



Code of Conduct 2023-2024

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Purpose of this document:

For all children, learning and development includes skills and competencies across the entire spectrum of human experience and knowledge. As a school, we understand that our primary responsibility to educate and guide the learning and development of our students may lie in the academic domain, but it is by no means limited to this domain. With the weight of caring for students *in loco parentis* during the school day, we understand that we have a responsibility to help students develop socially and emotionally, and that the culture of our school and its relationships are an essential element of our life as an educational institution. To that end, the Code of Conduct represents the norms and expectations that guide this aspect of our life together at IST. This document provides guidance as to how we will both build and maintain a culture that enables the school's mission.

Foundational Beliefs

At IST, we believe that:

- All of our students should benefit from a positive and supportive environment that guides them in their development into well-rounded and holistically mature individuals.
- That the social and emotional learning and development of a child are vital elements of their learning and that successful development of these competencies in our students are the foundation of a healthy culture.
- Our relationships with one another are healthy and constructive, grounded in respect, compassion, understanding, and collaboration.
- That there is an ordered relationship between adults and students at the school. Namely, that adults inhabit a natural position of authority over students and that the relationship should reflect this respect. Adults, in turn, are expected to treat students with respect and provide them with autonomy and authority in an age-appropriate manner.
- That conflict and misunderstandings are normal, but that respectful and authentic communication guides our process of resolving these situations.
- That care and respect for oneself is essential to our ability to both thrive and care for our fellow community members.
- Children should be treated with dignity, and have the right to be protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Decisions affecting children should be made with the best interests of the child in mind.

Culture and Conduct Across Programs

As a school with students across a wide spectrum of developmental stages, the way in which we work with students in their social and emotional development is differentiated according to their individual circumstances. This leads to distinct approaches taken when working with students in our various programs in the school.

Primary Years Program

The PYP program reflects a strong commitment to the whole child. We respect each child's dignity and our team works to provide a positive and safe environment that fosters student learning and responsible behavior.

Middle Years Program

The **MYP** students go through many changes and transitions. A middle school student is no longer a child, yet not quite an adult, thus they are very different from PYP and DP students. Our MYP students are old enough to take responsibility for their choices and actions. It is a place where our students are accepted, heard, and free to be themselves.

Behavioral Management

Approach

In general, our aim is to work with students in a non-punitive and educational manner. Our first assumption is that behavior that is not in keeping with our community norms and expectations is generally the result of a related social, emotional, or academic issue that also needs to be addressed. The best course of action in helping students grow and avoid this disruptive or problematic behavior is to identify and understand the underlying or related issue, not necessarily to just respond to the behavior itself. Building up a student's social and emotional awareness and fluency will enable them to identify and address both the underlying issue and the problematic behavior itself.

Methods and Response

We use a three-tier model for understanding and responding to problematic or disruptive behavior. As the behavior increases in its negative consequences, the nature of the response or intervention on the part of the school adapts accordingly. We define the three tiers* as:

Tier 1:

Behavioral issues that temporarily disturb the learning or social environment but where the environment is capable of returning itself to its prior state without significant intervention.

Tier 2:

Behavioral issues that significantly or regularly disturb the learning or social environment or negatively affect the physical or mental well-being of another community member. These situations typically require the intervention of multiple stakeholders to resolve the situation. Tier 1 incidents that occur with high frequency and do not show signs of improving may be escalated to Tier 2.

Tier 3:

Behavioral issues that severely affect the learning or social environment or endanger the physical or mental well-being of another community member. These situations typically require the intervention of senior leadership and/or external parties or experts.

Each discipline situation is considered to be an opportunity for learning and growth. When a core value has been disregarded, the situation will be discussed with the student. By treating children with respect and giving them the opportunity to think about their actions students learn how to change their behavior. Repeated negative behaviors will receive a corresponding increase and intensity of interventions and/or a parent conference. Suspension and expulsion are also possible consequences depending on the severity of the situation, especially if the behavior may jeopardize the safety or learning of others.

**These tiers and their respective responses are defined in more detail below.*

Criteria used in Tier evaluation

In the evaluation of each incident, a consistent set of criteria are used in the categorization of a behavior into a specific tier. These criteria are:

Source:

We understand behaviors to come from one or more of the following sources: the heart, the mind, and the body. Identifying the source of the behavior helps us understand the biological and physiological nature and context of the behavior.

Frequency:

We believe that it is important to establish whether the behavior or incident is rare, occasional, or regular/consistent in its frequency. This helps to establish whether there are patterns that should inform our response.

Intent:

Understanding the intent with which the action or behavior was undertaken is essential to understanding the way in which we should engage with a student.

Authenticity:

In the event that the behavior was threatening to another party, establishing the extent to which those threats are authentic will guide our response.

Behavior in Conflict with the Code of Conduct

Mean and Disrespectful Behavior

Being mean and/or disrespectful are behaviors that go against our IST Code of Conduct: be caring, open-minded, principled, balanced, reflective, communicators, thinkers, inquirers, and risk-takers. These are actions that are intended to hurt someone else through verbal, physical, written, or electronic means. These types of behavior become bullying when they are repeated or happen in a consistent manner.

Examples of these types of aggressive behavior may include:

Verbal: name calling, teasing, put downs, mocking, sarcasm, notes or messages, spreading rumors, ethnic or sexual orientation slurs, racial taunts, extortion of money or possessions

Physical: hitting, pushing, kicking, punching, any physical violence, attacks on property

Cyber: putdowns, teasing, all forms of electronic information: SMS, text messages, email, telephone calls, chat rooms, abusive web pages, or inappropriate photo taking and/or sharing

Relationships: sharing secrets, spreading rumors, putdowns, deliberate isolations, using relationships as a weapon, hiding others belongings, tormenting, threatening gestures, non-verbal gesturing, building coalitions that deny an individual from healthy relationships with others, silent treatment, mean looks, eye rolling

Bullying

Bullying will not be tolerated at IST. It is defined as repeated aggressive verbal, written, physical, cyber, and/or relationship behavior. It is intended to cause distress upon one or more people in the school environment. Bullying can take on many of the forms above. Direct bullying can be physical in nature: pushing, choking, hitting, kicking or verbal in nature: teasing, name-calling, or threats. Indirect bullying may be difficult to detect and can be very subtle. Examples of indirect bullying are: making faces, gestures, social isolation, staring, manipulating friendships, intentional exclusion, or cyber bullying. Bullying may take place in the physical world as well as the digital world. This policy is to be understood to encompass all methods of communication and relating.

This applies to student behavior both on and off the school grounds that is detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff at IST. This policy applies during any holiday or vacation period. For returning to IST at the conclusion of any holiday or break, behavior that violates this policy will be eligible for investigation.

A student who engages in any act of bullying will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action including suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to the law enforcement authorities. The severity and pattern, if any, of the bullying behavior will be taken into consideration when disciplinary decisions are made. A final decision as to whether or not bullying has occurred will be made in partnership between the Counsellor, the relevant Deputy Head, and, if necessary, the Head of School.

Tiers & Responses

Tier 1 - The Majority of Disciplinary Incidents:

Behavioral issues that temporarily disturb the learning or social environment but where the environment is capable of returning itself to its prior state without significant intervention.

Response:

Tier 1 incidents are handled in a non-punitive manner. These may include invitations to behavior modification, brain breaks, mindfulness breaks, or temporary changes of environment to help reset behavioral patterns.

Parties involved in resolution:

Student, teacher, counselor (if required), & other community members affected.

Documentation:

Single incidents are not typically documented when resolution is possible through the teacher or staff member on site, but examples must be available for general understanding of a student's behavioral profile. Counselor visits are always documented.

Parties informed of incident and resolution:

The incident and its resolution are contained to the relationship between the student and the teacher/staff member who may inform the counselor. Parents are generally not informed of single incidents. Regular patterns may be communicated and general behavior will be communicated to parents in conferences and term reports.

Tier 2 - Incidents of Moderate Concern:

Behavioral issues that significantly or regularly disturb the learning or social environment or negatively affect the physical or mental well-being of another community member. These situations typically require the intervention of multiple stakeholders to resolve the situation. Tier 1 incidents that occur with high frequency and do not show signs of improving may be escalated to Tier 2.

Response:

Tier 2 incidents are handled in either a non-punitive or punitive manner depending on the severity of the incident. These may include invitations to behavior modification, brain breaks, mindfulness breaks, or temporary changes of environment to help reset dysregulated patterns. It may also include a verbal/written plan, parent call, parent conference, loss of privileges, loss of free time, temporary removal from a class, service to the community, in-school suspension, or out of school suspension.

Parties involved in resolution:

Student, teacher, counselor, parent(s), other community members affected, Deputy Heads (if required), and Head of School (if required).

Documentation:

Incident is documented by the counselor and noted as a non-punitive or punitive incident.

Parties informed of incident and resolution:

The incident and its resolution are contained to the relationship between the student, teacher, counselor, and possibly Deputy Head. Parents are notified if the incident is a repeated occurrence or has punitive infractions. May require a parent conference. The Deputy Head is notified of the incident either verbally or in written format depending on the severity of the occurrence. HOS may also be informed of the incident.

Tier 3 - Serious Discipline Cases:

Behavioral issues that severely affect the learning or social environment or endanger the physical or mental well-being of another community member. These situations typically require the intervention of senior leadership and/or external parties or experts.

Response:

Tier 3 incidents will follow a thorough investigation and a values learning plan, offenders are disciplined accordingly and the Head of School may be notified. The school counselor is involved and outside counseling may be recommended. In order to best support the student, his or her teachers may be notified. These cases are referred to the Deputy Heads, parents are contacted, and a parent conference will be arranged. Given repeated offenses or in an extreme case threatening the physical safety of self or others, a student may lose the right to continue to be a member of the school community. This is the Head of School's

decision, and as all disciplinary decisions, is based on balancing the welfare of the student and that of the broader school community.

Parties involved in resolution:

Student, teacher (if required), counselor, parent(s), Deputy Heads, and Head of School

Documentation:

Incident is documented by the counselor, Deputy Heads (if applicable), and Head of School (if applicable)

Parties informed of incident and resolution:

The incident and its resolution are contained to the relationship between the student, teacher, counselor, Deputy Head, and Head of School. Parent(s) are called in to discuss the infraction.