
**TYPICAL LETTER TO
PARENTS :**

to accompany whole-class
student behaviour agreement
(at primary level).

Dr Bill Rogers and Colleagues

2020

A typical example covering letter : this letter would accompany a primary *classroom behaviour agreement**

February, 2020

To all our parents in grade ...

This behaviour agreement (plan) is for all the children, and their teacher, in Room ...

We have, with your children, discussed the issue of behaviour and learning in the first week of term one.

We discussed *what it means* :-

- ~ **To have a class where everyone can learn well**, to the best of their ability, in ways that support each other here. We discussed issues such as :- seating arrangements and groupings, reasonable working noise levels, how to get teacher assistance in learning time; how to support each other in our learning together.

- ~ **To have a class where everyone feels safe** :- We discussed physical safety and we also discussed *feeling* safe here at school :- how we speak considerately to one another; what 'put-downs' are; how people feel when they are spoken to in unkind or hurtful ways. We also had a positive discussion on manners.
You will see how these issues are reflected in our positive rules and responsibilities in our **classroom** behaviour agreement accompanying this letter.

- ~ **To have a class where we treat one another with thoughtfulness, kindness and respect**. As well as discussing the issue of manners, we also discussed what respect means and how we show respect to others. We also discussed crucial behaviours such as consideration and co-operation.

See notes :- *Our Classroom Behaviour Plan (Early Years) (2020)* /
Our Classroom Behaviour Agreement (Upper Primary) (2020)

Our rules

All the rules in **our classroom behaviour agreement** are there to emphasise how we protect *the right to learn, the right to feel safe and the right to respect and fair treatment*.

Our discussion on 'rights' focused on behaviours we agree are **right**, fair, proper, thoughtful, considerate, responsible ... We discussed the reason and purpose for our rules and the difference fair rules make.

Fair, sensible, rules are necessary to protect rights and encourage, and highlight, responsibility. This is true of all decent and fair rules (whether on the road, at home, at school, even in board games!)

We have tried to make our rules as positive as possible with an emphasis on personal responsibility, thoughtfulness and co-operation. These rules are also published in our classroom on large posters and are the basis of any appropriate discipline and restitution.

Encouragement

We encourage your children in many ways regarding their effort, their contributions, their participation in their life and learning here at our school. We believe that encouragement is crucial in acknowledging, affirming and supporting a child's self-esteem and growth as a learner and a member of our school community.

Consequences (for inappropriate and wrong behaviours).

The emphasis with any behaviour consequences – at our school – is not punishment but accountability and responsibility for one's behaviour. Our whole-school policy is developed to help our children to see a consequence as an opportunity to learn something constructive about their behaviour.

All of our students have an opportunity to have their say concerning their behaviour; where it is appropriate, children are encouraged to work out behaviour consequences with their teacher.

We also seek to enable our students to engage in restitution when they have been unkind, unfair, or hurt others in any way. We seek to make any consequences fair and related to our classroom *rights, rules and responsibilities*. We believe it is also crucial to *relate* the behaviour consequence to the wrong behaviour, so the child sees the 'connectedness' *between behaviour, their choices and the outcomes*.

We will use time-out (cool-off-time) for students who continue to disrupt others' learning or affect their safety. Time-out allows a child to calm down and think about their behaviour. Sometimes time-out may need to occur away from the classroom. We also seek, at all times, to keep the respect for the individual child intact. We always follow-up any time-out consequences with a discussion with the child to enable repairing and rebuilding.

Support

We make every effort to encourage and support your children to learn to the best of their ability while they are with us. Included in their learning are the choices they make about their behaviour. We will work with individual children, and the whole class group, to encourage and support responsible choices about behaviour and learning while they are with us. We also know that children get tired, frustrated, and angry; like us, they will have their 'off' days. We know that there will be days when students distract, disturb or disrupt others' learning; we know that students will – sometimes – hurt others unintentionally or on purpose. We need clear, fair, consequences for such behaviours.

Teachers will always support students beyond any necessary consequences for wrong behaviour.

There will always be opportunities for students to have a personal 'right of reply' concerning issues of behaviour and learning :-

- to discuss their concerns with their teacher;
- to participate in class meetings where discussions about common concerns are raised, discussed, explored and often resolved by peer consultation;
- mediation, restitution and individual behaviour support plans are also ways in which teachers can help and enable students who may need extra support with their behaviour choices.

We would appreciate it if you would take time to read through this behaviour agreement with your child i.e. : the **behaviour plan / agreement**¹ developed by the teacher with her grade group. It reflects our school's commitment to positive learning and behaviour.

We look forward to your support this year.

Yours sincerely,

Ms _____ Mr _____²

February, 2020.

See:

ROGERS, Bill (2006) *Behaviour Management : A Whole-School Approach*.

Sydney : Scholastic Books

(In the U.K. London : Sage Publications).

ROGERS, Bill and MCPHERSON, Elizabeth (2014) *Critical First Steps : Behaviour Management in the Early Years* Melbourne : Curriculum Corporation.

In the U.K. the title is *Behaviour Management With Young Children : Critical First Steps with Children 3 – 7* London : Sage Publications.

¹ Some schools use terms such as 'Behaviour Plan' or 'Student Behaviour Plan', 'Student Behaviour Agreement', 'Our Learning Community Agreement'.

² In Australian schools we begin the school year in February.

Dr. Bill Rogers is a teacher, education consultant and author. He conducts in-services and seminar programmes across Australia, New Zealand, Europe and the U.K. in the areas of behaviour management, effective teaching, stress management, colleague support and teacher welfare. He has also worked extensively as a mentor-coach in classrooms; team-teaching in challenging classes in Australia and the U.K. {He is a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators and Honorary Life Fellow of Leeds Trinity University and Honorary Fellow at the Graduate School of Education, Melbourne University}.