



SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the belief of *St. Joseph School* that members of our Catholic school communities are well disciplined, responsible and self-directed and promote respect, civility, responsibility and academic excellence. Our entire Catholic school community views this as an important social goal. It is the intent of this policy to outline conduct expectations and consequences for all students in our Catholic school community. The establishment of clear expectations for student behaviour will promote a fair and consistent approach to:

- classroom management
- a positive climate within our school community
- a school environment which is favourable to learning

It is the goal of *St. Joseph School*:

- to develop a framework from which all stakeholders in our Catholic school, including administration, staff, Catholic School Councils, parents/guardians, volunteers and students cooperate to develop codes of conduct from which our children learn a sense of self-discipline that comes from a healthy respect for themselves and others
- to teach students that reasonable obedience, conformity to rules and regulations lead to understanding, productive and harmonious interactions with others
- to show that we care deeply about our students and want them to feel comfortable learning in an environment which focuses on academic pursuits embedded with Gospel values
- to encourage the parents/guardians as primary educators of their children to assist the staff of the school in respecting the Code of Conduct

POLICY REGULATIONS

1. PURPOSES OF THE SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- to ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity.
- to promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic and Christian life of the school community.
- to maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect, civility and the Gospel values and beliefs.
- to encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict.
- to promote the safety of people in the schools
- to discourage the use of alcohol and illegal drugs

2. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR – RESPECT, CIVILITY, AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP:

All members of our Catholic school communities must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinion;

- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, age, or disability;
- respect the rights of others;
- show proper care and respect for the property of the school and of others at all times: building, grounds, equipment, personal belongings, material
- take appropriate measures to help those in need;
- seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully;
- respect all members of the school community, especially persons in positions of authority;
- respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching in a Catholic School;
- use language that is appropriate to their dignity as Christians and not swear at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority.
- comply with all particular School, School Board and Ministry expectations and regulations respecting behaviour;
- contribute positively to the Christian environment of the school;
- participate fully in the religious life of the school, including the celebration of liturgy, Religious Education and related activities.

3. **SAFETY:**

All members of our Catholic school community must not:

- engage in bullying behaviours;
- commit physical and/or sexual assault;
- traffic weapons or drugs;
- give alcohol or illicit drugs to a minor;
- commit robbery;
- be in possession of any weapon, including but not limited to, firearms;
- use any object to threaten or intimidate another person;
- cause injury to any person with an object;
- be in possession of, or be under the influence of, or provide others with alcohol or illegal drugs;
- inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person;
- engage in hate propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias;
- inappropriately use handheld electronic equipment, electronic communication or media devices on school property, at school-related events, on school buses or in any other circumstances that may have a negative impact on a member of the school community and on the school climate. These devices could include but are not limited to cell phones, Mp3 players, iPods, CD Players, Personal Video Game devices, computers, internet, email, website, and cameras.
- commit an act of vandalism that causes damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school.
- create a disturbance in a school or on school property which interrupts or disquiets the proceedings of the school or class or otherwise disrupts the operation of a school or the learning environment.

4. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY:**

All members of our Catholic school community and visitors to our school have the following roles and responsibilities:

Northwestern Catholic District School Board

Northwestern Catholic District School Board provides direction to its' Catholic schools to ensure opportunity, academic excellence, spiritual growth, and accountability in the education system. It is the responsibility of the Board to:

- develop policies that set out how their Catholic schools will implement and enforce the provincial Code of Conduct and all other rules that they develop that are related to the provincial standards that promote and support respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
- review these policies regularly with students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the community;
- seek input from Catholic School Councils, the Catholic Parental Involvement Committee, the Special Education Advisory Committee, parents, staff members, and the school community.
- establish a process that clearly communicates the Code of Conduct to all parents, students, staff members, and members of the school community in order to obtain their commitment and support;
- develop effective intervention strategies and respond to all infractions related to the standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
- provide opportunities for all staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment.

Principals

Under the direction of the Northeastern Catholic District School Board, principals take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school. They provide this leadership by:

- demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to academic excellence in a safe teaching and learning environment;
- holding everyone under their authority accountable for his or her behaviour and actions;
- empowering students to be positive leaders in the school and community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of the school community.

Teachers and Other School Staff Members

Under the leadership of the principals, teachers and other school staff members maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, teachers and school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth;
- empower students to be positive leaders in the classroom, school, and community;
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
- maintain consistent standards of behaviour for all students;
- demonstrate respect for all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the members of the school community;
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship.

Students

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a student:

- comes to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- shows respect for himself or herself, for others, and for those in authority;
- refrains from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others;
- follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his or her own actions.
- adheres faithfully to the school dress/uniform code;
- gives respect, obedience and cooperation to all individuals in positions of responsibility in the school;
- is in attendance at all classes and scheduled activities on time and with the materials required for full participation;
- welcomes the opportunity to participate, as appropriate to their age, in the sacramental life of the Church and, in particular, as it is celebrated in the school context; and
- develops personal skills and talents to serve God, and thereby, his/her neighbour.

Parents

Parents play an important role in the education of their children, and can support the efforts of the school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill their role when they:

- show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- inform the school of any changes of contact information including home and work phone numbers, home address and emergency contacts
- communicate regularly with the school;
- help their child to be neat, appropriately dressed, and prepared for school;
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
- show that they are familiar with the provincial Code of Conduct, the Board's Code of Conduct Policy, and school rules;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

Community Partners and the Police

Through outreach, partnerships already in place may be enhanced and new partnerships with community agencies and members of the community (e.g. Aboriginal Elders) may also be created. Community agencies are resources that boards can use to deliver prevention or intervention programs. Protocols are effective ways of establishing linkages between boards and community agencies and of formalizing the relationship between them. These partnerships must respect all applicable collective agreements.

The police play an essential role in making our Catholic schools and communities safer. The police investigate incidents in accordance with the protocol developed with the local school board. These protocols are based on a provincial model that was developed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ministry of Education.

5. RIGHTS:**Students have the right:**

- to be respected in both person and conscience as a son or daughter of God;
- to learn in a safe, orderly and stimulating environment;
- to have access to the facilities and equipment of the school;
- to participate in any program offered by the school; and
- to be conscientiously instructed by the teaching staff.

School Staff members have the right:

- to be protected as citizens;
- to safety in the workplace;
- to a secure work environment as established by standards or work relations;
- to require of students, the respect and discipline necessary to meet one's professional obligations toward the students; and
- to teach in the language recognized by the legal status of the school and of the education system.

6. RESPECT FOR SELF:**Appropriate Dress Policy**

Students are expected to dress neatly and appropriately to promote a positive Catholic learning environment. The students must adhere to the following guidelines:

- clothes should be reasonably neat, clean and without tears or holes
- patches, symbols or sayings on clothing shall not be offensive to anyone who might read it

- dress appropriately for age and grade level in a manner that demonstrates modesty, dignity and is deemed appropriate for a Catholic school (the midriff – navel – must be covered and all shoulder straps must be at least three (3) fingers wide)
- proper indoor and outdoor footwear appropriate for the conditions and environment must be worn at all times.

Students who fail to comply with the school's appropriate dress regulations will be subject to the consequences determined by the Principal for unacceptable behaviour outlined in this policy and will be required to meet the dress code regulations prior to returning to class.

In order to adopt a school uniform, principals should ensure wide consultation with the school community, and ensure, through a voting procedure, that 66 % of parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school are in agreement. Principals are required to consider issues of affordability with respect to school uniforms.

Medication

For safety reasons, no student should bring any form of medication to school without prior approval from the office. If medication is determined necessary, the "Request for Medication during School Hours" form must be completed by your doctor to indicate that medication must be taken during school hours. The package must be clearly labeled with the name of the student, parent and doctor, phone numbers and specific directions. Medications, however, are not to be kept by the students but must be taken to the office. Please communicate with the school to address individual student needs in this regard.

Drugs and Alcohol

The possession, sale or use of alcohol or illicit drugs on school property or at school events is illegal.

Proper Language

Students are expected to use language that is appropriate to their dignity as Catholics. Profane or vulgar language or taking God's name in vain is unacceptable.

Smoking

Recognizing that smoking is a health hazard, that the health of both students and staff will benefit from a smoke-free environment and that it is the prime responsibility of the school to educate, smoking is prohibited in all buildings and property owned, leased and operated by the Board. Possession of tobacco products by the students less than sixteen years of age is illegal.

Classroom Procedures

Students are expected to:

- be prepared for classes with the appropriate books, equipment and materials
- follow routines as assigned
- follow classroom and school behaviour expectations
- participate fully in all class activities
- ask for help when experiencing difficulties or when work and/or assignments are not fully understood
- complete all assignments on time
- prepare for tests
- keep notebooks and assignments neat and up-to-date
- participate fully in the physical education program and dress in appropriate clothing
- be responsible for library and school books and textbooks

Opening / Closing Exercises

All students must participate in the singing of *O Canada* and daily prayer

7. RESPECT FOR OTHERS:

Fire and Emergency Evacuation

Emergency drills must be practiced in accordance with legislated requirements to enable students to become familiar with evacuation procedures, resulting in the orderly evacuation with efficient use of exit facilities. It is of utmost importance that each student exit the school with the class in a quiet and orderly manner.

Bicycle, Scooter Safety

The riding of bicycles or scooters on school property is prohibited during the school day. Students must walk their bicycle or scooter to the stands. This is done in order to assure the safety of the school community. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged bicycles or scooters. The use of skateboards, roller blades/skates, 'wheelies' will not be permitted on school property.

Dangerous Articles

It is the policy of *St. Joseph School* that no individual be permitted to remain in school while in the possession of an article or replica designed as, used as, or intended for use as a weapon.

When a student uses or threatens to use a non-prohibited weapon on school property, the student will be suspended pending the principal's decision whether to recommend to the Board that the pupil be expelled and the police shall be involved.

When a student is found in possession of a firearm or a replica of a firearm on school property, the student shall be suspended pending the principal's decision whether to recommend to the Board that the pupil be expelled and the police shall be involved.

Fighting and/or Physical Assault

Students are encouraged to resolve disagreements in an appropriate manner which insures the dignity and safety of others. Should a student cause physical harm to another, he/she will be held responsible. Should a student damage another student's property, he/she will be held responsible. Any student engaged in a fight may be suspended from school and the police may be involved.

Abuse of Others

Abuse is defined as any expression of physical or verbal abuse that infringes upon the human rights of another person. This includes racial, religious or ethnic slurs, name calling, insults, ethnic jokes, teasing, physical, emotional, verbal and/or sexual abuse or violence. Abuse under any form will not be tolerated. A student who verbally abuses another student or a member of the school staff may be suspended. A student who physically or sexually abuses another student or a member of the school staff shall be suspended pending the principal's decision whether to recommend to the Board that the pupil be expelled and the police shall be involved.

Harassment

Harassment is defined as any unwelcome comment or conduct that intimidates, demeans or offends an individual. Students must not harass others whether it be physically, sexually, verbally, by use of the telephone, internet, email or in person, and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

Bullying

In keeping with the teachings of Christ and Board policy, *St. Joseph School* will strive to create a safe, caring and supportive school environment, free of bullying, for all members of the school community. As such, bullying is prohibited on school property, at school-related events, on school buses, or in any other circumstances (i.e. online) where engaging in bullying will have a negative impact on a member of the school community and on the school climate.

Bullying behaviour is defined as any repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour intended to cause (or should be known to cause) harm, fear and/or distress to another person's or group of persons' body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

Bus Policy

Bussed students are designated to a particular bus route and stop. Students are to have only one location to be picked up from and one location only to be returned to at the end of the day. These locations may be different, but should not vary from day to day. Students are expected to obey all the rules listed in the *School Bus Policy and Safety* document, such as:

- waiting for the bus in an orderly fashion
- showing respect for the bus driver and all other students
- entering and leaving the bus in an orderly fashion
- remaining seated while the bus is moving
- talking quietly
- not eating or drinking on the bus

St. Joseph School has distributed this document to each parent/guardian at the beginning of the school year. Bus privileges may be withdrawn for a fixed period of time or permanently as a result of misbehaviour on the bus at the discretion of the principal or Board office.

If any of the expectations within the document *School Bus Policy and Safety* are not followed, the bus driver will submit an Incident Report to the school principal who will then issue the following consequences:

- 1st Report: warning and inform parents/guardians
- 2nd Report: bus privileges are withdrawn for up to three (3) days
- 3rd Report: bus privileges are withdrawn for up to eight (8) days
- Any further reports may result in school suspension and a loss of bus privileges to be determined by the school principal in consultation with the Superintendent of Education
- In very serious cases, the principal will exercise discretion to withdraw transportation privileges as of the first incident report filed by the bus driver

Lunch Policy

The same general rules of school/classroom behaviour apply for those who remain at school for lunch. Students who stay for lunch are not allowed to leave school property, unless parental permission is granted.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance at school is compulsory as stated in the Education Act. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to see that their child/ren attend school and are punctual. The school requests that parents/guardians promptly report their child's absence or late arrival by contacting the school. Parents/guardians must send a note to school should there be any change in the daily dismissal routine. Students are not allowed to leave school property during regular school hours without parental permission.

Use of the School Telephone

The school telephone is to be used by the students for emergency purposes only. No social calls will be permitted. Teachers receive their messages during breaks in the day so that classes will not be disrupted. They will return your call at their earliest convenience.

Access to Premises

Access to school premises is subject to the provisions of the Education Act.

A person is not permitted to remain on school premises if a student has been suspended or expelled or if a person's presence is detrimental to the safety or well-being of others, in the judgment of the principal. Custody order restrictions will be enforced at all times.

Visitors

Unless you are a registered student or board employee, you are considered to be a visitor to the school.

The school expects visitors to report their presence on school premises by reporting to the main office. Visitors are required to follow the sign-in procedures established in order to proceed into the school or school yard. Every effort should be made to schedule appointments outside of school hours and should the student require to be excused during the school day, parents/guardians must notify the school in writing.

In the event of illness or injury, the school will make every effort to contact the parents/guardians before permission is given for a student to leave school. It is extremely important that parents provide us with accurate phone numbers on the registration forms and notify us of any changes to enable us to contact them in emergency cases. In the event of not being able to contact the parents/guardians, the principal reserves the right to seek medical attention depending on the seriousness of the injury or illness.

8. RESPECT FOR THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS:

Academic Honesty

Students must not knowingly plagiarize, cheat or copy the language, thoughts or ideas of another as their own work.

Library Books, Texts, and Equipment

Students, who lose, fail to return or damage school equipment (i.e. library books, textbooks, musical instruments, etc.) may be required to make restitution.

Littering

Students are expected to help keep the buildings, grounds and neighbourhoods clean. Students are expected to deposit all scrap paper, wrappers, etc. into waste baskets or recycling containers.

Theft

Theft will be treated as a serious offence since it violates the spirit of respect for the property of others and contravenes civil and divine law. Police may be called if deemed appropriate.

Vandalism/Willful Damage

Students, who destroy, deface, or otherwise damage property belonging to the Board, School, another student or staff member may be required to make restitution. The student may be suspended and the police may be called and charges may be laid if warranted.

9. STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR:

It is our goal to develop a sense of awareness of an individual's personal responsibility in society. The following strategies may serve as guidelines to promote self-discipline and responsible behaviour:

Prevention Strategies

- establish a safe and orderly learning environment;
- maintain effective classroom management;
- encourage and reinforce positive behaviour;
- promote the development of social skills;
- provide anger management programs;

- utilize peer counseling and informal conflict resolution;
- establish open communication between home and school; and
- use of community agency programs and services

Supportive Intervention Strategies

- use of verbal redirection, reminders and reinforcement
- use of active listening
- use of choices
- use of problem-solving techniques
- use of behavioural contracts
- involving community agencies
- use of interviews/discussion
- use of school/Board/community resources

10. CONSEQUENCES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR:

Students, parents/guardians, teachers and principals are encouraged to work together to resolve any difficult situation. Respect toward one another will resolve many difficult encounters. It is our goal to develop a sense of awareness of an individual's personal responsibility in society.

Consequences for violations to the School Code of Conduct shall be appropriate to the individual, age, special needs and grade level, and related to the circumstances and/or action. Where appropriate, the strategy shall be progressive. Principals may determine additional consequences in consultation with their school community members, which may include:

- verbal or non-verbal messages from a teacher or adult in authority (e.g. warnings);
- re-location within the classroom or learning environment (e.g. time-outs, time-owed or detention)
- private consultation with student, to develop alternative behaviours and to reprimand if necessary;
- collaboration with parent or guardian
- detention or loss of privileges
- write a letter of apology
- collaboration with other school personnel (e.g., Principal or Vice-Principal)
- referral to other school personnel
- referral to outside agencies (e.g. police, Child & Family Services)
- peer mediation
- restitution (i.e. financial, community service) or restorative justice
- suspension
- expulsion

Consequences shall be applied in accordance with the mandatory consequences outlined in the Provincial Code of Conduct.

11. SUSPENSIONS AND/OR EXPULSIONS:

The school and the Northeastern Catholic District School Board will impose and administer suspensions and expulsions of students, subject to mitigating factors, in accordance with the Education Act and the government regulations on suspensions and expulsions. For additional information please refer to the Board's F-13 Suspension and Expulsion Policy at www.ncdsb.on.ca.

12. REVIEW:

Schools are required to review their Code of Conduct on an annual basis in consultation with their respective Catholic School Councils.

*Subject to change. Please refer to school or board website for updated and current policies.

PARENT / GUARDIAN'S COMMITMENT

Parents/Guardians play an important role in the education of their children and have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill this responsibility when they:

- show an active interest in their child's school work and progress
- communicate regularly with the school
- help their child be neat, appropriately dressed and prepared for school
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival
- become familiar with the Code of Conduct and school rules
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues
- demonstrate respect for school staff

I have read the terms of the Code of Conduct.

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

STUDENT'S COMMITMENT

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a student:

- comes to school prepared, on time and ready to learn;
- demonstrates respect for themselves, for others and for those in authority;
- refrains from bringing anything to school that may affect the learning environment or compromise the safety of others;
- follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his or her own action.

I have read the terms of the Code of Conduct and agree to abide by them.

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature: _____