



Goosehill Primary School

October 12, 2012

Dear Parents,

This week the teachers and I conducted assemblies with three classes at a time to develop a School Charter with the children. The children were asked to share their ideas in response to three guiding questions.

Here is the **School Charter** we developed together---in the children's words:

Goosehill Primary School Charter 2012-13

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?

*let people play, smile, say please and thank you, keep our hands and feet to ourselves (respect personal space)
take metamoments, stand up for each other, say nice words, be nice to everyone, use indoor voices,
listen to adults, follow playground rules, buckle seatbelts on the bus and stay in our seats*

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, "Please stop," and "Be nice." Don't do it back. Walk away and tell an adult. Tell them to say sorry. Give them an "I" message ("I feel sad when you tell me I can't play.")

If someone doesn't learn and breaks the charter again... (consequences)

*Tell him/her to sit and calm down. Tell the teacher/principal. The teacher/principal will call his/her parents.
Have him/her do a kindness. S/he will lose a privilege. (something fun, like recess)
Show him/her the Charter again and make a promise.*

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.

An important message we shared 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 need 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.

At Tuesday's Spirit Day Assembly, all students will sign our School Charter. I hope you'll ask your child about the Charter and what it means to him/her.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Warm regards,

Lynn Herschlein, Principal