

SCHOOL CONDUCT POLICY STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

At St. Nicholas Catholic Junior High School, we are committed to nurturing a learning environment rooted in faith, love, and hope. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that safeguards and contributes to a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours. Every member of our school community shares responsibility for treating others with dignity, kindness, and respect, while recognizing the value and unique gifts of each individual. Together, we strive to build a strong sense of community where all students feel supported, valued, and encouraged to grow in their learning and faith.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

We affirm that the rights set out in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* are afforded to all students and staff members within St. Nicholas Catholic Junior High School. We affirm that pursuant to the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, students and staff members are protected from discrimination. More specifically, discrimination refers to any conduct that serves to deny or discriminate against any person or class of persons regarding any goods, services, accommodation or facilities that are customarily available to the public, and the denial or discrimination is based on race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation.

Expectations of students and school policies are outlined at the beginning of the school year and are regularly reviewed with students.

ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

We know that most students behave appropriately most of the time. We also believe that people perform better when they know what is expected of them. St. Nicholas Catholic Junior High School is committed to providing students with a school environment that is both safe and conducive to learning. We are dedicated to teaching students appropriate behavior towards themselves and others. We expect students to behave in an appropriate manner, which does not interfere with the learning or behavior of others. Students are to conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

At St. Nicholas Catholic Junior High School, students will:

- Refrain from engaging in violence of any kind at school and during school related activities.
- Assist in the prevention of violence without putting the student's own safety or well-being at risk, by co-operating with school staff and supporting intervention efforts. Students are encouraged to report incidents of concern to school staff.

Anything that interferes with teaching or learning is not allowed. This includes inappropriate dress, sunglasses, inappropriate use of electronic devices or games, behavior that is in conflict with our division responsible use agreement, and physical contact between students. School-wide expectations are communicated to our students by teachers in classroom discussions, by school administration in assemblies during morning broadcast, through the school newsletter and through our school website. We have set behavioral guidelines for the school as a whole and have asked each teacher to set programs and procedures designed to maximize student learning and

responsibility.

Since each teacher has a different style, specific expectations and procedures will vary from class to class.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

We concentrate on positive behavior and attitudes; however, there are times when a student has difficulty recognizing their responsibility as a student. In such cases, we have outlined a number of possible consequences for behavior. When a student behaves inappropriately, they can expect that the staff member present (teacher, administrator, teacher assistant, support & caretaking staff) will take the most appropriate action. Severe breach of conduct will result in suspension in accordance with Section 36 of the Education Act. One or more of the following can be expected to occur:

- Verbal reprimand
- Restriction of privileges and activities
- Noon hour detention of student
- Parental involvement
- Parent-student conference with school staff
- Verbal or written apology by student
- Problem solving, monitoring or reviewing behaviour expectations
- Replacement or repair of damaged property
- Temporary exclusion of student from class
- Bus suspension for students riding the bus
- In-school suspension
- Out-of school suspension
- Referral to Attendance Board
- Behavior contract
- Involvement of outside agencies
- Involvement of Police
- Expulsion

For all incidents, a record will be documented and retained in PowerSchool, and parents/guardians will be notified accordingly.

In dealing with inappropriate behaviors, consequences are fair, but not always equal. A number of factors are taken into account when dealing with inappropriate behavior. As might be expected, the more serious the behavior, the more severe the consequence. The nature and circumstances of the incident, as well as frequency of misbehavior, and age of student are also considered. Our school does have supports available for those students impacted by inappropriate behaviour.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

The following are considered major forms of misbehavior and will be dealt with severely:

Bullying/Cyberbullying

Section 1(1)(d) of the *Education Act* defines bullying as:

“Repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more other individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual’s reputation.”

Bullying can take different forms:

- Physical - pushing, hitting
- Verbal - name calling, threats, put-downs
- Emotional/Social - exclusion, rumors, extortion of money or possessions, intimidation
- Cyber - using the computer or other technology to harass or threaten

Bullying is not a normal part of growing up and it does not build character. No one should have to put up with bullying. Bullying is a learned behaviour – children and youth often learn bullying behaviours when they either experience being bullied or see it happening to others.

Bullying is different from conflict. Conflict is defined as a disagreement or struggle over opposing beliefs, needs, feelings or actions and is a normal part of life. From time to time everyone has conflicts with friends, family, teachers, co-workers. It is important to learn how to resolve conflict peacefully and recognize the difference between conflict and bullying.

Students are expected to report bullying behaviour as soon as they can after seeing it or experiencing it. Students may do this by telling an adult in the school. Students who are uncomfortable with coming forward to school personnel are encouraged to talk with parents or friends, who could then assist them in notifying the school about bullying.

Bullying or cyberbullying of students could result in immediate suspension from school. As well, the police may become involved in the investigation of bullying incidents. Bullying is defined in law as "the repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted or emotional abuse." Any person who repeatedly bullies a minor (under the age of 18) in a public place could be subject to a \$250 fine.

Defiance

Any act of defiance, that is, refusing to comply with a reasonable request from a staff member, can result in an immediate suspension.

Physical / Verbal Abuse or Harassment

Physical abuse of any type to anyone will result in an immediate suspension. Verbal intimidation or harassment will also result in an immediate suspension. At St. Nicholas Catholic Junior High School, there is no such thing as "play fighting" – and therefore this will not be considered an acceptable excuse for physical contact with another student. Police may be involved if this is deemed to be appropriate by school administration.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students who choose to watch or record incidents encourage other students in a physical fight might also be suspended from school. The fact that they have an audience encourages those students who are fighting to continue the conflict, as they do not want to "lose face" in front of their peers. Thus, the spectators are viewed by school administration as being a major contributing factor to the continuation of the fighting, and they will be treated accordingly.

Improper or Profane Language

The use or display of improper or profane language could result in a suspension from school. Students who use profane language in addressing a teacher will be suspended from school.

Vandalism or Willful Damage to School Property

Vandalism or willful damage to school property will result in an immediate suspension and/or service within the school community* depending on the circumstances. Students will be expected to pay fully for any damages caused deliberately or through carelessness.

*Service within the school community occurs when a student is assigned to do work to assist any of the adults in the school (i.e.: teachers, custodians, support staff). This is for a specific number of hours in a specified period of time.

Theft

Theft of property, either from the school or from another person is strictly prohibited and will result in a suspension. Restoration of the stolen property is mandatory. In some instances, cases of theft are referred to the police.

Illegal Drugs or Substances

Possession or use of illegal drugs or substances on school property or in sight of school property will result in an immediate suspension and may lead to expulsion from the school. In cases of drug use, the police will be involved in the investigation and charges could be laid.

Behavior Dangerous to Self or Others

Students who engage in reckless or dangerous behavior will be suspended from school. If appropriate, the police will also be involved in the investigation.

Weapons

Possession of a weapon or presentation of any object meant to threaten or intimidate will result in an immediate suspension. Any weapons brought to school will be confiscated and turned over to the police. Police may be involved if this is deemed to be appropriate by school administration.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This rule also applies to toy knives and guns. Simulated weapons will be treated in the same fashion as real weapons. They have no place in a school environment.

Repeated Violation of General Expectations

Repeated violation of general expectations or a continual disregard of classroom rules will result in an out-of-school suspension.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS OF OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

All members of our school community - students, parents and staff - are expected to model and promote behavior that contributes to a caring, respectful and safe learning environment. Parents and school staff have the responsibility to help students meet their responsibilities.

Students will:

- attend school regularly and punctually,
- be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education,
- ensure that the student's conduct contributes to a caring, respectful and safe learning environment,
- respect the rights of others in the school,
- refrain from engaging in violence of any kind at school and during school-related activities.
- assist in the prevention of violence without putting the student's own safety or well-being at risk, by co-operating with school staff and supporting intervention efforts. Students are encouraged to report incidents of concern to school staff.
- refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means,
- comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the board,
- co-operate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services,
- be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct, and
- positively contribute to the student's school and community.

*-Alberta Education Act, Section 31
- ECSD AP 351*

Students Can Contribute to Creating a Positive Learning Environment by:

- smiling at peers and adults in our school
- speaking to their friends about their behaviour (in a nice way) when they are not contributing to a caring, respectful and safe environment
- greeting visitors to their classroom or school
- being friendly and helpful towards students that are new to the school and others
- sitting with someone who is alone at lunch, inviting someone to join games, sit with their group outside, or work together to complete a project
- keeping our school and school grounds clean and tidy
- coming to school/class on time and as prepared as possible
- treating everyone with respect even if they don't agree with their beliefs and/or values
- having empathy for others
- following classroom and school expectations so everyone is able to learn
- not engaging in behavior such as put downs or snickers when questions are asked in class - no one
- should feel afraid or nervous about coming to school.

- *Excerpted from The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, Series on Alberta's Education Act, November 2014*

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports a safe and caring learning environment through respectful behaviour within the school community. Parents will do so by:

- acting as the primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child's education,
- taking an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with section 31,
- ensuring that the child attends school regularly,
- ensuring that the parent's conduct contributes to a caring, respectful, and safe learning environment,
- co-operating and collaborating with school staff to support the delivery of specialized supports and services to the child,
- encouraging, fostering and advance collaboration, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school, and
- engaging in the child's school community.

- *Alberta Education Act, Section 32*
- *ECSD AP 351*

Parents Can Help Students Meet Their Responsibilities by:

- paying attention to how they talk about other children and the school in front of their children
- taking responsibility for their mistakes
- reporting any problems at school to the teacher as soon as they can. Problems are easier to solve when they haven't been going on for a long time. The best place to start is with their child's teacher. If parents are not satisfied with the results of this conversation, the next step would be to make an appointment to speak with their child's principal
- modelling peaceful problem solving when you have a conflict

- *Excerpted from The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, Series on Alberta's Education Act, November 2014*

Other ways that Parents Can Contribute to a Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environment

- speaking respectfully to and about school staff
- speaking positively about the school, staff, other students and their families in front of their child
- making appointments to ensure the person they want to speak with has sufficient time to have a focused conversation. Drop off and pick up times are not ideal for parents or for the teacher
- communicating with the teacher or other school staff -
- e.g. positive notes or emails to their child's teacher and/or other school staff, positive comments when parents drop off or pick up their child

Staff Responsibilities include:

- Educate students by fulfilling the mandate of the Alberta Education curriculum and our Catholic faith
- Deliver appropriate educational programming that meets the needs of all students and enables them to be successful
- Encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with students, parents, colleagues
- Model mutual respect, Catholic values and conduct that contributes to a caring, respectful, and safe learning environment
- Discipline consistently, maintaining dignity and respect
- Administer consequences for inappropriate and/or unacceptable behaviors
- Maintain open communication, be accountable and provide assurances to students and parents with regard to student learning outcomes modelling kindness
- Review conduct policy with students
- Communicate classroom expectations
- Recognize diversity and individual differences
- Respect confidentiality
- Provide supports, as appropriate, for individuals impacted by inappropriate behavior or discrimination

Teachers Can Contribute to a Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environment by:

- Modelling kindness and caring
- Paying attention to how they talk to students
- Taking responsibility for their mistakes
- Making sure assignments and assessment dates are clearly posted in the classroom
- Reviewing the handbook portion of the agenda with students
- Communicating relevant information to parents