



# Marlboro Montessori Academy

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

Positive discipline is a process of teaching children to behave appropriately. Positive discipline respects the rights of the individual child, the group and the adult. Methods of positive discipline shall be consistent with the age and development needs of the children and lead to the ability to develop and maintain self-control.

Positive discipline is different from punishment. Punishment tells children what they should NOT do; positive discipline tells children what they SHOULD do. Punishment teaches fear; positive discipline teaches self-esteem.

### **You can use positive discipline by planning ahead:**

- Anticipate and eliminate potential problems.
- Have a few consistent, clear rules that are explained to children and understood by adults.
- Have a well-planned daily schedule.
- Plan for ample elements of fun and humor.
- Include some group decision making.
- Provide time and space for each child to be alone.
- Make it possible for each child to feel he/she has had some positive impact on the group.
- Share ownership and responsibility with the children.

### **You can use positive discipline by intervening when necessary:**

- Redirect to a new activity.
- Provide individualized attention.
- Removing a child for a few minutes from the area or activity so that he/she may gain self-control. (One minute for each year of a child's age is a good rule of thumb).
- Divert the child and remove from the area of conflict.
- Provide alternative activities and acceptable ways to release feelings.
- Point out natural or logical consequences of children's behavior.
- Offer a choice only if there are two acceptable options.
- Criticize the behavior, not the child. Don't say "bad boy" or "bad girl". Instead you might say, "That's not allowed here".

### **You can use positive discipline by showing love and encouragement:**

- Catch the child being good. Respond to and reinforce positive behavior; acknowledge or praise to let the child know you approve of what he/she is doing.
- Provide positive reinforcement through rewards for good behavior.
- Use encouragement rather than competition, comparison or criticism.
- Overlook small annoyances and deliberately ignore provocations.
- Give hugs and caring to every child every day.
- Appreciate the child's point of view.
- Be loving, but don't confuse loving with license.

### **Positive discipline is NOT:**

- Disciplining a child for failing to eat or sleep or soiling themselves.
- Hitting, shaking, or any other form of corporal punishment.
- Using abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment or any other form of emotional punishment of children.
- Engaging in or inflicting any form of child abuse and/or neglect.
- Withholding food, emotional responses, stimulation, or opportunities for rest or sleep.

Positive discipline takes time, patience, repetition, and the willingness to change the way you deal with children. But it's worth it because positive discipline works.