

St. Dominic School

Student Code of Conduct Policy (2018-19)



Statement of Purpose - Student Code of Conduct Policy

The new School Act will mandate that all schools provide a formal school policy which frames how a safe, nurturing learning environment is provided. A welcoming environment will be provided that recognizes the unique gifts and inherent value of each student and staff member who is part of the school community. Each student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with their Student Code of Conduct. 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. Dominic Catholic School*).

Student Code of Conduct Policy In Reference to *The Alberta Human Rights Act*

We affirm that pursuant to the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, The Alberta Human Rights Act prohibits 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. The denial or discrimination may not be 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. With this notion in mind, all schools shall develop a Student Code of Conduct Policy which in part reflects and speaks to the spirit of this act.

Student Code of Conduct Policy - Process

The School Act clearly states that, “One size fits all” or “Zero-tolerance” policies do not serve the purpose and intent of the School Act and are therefore not effective or manageable in any context; in particular not the school context. Student variables such as age, maturity and individual circumstances will always be considered. Preventative measures, supportive procedures for minor breaches of conduct, and fair, corrective interventions will all be considered when addressing policy infractions.

The Student Code of Conduct Policy will be developed and based on input from students, teachers, parents and the community at large. The Student Code of Conduct Policy will be publicly available on the school website and will often be referenced in school mail-outs. The policy will be reviewed annually by all stakeholders and changes/adaptations made accordingly.

In keeping with this spirit of community, and the recognition of ‘parents’ as the prime educators, responsibility for student growth within an orderly society is shared among the students, their parents the district staff and agencies and services in the broader community. Parents/guardians play an important role in assisting teachers and principals in implementing our Student Code of Conduct Policy and in helping to create a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.

Definition of Acceptable/Unacceptable Student Behaviours

(Section 12 of School Act)

As a student at St. Dominic School 'You shall':

- Respect yourself and the rights of others in the school.
- Make sure your conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment in the school that respects the diversity and fosters a sense of belonging of others in your school.
- Refrain from, report and refuse to tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour, even if it happens outside of the school or school hours or electronically.
- Inform an adult you trust in a timely manner of incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation or other safety concerns in the school.
- Act in ways that honours and appropriately represents you and your school.
- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue your education.
- Know and comply with the rules of your school.
- Cooperate with all school staff.
- Be accountable for your behaviour to your teachers and other school staff.
- Contribute positively to your school and your community.

As a student at St. Dominic School, whether within the school building, during the day, or by electronic means, 'You shall NOT engage in:

- Behaviours that contravene those listed above.
- Behaviours that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment or that create unsafe conditions.
- Acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.
- Physical violence.
- Retribution against any person in the school who has intervened to prevent or report bullying or any other incident or safety concern.
- Illegal activity such as possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances,
- possession or use of weapons,
- theft or damage to property.

Bullying

(From Alberta Educations 'Bullying Prevention')

What is 'Bullying'

Alberta Education defines bullying as, "...a repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour intended to cause harm, fear or distress, including psychological harm or harm to a person's reputation. It often involves an imbalance of social or physical power."

Bullying Behaviours

Bullying behaviours are a form of aggression and can be:

- Physical – For example: poking, elbowing, hitting
- Verbal – For example: name calling, insults, racist, sexist or homophobic comments, put-downs or threats
- Social – For example: gossiping, spreading rumors, excluding someone from the group, isolating, ganging up
- Cyber – For example: social or verbal bullying through the use of email, text messages or social media.

Identifying Bullying Behaviour

Below are some warning signs to help identify if a person may be engaging in bullying behaviour:

- Not understanding or caring if someone is hurt
- Unexplained increase of money, clothing or other items
- Boasting about taunting someone
- Passing off teasing as a joke
- Laughing when others get hurt
- Demonstrating aggressive behaviour
- Grouping together with some individuals and intentionally leaving others out (e.g., isolating, shunning)
- Name-calling

Bullying is the misuse of power intended to harm or humiliate someone else. People of all ages may engage in bullying behaviours.

What Bullying is Not

Bullying behaviour is not the same as hurting someone's feelings if there is no misuse of power or a deliberate intent to cause harm. It is important to support individuals to understand the difference between these behaviours as part of learning how to build healthy relationships.

Bullying behaviour is sometimes confused with conflict. Conflict is a disagreement about different beliefs, ideas, feelings or actions. It is a normal part of healthy relationships. For example, friends may disagree over which movie to see or what game to play. Learning skills to resolve conflict appropriately is very important for building and maintaining positive relationships.

Student and Adult Roles in Stopping Bullying

Alberta Education notes that bullying behaviour is very much a group phenomenon - 85 per cent of bullying takes place in the presence of others. By providing students with the skills and confidence to intervene, either in the moment or afterwards, schools can take a significant step toward stopping bullying behavior.

Intervening In a Bullying Incident

The Role of Adults:

Intervening in a bullying incident generally stops the behaviour and sends a message that it is not acceptable. When intervening:

- Stay calm and ensure that everyone is safe.
- Listen attentively to all points of view.
- Determine if bullying is actually the case.
- Ensure support is provided to the person impacted by the behaviour, the person engaging in the behaviour and bystanders witnessing the behaviour. Make sure to take into account age, maturity and individual circumstances. It is important that the person engaging in bullying behaviour has an opportunity to understand the impact of their actions.

The Role of Students:

- Model the behaviours you would like to see.
- Support the person who is the target of the bullying behaviour.
- Don't watch or encourage the behaviour - this sends a message that you think the behaviour is acceptable.
- If it is safe, say to the person "hey, let's go" and walk away with them.
- Check in with the person to see if they are OK and if they have someone to talk to.
- Encourage the person to tell an adult or tell an adult that you trust.

School Response To Bullying

In instances of bullying, the school will respond to bullying whether within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means. If a child is being bullied or observes bullying, the child needs to report the incidents to his/her teacher or the school administration. If a child tells a parent about the incident, the parent needs to report the incidents to the teacher and/or school administration.

When informed of an incident of bullying, the teacher and/or school administration will investigate the incident and determine if this is a bullying situation. If it is determined that bullying has occurred, the student who has bullied others will be disciplined, in accordance with possible consequences listed below. In addition, support for the student who has been bullied will be provided, as needed.

Consequences For Unacceptable Student Behaviours

At **St. Dominic School** we concentrate on positive behavior and attitudes. A continuum of supports will be provided to students, based on individual needs, who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.

The office is involved depending on the severity of the infraction AND/OR at the request of the teacher. However, there are times when a student has difficulty recognizing their responsibility as a student. Severe breaches of conduct will result in suspension in accordance with the Section 12 of the School Act. In addition, possible consequences for behavior include, but are not limited to the following:

First responses to most student conduct infractions (i.e. minor infractions) begin at the classroom level.

Responses to policy infractions typically follow the following process:

1. Reminder of appropriate behaviour.
2. Discussion of the inappropriate behaviour with the student (logging the occurrence by the teacher).
3. Note: If the infraction occurs during supervision, it is noted and reported to the child's teacher. The homeroom teacher will decide what consequence the student will have depending on where the student is in the cycle.
4. If the behaviour continues, the homeroom teacher contacts the child's parents and explains the student's behavior to them.
5. If the behaviour continues, the administration may become involved and the parents may then be asked to come to the school OR a telephone call is made to parents after which parents, student and involved staff meet. The staff member goes over the behavior of concern with the parent and the student and parents are both informed that if the

inappropriate behavior continues, either an in-school or an out-of-school suspension may occur, depending on the circumstances.

6. If the behaviour continues, school administration may resort to either in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.
7. In extreme circumstances, district personnel would become involved and further action may be taken

Other responses to student misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- verbal reprimand
- restriction of privileges and activities
- parental involvement
- parent-student conference with school staff
- verbal or written apology by student
- restitution/compensation for damaged property
- loss of privileges (e.g. field trips, assemblies, classroom and/or extra-curricular activities, special days)
- problem solving, monitoring or reviewing behavior expectations
- replacement or repair of damaged property
- temporary exclusion of student from class bus suspension for students riding the bus in-school suspension
- in-school/out-of school suspension
- referral to Attendance Board
- involvement of outside agencies (i.e. police/social services)
- Recommendation for expulsion (In consultation with District personnel)