
Deutsche Schule Riga
Privātā sākumskola "Rīgas Vācu skola"
The German School of Riga

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POLICY ON DEALING WITH STUDENT MISBEHAVIOUR

1. An important component of a school environment conducive to academic learning and comprehensive student development is the behaviour of the students themselves. Negative student behaviour, or misbehaviour, subtracts from the desired environment, and in extreme cases can significantly impact the ability of fellow students to learn and develop as desired. While student misbehaviour is natural and human, much of it is unacceptable and will be dealt with.
2. Student misbehaviour in the classroom starts with minimal infractions such as disrupting the learning environment by uninvited speaking and can escalate to subconscious or even intentional attempts to challenge the authority of the teacher. During recreational times, i.e. between lessons, during snacks and the lunch break, misbehaviour can be driven by a student's desire to increase his or her social standing within a group. Students consciously or subconsciously acting in pursuit of this aim may engage in inappropriate conduct to include negative attention-seeking or the use of unacceptable methods to dominate a group. Students seeking a dominant position may perceive the process to get there as a zero-sum-game where a gain in their social standing shall be achieved by inflicting a corresponding loss onto someone else's. Various forms of misbehaviour employed in the pursuit of such aims range from the use of foul language, provoking, touting, ridiculing, insulting or excluding others from common activities all the way up to attempts, common among elementary school boys, to impose their will or settle arguments through the use of brute physical force. The application of such misbehaviour towards fellow students is collectively known as bullying. Misbehaviour during class and bullying during recreational times is not tolerated at our school and all staff will take action to prevent, correct and sanction it by applying the following procedures.

3. Dealing with minor misbehaviour

- 3.1. In case of minor misbehaviour during class, the following disciplinary steps shall be taken by the teaching staff.
 - 3.1.1. the student receives an oral warning to discontinue said behaviour;
 - 3.1.2. the student receives a second oral warning to discontinue said behaviour;
 - 3.1.3. the student receives a third oral warning to discontinue said behaviour.
- 3.2. If said misbehaviour persists, the teacher may impose sanctions, including but not limited to the following:
 - 3.2.1. the student is sent out of the classroom for a period of approximately 5 minutes at a time;
 - 3.2.2. the student receives additional homework;
 - 3.2.3. the student is given a task to atone for his behaviour ("make it up" to the class and/or teacher), for example, doing another student's class chores for a day, or cleaning up the classroom etc.
- 3.3. If said misbehaviour still persists, the teacher shall take the steps described under point 4 "Dealing with persistent or aggravated misbehaviour or serious incidents".
- 3.4. If the class as a whole or a large part thereof pursuant to repeated warnings by the teacher still fails to follow school or class rules, the teacher may impose a "silent minute".

4. Dealing with persistent or aggravated misbehaviour or serious incidents

- 4.1.1. In case of persistent or aggravated misbehaviour or a serious incident, the teacher shall conduct a private, face-to-face talk with the student in question. If there are more than one students involved, the teacher conducts either several separate talks with each involved student, or if appropriate a group talk. Simultaneously, the student(s) is/are instructed to apologize to any students affected by said misbehaviour. If necessary, the talk is conducted in the presence of an additional staff member who is prepared to translate to/from the language which the student is most comfortable in. Serious incidents are immediately reported to the parents of all involved students.
- 4.1.2. If misbehaviour persists, the teacher shall inform the student's parents, either via e-mail or face to face, advising that the parents discuss said misbehaviour with their child at home.
- 4.1.3. If misbehaviour still persists, the teacher shall invite the parents of the student in question to a private face to face meeting to discuss the misbehaviour. This

meeting is intended for understanding of possible causes of said misbehaviour and to jointly determining tailored solutions.

- 4.1.4. If the tailored solution is not effective the teacher may invite the parents to a second private face to face meeting with the aim to adjust and improve tailored solutions. The teacher is also permitted to skip this step.
- 4.1.5. If misbehaviour persists, the student is sent to the principal's office for a disciplinary conversation. The occurrence of a disciplinary conversation and the reasons for it will be documented in writing and shared with the parents.
- 4.2. Depending on the seriousness of the misbehaviour the principal may suspend the student for the rest of the school day or the following school day, depending on the time of the day when the suspension occurs. The school will call the student's parents and instruct them to pick up the student without delay. The reason(s) for the suspension will be documented in writing and shared with the parents. For a particularly serious incident the principal may further convene all appropriate pedagogical staff to hold a disciplinary board meeting.
- 4.3. After a student's second suspension within a 12 months period the principal will convene a disciplinary board meeting to discuss and decide on the further course of action. The disciplinary board may decide to expulse the student from the school.

5. Parent involvement

- 5.1. Parents are asked to cooperate with the school in accordance with this policy in order to prevent and correct misbehaviour
- 5.2. Misbehaviour or alleged misbehaviour which is detected by parents shall be reported by them to the appropriate class teachers or the school's secretariat, particularly so if students other than their own are involved. Dealing with misbehaviour or alleged misbehaviour committed by children other than their own is the exclusive responsibility of the school. Parents shall abstain from dealing with misbehaviour or alleged misbehaviour by children other than their own unless they enter prior to that into contact and reach agreement with the parents of all students concerned.



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6. Miscellaneous

- 6.1.1. The teacher may use the class hour to carry out discussions about interpersonal relationships amongst students, teambuilding exercises to strengthen class spirit, mediation of general student issues.
- 6.1.2. If misbehaviour occurs during recreational time, the teaching staff member in charge is permitted to shorten play time for any involved students. During this time the students shall receive written tasks. Outdoor play time can be restricted for no longer than 15 minutes.
- 6.1.3. The auxiliary teaching staff who is in charge to supervise recreational times (including the playtime during the lunch break) plays a key role to recognize, prevent and deal with bullying. Selection criteria for auxiliary teaching staff, in addition to pedagogical skills, therefore include language skills, including the ability to understand and communicate in Latvian and Russian. German auxiliary teaching staff without language skills in Latvian and Russian are at a disadvantage to detect bullying.
- 6.1.4. Where appropriate, the teacher may suggest consulting a psychologist/behaviour specialist.

Martin Farenfield
Principal