

# Discipline and Conduct

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## **Philosophy of Discipline at 1st Lutheran School**

One of the primary goals of 1st Lutheran School is to provide a school environment that fosters maximum growth and development of God's children based on both the Law and the Gospel that God "spells" out for us in Scripture. To facilitate these processes, a planned and coordinated program of discipline, based on Biblical principles, including the teaching of the skills of self-discipline, and focused on the needs of the children has been developed and is practiced. It is to be expected that this discipline program is modeled by all that are involved in the educational program [students, faculty, staff and parents] and all school- sponsored activities of 1st Lutheran School.

Opportunities to teach children the self-discipline skills abound within any school day. Because teachers believe that confrontation [coming face-to-face] is part of their task as disciplinarians, they welcome opportunities to help children learn to help themselves. All disruptive behaviors are routinely handled immediately by the supervising adults in the school.

Broad rules that affect the daily living together of all members of the 1st Lutheran School community include:

- As a forgiven disciple of Christ, show respect to others and your school.**
- Contribute to the Christian learning environment.**
- Follow established classroom procedures.**

## **Classroom Management Plan**

Each classroom teacher has adopted some version of these three rules for his/her classroom. The teachers work with the children to make sure the rules are understood and the reasons for these rules are taught. Children learn that each adult may have different procedures to help them follow the rules.

These Management Plans list the consequences for not following the rules. All teachers work with the students to determine acceptable consequences. Be sure to ask your child's teacher about the Management Plan being used in his/her classroom each year. Each family is to receive a copy of the plan from their child's teacher at the Parent Orientation Meetings in August. The system used will help your child grow in the self-discipline skills.

## **Student Responsibility**

Students are required to demonstrate respect to all people with whom they come in contact while at school, in the church, on the playground, and on all school-sponsored activities away from the school campus. This includes other students, teachers, Principal, Pastor, secretaries, custodians, janitors, volunteers, parents and visitors. Older students are expected to assume responsibility for younger students by helping them, by setting a good example for them, and by providing positive tones for the entire school.

Students are required to demonstrate respect for themselves, others, property, and authority. This includes respect for school/church property and responsibility for the care of their own possessions as well as the possessions of others.

## **Teacher Responsibility**

The teacher will establish good relations with the student by reinforcing positive behaviors that encourages rather than discourages the child. A variety of learning experiences will be provided to stimulate student interest and motivation. The teacher needs to understand the uniqueness of each student as a child of God, accept them as persons redeemed by Christ, respond to them as forgiven children of God, forgive and give forgiveness, help them to grow in their creativity, individuality, and problem solving ability, and hold high expectations

## **Principal Responsibilities**

The Principal is responsible for establishing and maintaining a well-disciplined and positive environment. In dealing with behavioral problems, the Principal makes recommendations for handling the problem and establishes procedures for using resources and resource people to resolve behavioral problems.

## **Parent Responsibilities**

God has given parents the primary responsibility as their child's "first" teacher. The school willingly takes on a secondary responsibility of assisting the family in this important task, but will not neglect our duty to "train up a child in the way he should go." The home is to be the environment where the teaching of responsibility, hard work and respect begins. When the child enters school, this process becomes a shared responsibility that reinforces Christian values in the home and the school. This shared responsibility best benefits the children when both the home and the school communicate, share ideas, and cooperate in a joint effort to benefit the children.

*Parents are responsible to show support for their child's teacher when talking to their children and/or friends and acquaintances. If a family has a concern with a teacher, that family is to speak to the teacher directly. Putting children "in the middle" - between the teacher and the parent - by talking to or in the presence of children about a school problem is not a "blessing of childhood."*

## **Communication Process**

In spite of all our expectations, children still misbehave - sometimes deliberately, sometimes unintentionally. When a student continues to misbehave, the teacher contacts the parents so they can cooperate in helping the child understand the problem and implement a plan for modifying the behavior. The teacher should may the Principal to assist in diagnosing problems and implementing a plan for modifying the child's behavior.

**When a student has a concern about discipline, he/she should talk with the teacher. If the problem isn't resolved, the student then should talk with his/her parent(s). The parent then is to discuss the concern with the teacher directly involved before discussing it with anyone else. If the problem is not resolved, the parent is to present the concern to the Principal.**

When parents observe or hear about incidents at school that concern them, they should immediately contact the teacher who has responsibility for supervision of the children. Seeking answers and solutions from the source of the concerns will eliminate damaging accusations and hearsay.

**When differences arise ... when questions about behavior, motivation, actions taken, reactions occurring - teacher wise or student wise - we need to communicate - and the communication must remain among the adults involved - and only the adults. We err when we put the child in the middle of a concern and force them to take sides.** Parents when talking to their child need to support the teacher and teachers when talking to the student must support the parent. When a child sees that either their parent or their teacher has forced him/her to "take sides," further effective communication is either severely hampered or completely destroyed. In addition, expecting our

children to handle disagreements between adults in a fair and mature-like manner is expecting too much from them. The maximum growth and development we [the school] and you [the parents] want for the child will not occur when the adults involved do not model adult, Christ-like behavior.

When a parent feels a concern has not been resolved, the Principal should be asked to assist the parents and the teacher with the problem. As a final step in resolving a problem, the parent should request that the Principal or the Board of Christian Education chairperson place the concern on the Board's meeting agenda.

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled for the end of the first and third quarters of each school year. Time is set aside for teachers to confer with each of their parents. These conferences are a very important factor in providing the "best" education possible for the students of our school. Please make parent-teacher conferences a priority and take the following steps to ensure you and your child get the most out of them.

#### **Before the Conference:**

- *Talk with your child:* Find out his/her favorite subjects and activities and ask if there are any concerns he/she would like you to discuss with the teacher.
- *Review assignments:* Are there some areas where your child really shines and others that might need a little extra work? Discuss both strengths and weaknesses with the teacher.

#### **The Day of the Conference:**

- *Be on time:* The conference schedule is tight and teachers need all parents to be on time. If something comes up, notify the teacher as soon as possible. Reschedule, even if it has to be a telephone conference.
- *Remember that conferences are brief:* A typical parent-teacher conference lasts 10 – 15 minutes. If you need additional time, ask for a follow-up session.
- *Keep an Open Mind:* Some parents get angry when teachers discuss trouble spots. Some teachers get angry when parents criticize them. Remember that these conferences are meant to help you understand your child's performance in school. Working together with the teacher, and the teacher with the parent will help your child succeed.
- *Make Plans:* Find out what you can do to follow through at home. Decide together what you, your child, and the teacher need to do to help your child succeed.

#### **Afterward:**

- *Tell Your Child:* After the conference, meet with your child and discuss the teacher's comments. Remember to praise all the things your child is doing well, and pass along the teacher's compliments. If you need to, talk about areas that you and the teacher will be working on to help your child improve.
- *Follow Up:* In the days and weeks that follow, let your child's teacher know that you are following through on what was discussed, and that you'd like to hear how things are progressing in the classroom.

Remember that 1st Lutheran School welcomes parent involvement year-round. Feel free to call and schedule a phone or in-person conference any time you think there's a need.

### **Conduct and Discipline**

***"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things." Phil. 4:8***

Our school family - teachers, children and staff - is God's family here at school. Jesus Christ is the head of this very special family, He directs and guides it - He has set the example as to how a member of His family should conduct his/her life. He is the motivating force behind all life in this family.

Like most families, our school family experiences problems. We recognize that Satan works very hard to disrupt the life and the work of this family, so that even in a Christ-centered school difficulties arise in matters of honesty, truthfulness, thefts, use of inappropriate language, disobedience, disrespect, unkindness, cheating and the like. These problems have to be faced realistically and in the light of the example and teachings of Christ.

Discipline, therefore, at 1st Lutheran School is firm, but is positive in that it uses as its motivating power the love of God, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the skills which enable the child to grow in self-discipline - to grow in forgiveness - to grow toward spiritual maturity.

### **Total School Discipline Cycle**

Occasionally removal from the group is necessary to protect a student and/or the learning environment of the school. This is necessary when a student:

- 1. Is in physical or psychological danger or puts another in danger.**
- 2. Pushes beyond the limits of respect in speech or action. [Abusive]**
- 3. Is irrational or unreasonable - out of control.**

If possible, the adult who removes the child will work quickly to help the student regain self-control. If this happens, the two parties can continue to work together to redirect the inappropriate behavior. If regaining control does not happen, the student will be sent to the Principal's office and a four-step Discipline Cycle will be set in motion.

**Step One:** The student will be sent to the office by the supervising adult.

1. The student will meet with the Principal.
2. A plan will be developed to eliminate the behavior from occurring in the future.
3. The student will be held accountable for the plan developed.
4. The Principal will notify the parent of the incident and a plan will be developed.

When discipline and guidance become necessary, corrective measures used, but not limited to, include:

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|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| - "Time-outs"       | - Detention                           |
| - Probation         | - Expulsion                           |
| - Loss of Privilege | - Work Detail                         |
| - Suspension        | - Temporary separation from the group |

**Step Two:** Should a student be referred to the Principal a second time within a two month period for any serious infraction, the following will occur:

1. The student will again meet with the Principal.
2. The original plan will be consulted and updated with additional actions to be taken.
3. Consequences will be given to the student in relation to the severity of the incident.

**Step Three:** If a student is sent to the Principal a third time within a two month period for any serious infraction, or in extreme cases, when the Principal determines the seriousness of the action warrants starting at Step Three the following will occur:

1. The student meets with the Principal.
2. A conference will be held with a parent, teacher(s), student, and Principal.
3. Suspension of up to three days may be earned.

4. A recommendation may be made to have the family visit with a counselor or other specialist.
5. All schoolwork missed during the period of suspension must be completed before the child rejoins the class.
6. A probationary time period to monitor and review progress will be set once the student is ready to return to class.

*Step Three can be repeated as long as a student is able to demonstrate that learning from mistakes is occurring and shows willingness to contribute to a positive learning environment. When little or no change is evident in behavior and school personnel have exhausted all available means to affect change, the student will move to Step Four of the Discipline Cycle.*

**Step Four:** The Principal will recommend removal of the student from 1st Lutheran School.

1. The decision to terminate a student rests with the Principal, Pastor, and Board of Christian Education.
2. If termination is the decision, the student's parent(s) will be notified in writing of the reasons for the dismissal, and the right to request a hearing will be explained.
3. The Principal, Pastor and BCE may reconsider termination when the parent makes a written request for a special hearing.

***A few, serious infractions such as possession of drugs or weapons, or severe physical or moral misconduct could result in an immediate move to Step Four of this cycle.***