



ÉCOLE GLENMORE SCHOOL

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Dear GME Parents and Guardians;

RE: Conflict Happens- Learn From It

Yesterday we had an amazing cultural performance in our gym with our entire school. When we are all together, it is visual just how large our population has become. When there are so many of us in such a small area, conflict is unavoidable. Conflict will happen, so how can we learn from it?

At GME we are trying to teach our students to stand up for themselves and use their voice. When we have a conflict, it is important to tell the person or persons directly involved with the conflict. Many times, there are misunderstandings that need to be cleared up and then the conflict is resolved. We are trying to teach our students to take perspectives of others, trying to build empathy and to use words to explain feelings and actions.

When a conflict cannot be resolved with the students themselves, we encourage them to get help from a trusted adult. The most important starting point in any conflict is to listen intently to those involved. The next step is to try to get the students involved to use their own words to tell how the other person sees the conflict and what happened. This step usually helps us to get to the point of reminding them that we need to treat others the way we would like to be treated. The conversation ends usually with all those involved shaking hands and apologizing if necessary.

Apologies can never be forced, neither can the acceptance of the apology. When the time is right, and sometimes this takes a day, the apology helps to move the relationship between the students forward in a positive way. It is rare that a conflict is completely caused by one person. When students apologize, we have them state exactly what they are sorry for, we give the other student a chance to respond and we discuss the plan going forward about how it will be different in the future.

Bullying and conflict are different. Bullying is an imbalance of power between the persons involved with the intention to harm. Many times the word 'bully' is used incorrectly. It is never okay to be mean.

Our students, your children, are articulate, kind and learning every day better how to treat others the way that they would like to be treated. We see incredible progress in their capacity to resolve conflict.

At that Friday cultural performance, with 700 of us in the gym, their behaviour was outstanding, their questions curious and their entry and exit exemplary. Thank you for sharing your precious children with us, they are so joyful to be with each and every day.

Wendy Briggs
Principal Learner