

Code of Conduct

The Catholic Code of Conduct applies to all persons involved in any aspect of school life. The following topics have been included:

- 1.EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS
- 2.RESPECT FOR STAFF
- 3.RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS & SAFETY OF STUDENTS & OTHERS
- 4.RESPECT FOR SELF
- 5.RESPECT FOR THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS
- 6.DISCIPLINE
- 7.TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL, SUSPENSION, EXPULSION
- 8.MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board will do everything in its power to create a Catholic learning community in which students will be able to develop their spiritual, intellectual, physical and social potential. It is the expectation of the Board that students will respond positively and avail themselves of their opportunities.

The Catholic Community finds its expression in sacraments, practices, rituals, prayer gatherings, community outreach, and a deep respect for the Catholic faith. All students must respect our Catholic expression, as this is the reason for our Catholic schools. Students who attend a Catholic school in Dufferin-Peel must, by routine, acknowledge and support the Catholic nature of the school and do nothing that would take away from this purpose.

Within this context, the Board, therefore, acknowledges the following rights and responsibilities for its students:

Rights

- to be respected in both person and conscience as a son or daughter of God;

- to learn in a safe, orderly and stimulating Catholic environment;
- to have reasonable access to the facilities and equipment of the school;
- to participate in appropriate programs offered by the school;
- to be conscientiously instructed by staff.

Responsibilities

- to respect the person, property and rights of all members of the school community;
- to give respect, obedience and cooperation to all adults in positions of responsibility in the school;
- to comply with all particular school expectations and regulations respecting student behaviour;
- to contribute positively to the Catholic climate of the school;
- to use language that is appropriate to their dignity as Christians;
- to adhere to the school dress code;
- to respect the property of the school and others at all times: building, grounds, equipment, materials;
- to be in attendance at all classes and scheduled activities on time and with the materials required for full participation;
- to take part in services offered by the school to its community;
- to participate fully in the religious life of the school, including the celebration of liturgy, Religious Education courses, retreats and related activities;
- to welcome the opportunity to participate, as appropriate to their status and conscience, in the sacramental life of the Church, and, in particular, as it is celebrated in the school context;
- to develop personal skills and talents to serve God, and thereby his/her neighbour.

The vast majority of students in Dufferin-Peel are well disciplined, responsible and self-directed. However, as with any large group of people, there are a few students who, from time to time do not abide by the guidelines established for the benefit of all.

The Catholic Code of Conduct implemented in each school clearly reflects the need to provide a safe, effective learning environment for all students and staff based on a set of behavioural expectations, disciplinary procedures, and consequences, which are both fair and consistent.

In addition to the Board Mission Statement and the Board Policy, a set of Regulations has been adopted by the Board to ensure that certain elements are present in the Catholic Code of Conduct.

"As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other just as the Lord has forgiven you." 1 Thessalonians 5:14 14

Classroom Expectations

The teachers at St. Helen School believe that every student wishes to be a successful learner. In order to bring about this success, each teacher develops an appropriate learning climate according to his or her subject discipline and teacher practices. The teacher's expectations and regulations are explained to students in the first few days of class. Students are then required to follow these rules set out in each of

their classes. When problems do arise teachers will communicate these concerns to parents in an effort to work together to assist our students in making positive choices.

Show our positive attitude and desire to achieve by:

- completing opening exercises respectfully;
- not using put downs or swearing;
- being attentive while others are talking;
- taking pride in our classrooms and desks;
- not rocking on chairs;
- demonstrating respectful behaviour.
- we put forth our best effort at all times and always do our own work.
- we do not chew gum or eat candy.
- we follow our teacher's system for getting permission to leave the room (e.g. yellow hall pass or name card).
- we bring the proper clothing for Physical Education classes. we do not take food outside.
- we obey classroom rules, tidy up and recycle.
- we should leave all other expensive, personal items at home. (The school cannot be responsible for personal items that are lost or stolen.)
- objects designed for use in the classroom for science and technology, art or other curriculum areas, will be used only under direct supervision of a teacher and only within strict safety rules. We will never remove such an item from the classroom.

At School... Entry/Exit/Hallways

- We enter the school building in a safe and orderly way through the doors where our teachers meet us.
- We walk quietly in the hall. When classes are changing we are to be in a single file and walk quietly along the right hand side of the hall.
- We always get a hall pass from the teacher before we go into the halls during class time or if we come in from outside. Our teachers must know where we are at all times.
- We are to use student washrooms and not staff washrooms. We get a washroom pass from our teachers within the school, during class and recess.
- We are not allowed to bring any classroom objects with us into the washrooms (e.g. pencils), or outside at recess.
- We are to make all necessary after school arrangements with parents before school begins.

Peace on the Playground

Students who find themselves in disagreement with another student or students in the playground are expected to use peaceful problem-solving strategies, including:

- telling the other person what the concern is in a quiet, respectful voice;
- asking the person to quit doing whatever it is;
- leaving the immediate presence of the other person;

- asking the teacher on duty for assistance.

Students are also reminded that:

- we are to stay within school boundaries and away from the parking lot and the front of the school. Play areas for Kindergarten are out of Bounds for students in Grades 1-8.
- no food or drinks are allowed outside; time will be given in class for snacks to be eaten. This helps with the reduction of garbage outside and discourages the attraction of birds and wasps.
- we must ask permission to leave the school grounds (to retrieve balls, etc.) on park property. We must have permission (hall pass) to enter the school during recess, before and after school.
- we dress properly for all outdoor activities.
- the following equipment is not allowed in the playground: hard balls, bats (wooden or plastic), hockey sticks, skateboards, roller blades, scooters, bicycles and frisbees (unless our teacher is supervising a physical education class or coaching us).
- play fighting or contact sports/games are not allowed.
- in the winter snowballs, ice throwing and "snow jobs" are not allowed. Sliding on icy patches/snow hills is not permitted.
- we are not allowed to retrieve balls that go on the roof.
- when the bell rings, we are to end our play and get into line.

RESPECT FOR STAFF

Students and others are expected to comply with the rules of the school as implemented by all school staff and to respond with respect, obedience and cooperation. Failure to comply affects the moral tone of the school and will result in disciplinary action.

Abuse/Assault of Staff Members:

Abuse/assault is any expression of verbal, physical and/or sexual contact/conduct that impinges upon the rights of another person because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability.

- A student who verbally abuses/assaults any staff member shall be suspended and further disciplinary action may be taken. This may include transfer to another school.
- A student who physically and/or sexually abuses/assaults any staff member may be suspended and further disciplinary action shall be taken. This may include transfer to another school. Expulsion proceedings shall be initiated and police shall be contacted.

RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS & SAFETY OF STUDENTS & OTHERS

Many aspects of the Catholic Code of Conduct are based on the rights of students to learn in a safe, orderly and stimulating Catholic environment.

Students and others must respect the person and rights of all members of the school community without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or handicap.

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality of students reporting violations of the Code of Conduct.

Fighting, Physical/Sexual Assault, Bullying or Threats

Students are expected to resolve disagreements in an appropriate manner, which ensures the dignity and safety of others.

- Students engaged in fighting, physical assault, or bullying shall be suspended from school.
- Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm will result in suspension and further disciplinary action shall be taken.
- A student who sexually assaults another person shall be suspended and further disciplinary action shall be taken. This may include transfer to another school. Expulsion proceedings shall be initiated and police shall be contacted.
- Students who promote or encourage others to fight are also subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension.
- Any violent behaviour either at school or associated with the school will result in disciplinary action.

Harassment

Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment is defined as any unwelcome comment or conduct that intimidates, demeans or offends an individual. It includes behaviour or comments that puts down, insults or offends another person because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability.

- Any form of harassment is not acceptable whether it is physical, verbal, by telephone, electronic, in writing or in person. The Board has made explicit statements on particular types of harassment, namely: sexual harassment, race and ethnic relations, and assault.
- Failure to comply with this expectation may result in the involvement of police, other community agencies, suspension and/or expulsion.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual comment or conduct that intimidates, demeans or offends an individual. Sexual harassment is an expression of power in a sexual manner. Sexual harassment may include: unwelcome sexual innuendo, unwelcome sexual advances, inappropriate body contact, request for sexual favours, display of exploitive material.

Access to Schools/Trespassing

Situations arise in which the mental and physical well-being of students and/or staff is put in jeopardy by trespassers or unwelcome visitors. In such situations, the Principal or any member of staff will be supported by the Board in pursuing the courses of action available under the Education Act, and Trespass to Property Act.

- Problems arise when unauthorized persons enter the building/property without the express permission of the Principal.
- Students of one school must follow the guidelines for visitors when entering any other school and report to the office as stated on posted signs.
- Students are not permitted to invite or associate with unauthorized persons on school property.
- Suspended or expelled students are not permitted on school/Board property without written authorization from the Principal.
- Failure to comply shall result in disciplinary action.
- Students who cause difficulties at another school shall be disciplined by administrators in their home school. If an incident involves students from another system with which arrangements cannot be made, the police shall be called.

Dangerous Articles and Weapons

A student found in possession of a non-prohibited weapon or replica of a weapon on school property may be suspended, the parents may be notified and the dangerous article confiscated and dealt with in an appropriate manner.

When a student uses or threatens to use a weapon, or replica to harm another person, the police shall be contacted, the student may be suspended and expulsion proceedings may be initiated.

RESPECT FOR SELF

Dress Code /School Uniform

In keeping with the Board's Mission and Catholic School teachings, each school is committed to standards of neatness, cleanliness, modesty and good taste as specified in the Appropriate Dress Code Policy of the Board.

- Students are required to dress in a manner and attire suitable for the occasion and appropriate to the school environment. Failure to comply with this expectation shall result in disciplinary action.
- Shirts must be close to the arm and must not be low in the front or back. We must be able to tuck our tops into our pants i.e. no halter (thin straps) or tank tops that show midriff.
- Shorts and skirts should be longer than arms length; no cutoffs or bicycle shorts are permitted.
- Suggestive or inappropriate language or satanic symbols are not permitted on any clothing, shoes or personal belongings, i.e. skulls, deliberate tears, violent symbols, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious slurs. Any reference to gangs is also not permitted.
- Sunglasses and hats are allowed to be worn only outdoors.
- To protect the gym floor, black soled shoes are not to be worn in the gym for physical education activities.
- For physical education class, students must bring a change of top and if possible, shorts or track pants. For safety and security reasons, jewelry is not to be worn during gym class.
- Make-up if worn will be modest and in good taste.
- No improper jewelry in terms of symbols and location.

- Footwear must be worn at all times.

Littering

All persons are expected to help keep the buildings, grounds and surrounding neighbourhoods clean.

Theft/Extortion/Robbery

Theft/extortion/robbery will be treated as a serious offence. Police may be called if deemed appropriate. Further disciplinary action may be taken, including suspension and a recommendation for expulsion.

Vandalism/Willful Damage

Anyone, who destroys, defaces, or otherwise damages property will be required to make restitution where appropriate. Further consequences will be dictated by the severity of the offence and may include suspension and expulsion.

Attendance and Punctuality

According to the Education Act, students of compulsory school age must attend school and parents have the obligation to ensure that they do attend.

Each student has the responsibility to be in attendance at all classes and scheduled activities on time and with proper materials required for full participation.

Regular attendance at school is critical for the student's learning and achievement of course expectations. Students who habitually miss class may suffer in the evaluation process. As well, staff may apply additional consequences.

Students are responsible for bringing to class the proper materials required for full participation. Each school will address this responsibility and the associated consequences.

Drugs and Alcohol

The unauthorized possession, sale or use of alcohol and/or illegal/illicit drugs on school property or at school events such as school-sponsored trips, celebrations and/or graduation is not permitted. Failure to comply with this expectation shall result in disciplinary action.

Students who are deemed to be under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal/illicit drugs shall face disciplinary action.

Proper Language

Coarse, profane or vulgar language (verbal, written or gestures) or taking God's name in vain are unacceptable in the Catholic school community.

Failure to comply with this expectation shall result in disciplinary action.

Smoking

The Board recognizes the benefits to all persons of a smoke-free environment.

- Smoking is banned within school buildings, in school vehicles and on all Board property.
- Failure to comply with this expectation shall result in disciplinary action.

- The policy of our schools is to prohibit smoking and holding lit tobacco anywhere in the school or on school property, by anyone, at any time.
- This policy applies to students, staff and anyone using school facilities. This policy also applies to school events and field trips.

RESPECT FOR THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS

All persons are to treat school grounds, buildings, and contents, and the personal property of others with respect.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarizing, cheating, copying, or knowingly and deliberately presenting the language, ideas, or thoughts of another individual as one's own work is not permitted. Consequences may include academic penalty on the assignment, test or exam, and/or further disciplinary action.

Lunch Rooms

Food and beverages are to be consumed in the cafeteria or designated area. Facilities must be left clean and tidy.

School Equipment and Materials

Restitution will be required for lost, non-returned, or damaged school equipment. (I.e. library books, textbooks, musical instruments, athletic equipment)

Use of Technology

Computer hardware and networking equipment has an increasingly important role in our schools. Computers assist staff and students in making the delivery of education more effective and efficient and help students develop the necessary life skills for the world of work.

- All computer usage is to be directed towards sanctioned activities. Use of computers for other purposes, any deliberate misuse, vandalism, damage, tampering or unauthorized access or configuration shall result in disciplinary action.
- Plagiarism through electronic means will not be tolerated and shall result in disciplinary action and/or academic penalty.
All inappropriate references to board or school personnel and/or students in computer related mediums such as web pages or e-mail are violations of the Catholic Code of Conduct.
- Using computer technology to communicate inappropriate, demeaning, harassing or threatening messages shall be subject to disciplinary action. Police may be contacted.
- Any unauthorized use of photographic, video or audio communication devices is strictly prohibited on all school board property, and during any school related-activities. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action.

"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others." Philippians 2:3-4 20

DISCIPLINE

We believe that the primary educators of our children are their parents. We strive to work in partnership with parents to provide the best possible Catholic education for our students. While encouraging them to be the best they can be, we encourage each child to recognize that he/she is a member of society and that he/she has an obligation to contribute to that society.

Students are expected to comply with the rules of the school and the expectations of their teachers. These rules and expectations are based on respect for self and others. All students are expected to contribute to a positive school environment.

It is encouraged that each teacher deal with conduct and behaviour of her/his pupils. From time to time further action may be required involving the services of the parent or the principal. If this collaboration is required a professional attitude and plan of action must be established. Regardless of the actions or behaviour of the child, he/she must be treated with dignity and the firmness as would be shown by a kind, firm and judicious parent.

Process of Discipline

The process of student discipline shall reflect Catholic values.

An essential element of this Catholic Code of Conduct is a clear outline of disciplinary procedures and consistent, effective, and appropriate consequences.

Those responsible for ensuring that the Catholic Code of Conduct is enforced must have sufficient latitude to meet the needs of all students within the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board while at the same time assuring a consequence for each inappropriate behaviour. This would include consideration of any mitigating factors recognized in the student Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.)

Implementation Process

The following are the basic interventions and consequences that may be initiated by teachers and/or administrators.

The Catholic Code of Conduct which emphasizes the nurturing of a sense of self-worth and self discipline for all students contains a clear outline of realistic and effective consequences for failure to meet the expectations set out in it. To encourage this nurturing of a sense of self-worth and self-discipline the following interventions and strategies should be considered:

- Informal interview with the student
- Formal interview with the student
- Parental involvement: by telephone, correspondence, interview
- Utilization of behavioural, attendance or performance contracts
- Involvement of school support personnel
- Involvement of chaplain and/or parish resources
- Referral to school Special Services team
- Attendance conference
- Referral to outside agencies i.e. Children's Aid, police, treatment or medical agencies.

Behaviour modification strategies may not always be successful or applicable, and may require the immediate application of one or more consequences. The following list is not all-inclusive nor does it

imply that each consequence must be exercised before moving to subsequent consequences. Any specific behaviour may lead the school authorities to offer any alternatives or to invoke any consequence or combination of consequences.

- Detention of student (for transported students see Board Regulation 7.10 #6)
- Removal of privileges to attend school related functions and/or extracurricular/co-curricular programs
- Removal of student from the classroom to an alternate setting within the school with supervision
- Requiring the student to make restitution where appropriate
- Temporary withdrawal from school
- Suspension as set out in the Education Act and Board Policy, Regulation and Procedure
- Expulsion under the Education Act and Board Policy, Regulation and Procedure

The Catholic Code of Conduct which is adopted by each school will reflect the principles of natural justice and defined process.

TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL, SUSPENSION, EXPULSION

In those areas involving serious misconduct which is a breach of Board Policy or Regulation, and/or against the law, and for which the Board has seen fit to recommend a suspension for a minimum number of days, the Principal must regard this as mandatory.

The following consequences are not taken lightly and are recognized as appropriate to serious offences since denying a student access to school is a very serious matter. However, school Principals must balance this concern with their responsibility to provide a safe and effective learning environment for all. Exclusion will be considered when other options to modify behaviour have been unsuccessful, or where the seriousness of the situation warrants it. The school reserves the right to send students home immediately, either while at school or on a school-sponsored activity or trip at no cost to the school. Parents will be notified before any student is sent home.

Temporary Withdrawal

Under some circumstances it may be appropriate for the Principal and parent to agree to a time out of school for the student. Such a temporary withdrawal will point out the seriousness of the situation while providing a cooling off time and avoiding a suspension.

During this period further professional support may be sought.

This temporary withdrawal may be for a period of up to four days on the condition that the parent agrees in writing to such action and wishes to become directly involved in resolving the problem. Failure of the parent to agree to a temporary withdrawal will result in suspension of the student.

Suspension

Suspension is the removal of a student from the school for a specified period of time. Suspensions are governed by the Education Act, in accordance with Board Policy and Regulation 6.82 and General Administrative Procedure 102.00.

Suspensions under Board Policy and Regulations and the authority of the Education Act will carry with them the following understandings:

- Students may not be provided with work to carry on during time missed while under suspension.
- Students will be fully responsible for material presented while they were under suspension.
- The period of suspension may include examination days and the school staff will not be responsible if the timing of the suspension jeopardizes the awarding of a credit.
- Any student under 18 years of age becomes the direct responsibility of his/her parent(s) during the period of suspension.
- Students under suspension will not be permitted on school property and shall not attend any school-sponsored events without written authorization from the Principal.
- Students suspended from one jurisdiction (e.g. day-school) may be prohibited from participating in another jurisdiction (e.g. Con. Ed. Programs). Determination and direction in this regard will be provided by the appropriate administrator.
- Students under suspension from one jurisdiction will not be permitted on school property and shall not attend any school-sponsored events within that jurisdiction without written authorization from the Principal.

Expulsion

Expulsions are governed by the Education Act in accordance with Board Policy, Regulation 6.83 and General Administrative Procedure 102.00

Expulsion of a student is an extremely serious matter. A student may be expelled on the grounds that his/her conduct is such that his/her continued presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the physical or mental well-being of other persons in the school or Board.

Procedures for the expulsion of a student are initiated on the recommendation of the Principal. Where an expulsion is considered, the Principal will suspend the student for 20 days. There are two categories of expulsion - "limited" and "full".

- On a limited Board expulsion, the student is expelled from his/her school and may not attend any other school in the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board for a period of from 21 school days up to 1 calendar year.
- When a full expulsion is imposed by the Board, the student may not attend any other school in the Province of Ontario for an indefinite period of time.

Students under expulsion are required to remain off all school/Board property and may not attend school/Board-sponsored events without written authorization.

Debriefing

Issues of behaviour, discipline and consequences often involve intense reactions. Administrators and relevant staff are encouraged to debrief these situations as needed. The appropriate staff member(s) should also be advised/informed of the relevant details and outcome associated with the incident.

Where possible efforts shall be made to debrief students who may be victimized by violations of the Catholic Code of Conduct. Where appropriate parents may be included in this process.

Students returning from a suspension/expulsion shall meet with a school administrator as part of a re-entry plan.

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

The Principal of the school, who is responsible for ensuring that the Catholic Code of Conduct is implemented, must have sufficient latitude to meet the individual needs of students and to exercise judgment within the context of specific circumstances. In order to determine the appropriate consequence, including the duration of a suspension, or in the case of an expulsion, the type and duration that may be appropriate in particular circumstances, the Principal shall consider the pupil's history and such other factors as he or she considers appropriate.

Although a pupil may be suspended or expelled, the suspension or expulsion of a pupil is not mandatory if:

- the pupil does not have the ability to control his/her behaviour;
- the pupil does not have the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour; or
- the continuing presence of the pupil in the school does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety or well-being of any person in the school.

Note that all mitigating circumstances should be considered when making a decision with regard to appropriate consequences.

"Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger.... and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ has forgiven you" Ephesians 4:31 - 32