



# Goosehill Primary School

Weekly Notes- October 3, 2014



Dear Parents,

Our social-emotional literacy (SEL) curriculum is based on the work of Dr. Mark Brackett of Yale University. The program is called "The Ruler Approach." Ruler is an acronym for the skills we teach children about managing emotions. We teach them to: Recognize, Understand, Label, Express, and Regulate their emotions so that they are able to build positive relationships, manage stress, and learn at high levels.

At the beginning of the school year, we focus on the first three "tools" of the Ruler Approach: the **Charter**, the **Mood Meter**, and the **Metamoment** strategy. As you know, **Classroom Charters** have been developed in all classrooms and a **School Charter** was developed with all of the students at a series of assemblies in September.

Here is the School Charter we developed together:

## Goosehill Primary School Charter 2014-15

**In our classrooms, in the lunchroom, on the playground and bus, and in our hallways, we want to feel...**  
*safe, happy, excited, included, comfortable, good, loved*

**What will we do to make sure we all feel this way?** *Say nice words. Keep our bodies to ourselves*  
*Follow the rules. Invite people to play. Stick up for each other*  
*Help each other. Take Meta-Moments* (kindergarten students are just beginning to learn about Metamoments)

**What should we do if someone doesn't live by our charter?** (If someone is mean, or hurts us with words or actions...) *Tell them, "Follow our charter!" Ask them to stop. Don't do it back.*  
*Give them an "I" message. ("I don't like it when you do that. It hurts my feelings.") Tell an adult.*

**If someone doesn't learn and breaks the charter again... What should the adults do?**  
(What are the consequences for "hurtful choices"?)  
*Give the student a break. Tell the teacher/principal. Call parents.*  
*Miss something fun, like recess. Make a promise to follow the charter.*

As you can see, our students are very capable of expressing their needs and establishing guidelines for conduct! They were honest and open during our discussions and seemed to possess a real sense of what is right and fair. It was interesting to note that every group of students felt strongly that parents should be called if a child "breaks" the charter more than once. While they respect the authority of their teachers and principal, they intuitively know that their parents must be involved if their behavior is to change. I have shared the Charter with you so that you can use some of the same language with your child. A consistent approach benefits children.

The most important idea we share with the children is that our job is to teach them to be the very best people they can be. They may make mistakes along the way, but we will support and guide them so that they don't make the same mistakes twice. Also, it is the job of adults to ensure that all children are safe, comfortable, and happy at school, but children have a voice and can stand up for themselves and for each other.

At Goosehill, we are committed to helping children learn to manage their emotions and build positive relationships. We appreciate being able to work in partnership with parents to ensure that all children are safe, happy, and comfortable at school. Please don't hesitate to call your child's teacher or me if you have a concern to share. Your insights will help us address potential problems more quickly and efficiently.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Warm regards,

Lynn Herschlein, Principal