

Hill View Montessori

Behavioral Response Strategies

2023-24

I. TIERED BEHAVIORAL RESPONSE STRATEGIES

At Hill View Montessori Charter Public School, faculty and staff use the 4 R's (Rules, Routines, Relationships & Regulation), the 4 Schoolwide Agreements (Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Kind), and routine classroom management strategies to prevent and respond to typical unwanted student behaviors.

Tier 1 Strategies:

Tier 1 strategies help create a positive learning environment and typically meet the needs of 80-85% of students

Teacher options for responding to unwanted student behaviors at Tier 1 include:

- Reminders of rules and expectations
- Redirection
- Repetition of instructions
- Diffusing phrases
- Encourage the student to use the Peace Corner space in the classroom
- Encourage the student to talk about their behavior. Often a simple question such as “What were you hoping to have happen?” can shed light on positive intentions gone wrong. A valuable teachable moment can follow.
- Encourage mindful breathing exercises
- Encourage win-win problem-solving
- Encourage basic peer conflict resolution (ex: an apology)
- Allow student to take a 2-minute walk, get a drink of water, or ‘bring a note’ to the office (*movement, change of scenery, distraction strategies*)

No need to call for outside help at this level.

Tier 2 Strategies

Tier 2 strategies should be focused on 10-15% of the student population that need more intensive supports than are provided in Tier 1 and/or a single incident requiring more intensive support.

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When Tier 1 strategies are not sufficient to meet the level of student need, HVM Educators aim to respectfully connect with the student, then use any of these options for responding to unwanted behaviors:

- Diffusing phrases
- Silence, time to make a better choice
- Natural consequences
- Assigned seating
- Restorative conflict resolution between peers
- Use of the Peace Corner or Amygdala Reset Space
- Private conference with teacher after class that allows sufficient time for processing the problem situation. Goal is to put together a Timeline of events to uncover the full set of circumstances, review new skills or replacement behaviors, and restore relationships if needed.

When problems consistently persist to this level, teachers should reach out to the student's caregivers. Phone contact is preferable to emails when discussing problem behavior.

If the student's behavior is aggressive, disruptive to the class, or doesn't respond to multiple re-directions, the lead teacher should ask the co-lead or assistant teacher to respond. If additional assistance is needed, please use the phone or walkie to call for help from Bridget (K-3) or Carla (Gr 4-8). If neither are available, please call for Ginger.

Disciplinary options at this point may include:

- Logical consequences
- Loss of privilege
- THINK sheet
- Time away from peer group after incidents of aggression
- Scheduled, daily check ins, aimed at emotional regulation and prevention of problem behavior
- Contact with parents
- Student may be sent home for the day if aggressive or significantly disruptive behavior occurs. DOS should be consulted before initiating this intervention.

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Tier 3: Strategies

Tier 3 strategies should, on average, be focused on 5-10% of the student population that shows the most intensive needs for behavioral support and/or a single incident requiring intensive intervention.

At this level, members of the Resiliency team may be actively involved in the student's daily activities and teachers should be in regular contact with the student's parents.

- Invite family in for a Conference, DOS may be included.
- Use of the Amygdala Reset Space (ARS)
- Daily communication with families
- Behavior plan, including incentives
- Regular sessions with School Counselor/School Social Worker
- Schedule modifications
- Focused instruction on regulation strategies, peer interactions, social skills, etc.
- Referrals for outside counseling & psychological assessments
- In-school suspensions
- Out of school suspensions

II. MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC DISCIPLINE PROTOCOLS

As our faculty prepares Middle School students for high school, we supplement the general Behavior Response Strategies used in K-6 with the following protocols to address minor but repeated rule infractions:

“Minor” but repeated offenses include but are not limited to:

- Skipping class
- Arriving to class late/leaving a classroom without permission/not returning to the classroom in a timely manner
- Disrupting others from completing work
- Use of profanity and/or vulgar language
- Use of language that is homophobic or racially/culturally insensitive
- Incomplete schoolwork/Assignments not turned in on time
- Needing multiple re-directions to follow school rules
- Unapproved use of cell phone during the school day

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Individual student incidents of minor but repeated rule infractions will be tracked and responded to as follows:

First offense: Student is verbally reminded of the school rule by a faculty member.

Second offense: Lunch detention

Third offense: Lunch & recess detention + parent notification

Fourth offense: 2-day Lunch & 2-day recess detention + parent notification

Fifth offense: Schedule P-T-DOS Conference Lunch & recess detentions until Conference is held.

Sixth offense: 1-day ISS

For 7+ incidents, schedule additional P-T-DOS Conference. Determine individual behavior plan.

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III. DIFFERENTIATED DISCIPLINE

Inherent in the Hill View Montessori Code of Conduct is the belief that educators must look beyond surface behavior and seek to understand the unique circumstances surrounding all student incidents in order to make fair and just disciplinary decisions. The Dean of Students and other HVM faculty members will make decisions based on the school's Code of Conduct *and* on an in-depth and thoughtful consideration of events, precedents, and important circumstances.

While there should be no expectation that all student behaviors are responded to equally, since not all circumstances are equal (see example below), HVM community members can expect that school disciplinary decisions will be made in a thoughtful, equitable, fair way based on a thorough examination of events, precedents, and important circumstances.

EXAMPLE of THOUGHTFUL, DIFFERENTIATED DISCIPLINE:

Scenario 1: Student A punches Student B in the face.

Scenario 2: Student C punches Student D in the face.

(The surface behavior is identical)

Scenario 1: Disciplinary action for Student A is a 1-day out of school suspension, family conference, along with restorative practices.

Scenario 2: Disciplinary action for Student C is a 1-day in-school suspension, along with restorative practices.

(The disciplinary response is thoughtfully differentiated)

Explanation for differential disciplinary response to identical surface behavior:

Scenario 1: Student A is angry at Student B for laughing at them when they missed a shot in a game at recess. Student A punches Student B in the face.

According to the HVM Code of Conduct, physical aggression is unacceptable behavior and subject to major discipline protocols. After interviewing the students involved, it is revealed that Student A's action was spontaneous, done in anger, and intended to cause harm. Student A receives a 1-day out of school suspension, along with 1:1 conferences with the DOS, a parent conference, and restorative actions. Note: This is the first reported incident of aggression by Student A. In the event of further, similar behavior, a longer suspension will be strongly considered.

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Scenario 2: Student C is frustrated because for the last week, Student D has been sending them unkind texts, directing other students to exclude them from the lunch table, verbally mocking them in class, and “accidentally” bumping them whenever they pass in the hall. Today, Student D laughs at Student C for missing a shot in a game at recess. Student C tells Student D to stop but Student D continues laughing and making fun of him. When Student D says, “What are you going to do about it?” Student C punches Student D in the face.

According to the HVM Code of Conduct, physical aggression is unacceptable behavior and subject to major discipline protocols. After interviewing the students involved, it is revealed that Student C’s actions were impulsive, retaliatory, and based on repeated provocative actions by Student D. Unfortunately, Student C had not told an adult about what was happening leading up to the incident at recess, so there was no opportunity for an adult to intervene in order to prevent the conflict from escalating. There have been no previous incidents of physical aggression by Student C. Student C receives a 1-day in-school suspension, along with 1:1 conferences with the DOS, a parent conference, and restorative actions. Student C is also reminded of the expectation to let an adult know about provocative actions by peers so that adults can intervene in a timely way to prevent problem situations from escalating. Student D’s behind-the-scenes behavior is addressed in a 1:1 conference with the DOS and a parent call is made. Faculty initiates a plan to monitor the student interactions and to separate them as needed.