

DEMOCRATIC DISCIPLINE



CORE PILLAR

Providing a collaborative and democratic learning environment!



WHAT IS DEMOCRATIC DISCIPLINE?

Democracy is characterized by free and equal participation in the decision-making processes of an organization or group, and likewise, Democratic Discipline comes from a philosophy that everybody has a voice in establishing the rules of behaviour and the consequences for their maintenance. Democratic Discipline is our approach to classroom management, based on positive, firm, fair, and consistent expectations and natural (logical) consequences.

HOW IS IT USED AT CAA?

Students feel valued and trusted when they are provided with choices in classroom policies and learning procedures. This principle applies just as effectively to the establishment of behaviour and disciplinary measures. If discipline is handled with the same mutual respect as with other classroom activities, it can be a valuable and constructive part of a student's educational experience. In a democratic classroom, the school encourages self-discipline, responsibility, decision-making and independence.

The system proposed by democratic discipline is the use of natural and logical consequences rather than reward and punishment. Students are responsible for their own behaviour and make decisions, and then are held accountable for the consequences of those decisions. Consequences are immediate, logical outcomes of student decisions rather than punishments that are far removed from the student's actions. Consequences are applied in a firm and friendly manner. The most effective consequences are those that have been formulated in advance with student input and collaboration. At CAA, all teaching staff participate in yearly professional development and training in Democratic Discipline. At the start of each year, students collaborate on setting clear expectations for behaviour. These expectations are based around themes of respecting each other, respecting the learning environment, and respecting ourselves.

LEARN MORE: Nelson, J. (2006). *Positive Discipline: The Classic Guide to Helping Children Develop Self-Discipline, Responsibility, Cooperation, and Problem-Solving Skills*. Ballantine Books.