a child chooses a work before the lesson has been presented?
6. What work should be done individually and what can be done as a team?
7. What are the procedures for children watching, touching or taking another's work?
8. How do we handle wandering children?
9. What do you do when a child works at the shelf and not at the workstation?
10. How do you handle children who have not put their work away?
11. What happens if someone else wants to use the materials another child is working on?
12. Who puts away work when more than one person is working on a material?
13. What if a child does not put away his work and someone else needs it, especially if he has started another work? Who should put it away finally?
14. When is it appropriate to interrupt a child at work?
15. Who can ring the bell?
16. How are transitions handled?
17. Who cleans up spills and during lunch breaks, etc?
18. What are children expected to do to help with setting and cleaning up their lunch?
19. What are children's duties with cleaning their classroom?
20. Can children carry furniture?

# Discipline, School Policies and Class Management

21. What is the procedure for children giving lessons?
22. How do children get your attention?
23. How do we handle inappropriate behaviour? When, where and how?
24. What do we do if a child does not want to join assembly or circle time?
25. How do we resolve conflicts among the children and make peace?
26. How do we redirect bad behaviour?
27. What are our disciplinary procedures? This helps to prevent abuse among other things.
28. Who discusses problems with parents?
29. Who greets the children?
30. How do we handle separation issues?
31. What are our parent and volunteer policies?
32. What are the outdoor rules?
33. What are the playtime policies? (important, because some teachers don't know the importance of letting the children go out to play.)
34. What are the excursion policies?
35. What are the roles of the Directress?
36. What are the roles of the Assistant Guide?
37. What are the procedures for preparing the Assistant Guide to present a lesson?
38. How do the Directress and Assistant Guide work together to ensure that the children are safe and secure at all times?