

## **Addendum: Discipline Policy**

The philosophy of The Good Shepherd School is to offer a program that fosters the development of the whole child: social, intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual. We strive to challenge the children and at the same time to insure their success in a school setting. In keeping with this philosophy, our discipline policies guide the children to limit undesirable behavior and develop desirable behavior and good social skills, while maintaining and enhancing self-esteem.

Good Shepherd teachers plan the classroom environment to prevent conflict. Toys are within easy reach of the children. Children can engage in a variety of activities with sufficient space. There is an adequate supply of materials and toys. And most important, the child-to-staff ratio is kept low and generally exceeds the guidelines established by the Department of Human Resources. With these ratios, problems can be addressed promptly and the children's needs met properly.

Throughout the day, teachers model behavior that we want the children to emulate: sharing, talking about feelings, and problem solving. An uncooperative child can be gently moved to action and given verbal encouragement. Teachers can initiate the desired behavior with a child. Sometimes, privileges can be withdrawn so children learn the connection between their actions and logical consequences. Aggressive behavior is stopped calmly by the teacher and then discussed privately. A child who is asked to sit quietly to regain self-control is not isolated completely, but is removed from the activities of the other children. This gives the child a chance to regain control and gives the teacher an opportunity to talk with the child about what was wrong and about alternative behaviors. Cooperative behavior is praised consistently so it becomes a desired model.

The following disciplining behaviors are not used: physical roughness, verbal harshness as in yelling and name-calling, comparing children with others, sarcasm, shaming, isolation without adult supervision and/or ignoring conflict.

Teachers welcome and will initiate communication with parents. The school and the family work together as partners to solve any discipline problems. Learning self-control is a process. At Good Shepherd, we consciously teach pro-social behaviors.