

Positive Behavior Support

Our Lady of Mercy continues to fine tune and grow in our a school-wide system of Positive Behavior Support (PBS). PBS includes strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting expected student behaviors to create a positive school environment. Instead of using a patchwork of individual behavioral management plans, we have created a continuum of support for all students within our school. This includes support in both classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, restrooms, playground, etc.).

The purpose of school-wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is to establish a climate in which expected behavior is clear and predictable for all students. Attached is the matrix of expected behaviors that addresses the three core values of *Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe* and examples of what that behavior should look like in the various areas.

We believe that all students are capable of following the rules and expected behavior as outlined in the matrix. If students do not engage in appropriate behavior an office referral form may be used.

Problem Solving Model

Below is the school wide **Problem Solving Model** which is used for ongoing problems and by the Peer Mediators. Mr. Schaufele gives grade specific lessons and models how and when to use the problem solving steps. Each year the problem solving model will be reviewed and both the staff and students will be encouraged to use the language of this model when solving larger and ongoing problems.

Problem Solving Model

- Step 1: Stay Calm
- Step 2: Agree to Solve the Problem
- Step 3: How do I Feel?
- Step 4: What is the Problem?
- Step 5: Solutions
- Step 6: Agree on a Solution

Peer Mediators

Each year the grade seven students are trained as peer mediators by Mr. Schaufele and Mr. Geary. A peer mediator can be identified by the peer mediator vest he or she is wearing. Two peer mediators walk around the playground every lunch hour.

Peer Mediation is where students facilitate resolving disputes between two people or small groups. This process has proven effective in schools changing the way students understand and resolve conflicts in their lives. Changes include improved self-esteem, listening and critical thinking skills, and school climate for learning.

Peer Mediators do not “make decisions” but rather work towards a resolution for both sides. More serious problems are immediately brought to the attention of an adult supervisor.

Office Referral Form (see attached)

An Office Referral Form is a systematic form that offers a common understanding for staff, students and parents of the procedure that follows inappropriate behavior in our school. This form outlines examples of inappropriate behaviors that would require administrative involvement. It is intended for those students who fail to follow school or classroom expectations and/or who demonstrate a pattern of misbehavior such as repeatedly not having his or her homework completed.

Consequences will be determined by what the action has been and the repetitiveness of poor actions. This could result in writing an apology to another person, in-school suspension, missing a fun activity, staying after school, or another consequence appropriate to the behavior at the discretion of the administrator. Our goal is to teach students to make good choices and sometimes this happens through making a poor decision and learning from it. The goal is not to put down students, but to teach them to behave in appropriate ways and to learn from their mistakes. We are in the process of growing young people, and it takes nurturing, caring, and good discipline for this to happen. We appreciate your support from home in positive discipline for your child.

Minds Up Curriculum

Our Lady of Mercy is implementing a school wide curriculum called, MindUp. MindUp is a comprehensive evidence-based curriculum framed around 15 lessons that foster social and emotional awareness, enhance psychological well-being, and promote academic success.

The essence of what the MindUP programs calls for is embodied in the idea all children should have the opportunity to learn in an environment that encourages students to achieve to their full potential.

The MindUP curriculum promotes and develops mindful attention to oneself and others, tolerance of differences, and the capacity of each member to grow as a human being and a learner. It helps students to self-regulate behavior and is dedicated to the belief that the child who learns to monitor his senses and feelings becomes more aware and better understands how to respond to the world reflectively instead of reflexively.

Play is the Way

What is *Play is the Way*?

Play is the Way is a practical methodology for teaching social and emotional learning using guided play, classroom activities and a specific language set. It is a well researched program that guides students in the development of positive social behavior. Students will participate in Play is the Way two to three times a week during PE classes and in the classrooms.

Play is the Way supports our school philosophy:

“As Catholic educators we believe that every child is a unique gift of the Lord. In co-operation with the parents, we are committed to the teachings of Christ in educating the whole child physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and spiritually. We believe in encouraging each child’s sense of responsibility, self worth and community values to the fullest of his/her capability.”

Play is the Way is also supported by the emerging research in neuroscience which demonstrates that physical activity sparks biological changes that encourage brain cells to bind to one another. To quote Donald Hebb, psychologist, “When neurons fire together, they wire together” – mental and physical activity creates new neural structures. The more neuroscientists discover about this process, the clearer it becomes that exercise provides an unparalleled stimulus, creating an environment in which the brain is ready, willing, and able to learn.

Play is the Way encourages students through guided questions (see below) to pursue their personal best rather than trying to beat others. Students can learn to be resilient when encountering failure and taught to persist against difficulty. Students can be guided to see that most conflicts happen because of assumptions and allowing our emotions to dictate our actions instead of our thinking ruling our behavior.

Play is the Way objectives:

- To help students be independent, self-regulating, self-motivated learners in persistent pursuit of their personal best and able to get along with each other
- To develop students’ social and emotional competencies to live and learn well
- To foster empathetic students, considerate of themselves, each other and the world in which they live with sound and good reasons for the things they say and do

Play is the Way Questions:

1. Is that the right thing or wrong thing to do?
2. Am I making a strong or a weak decision?
3. Are my feelings in charge of my actions or is my thinking in charge?
4. Am I running away from the problem or am I dealing with it?
5. Am I being my own boss or am I inviting someone else to be my boss?
6. Is my teacher trying to help me or hurt me?

“The heart of the intelligent acquires learning, the ears of the wise search for knowledge.”

Proverbs 18:15