



St. Nicholas Student Code of Conduct

Students at St. Nicholas are expected to be contributing participants in their education. Students, parents and school staff will work together to create opportunities for individual growth and learning. All students are required to behave in a manner that does not disrupt their learning or that of the students around them. Students must take responsibility for their own learning. At all times, our goal is to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.

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.

The Student Code of Conduct Procedure will be developed by the school community and will:

- Be based on input from students, parents, and staff;**
- Be reflective of expectations of students as addressed in legislation and district procedures;**
- Be communicated in writing and placed on the school website on an annual basis;**
- Be reviewed and adapted as necessary on an annual basis by members of the school community.**

Responsibilities of the 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 welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. Parents and school staff have the responsibility to help students meet their responsibilities.

Student Responsibilities:

To achieve this, students are called upon to know, respect, and comply with the guidelines as set out in the Alberta School Act, Section 12:

A student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- (a) Be diligent in pursuing his studies;*
- (b) Attend school regularly and punctually;*

(c) Cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services;

(d) Comply with the rules of the school;

(e) Account to his teachers for his conduct;

(f) Respect the rights of others.

Students are expected to comply with the simple requests made of them by staff. The respect shown to students by St. Nicholas staff should be given back to them with respect from the students. We are all in this together and need to continue to work together.

Parent responsibilities:

(a) to take an active role in the student's educational success, including assisting the student in complying with section 12,

(b) to ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment,

(c) to co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of specialized supports and services to the student,

(d) to encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school, and

(e) to engage in the student's school community.

-Alberta School Act, Section 16.2

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 welcoming, 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.

☑ Review conduct policy with students

☑ Communicate classroom expectations

☒ Recognize diversity and individual differences

☒ Respect confidentiality.

☒ Provide supports, as appropriate, for individuals impacted by and those engaging in inappropriate behavior or discrimination. Supports could include meeting with STAY personnel, Family School Liaison Social Workers, Emotional Behavior Specialists, or others on an individual basis.

Edmonton Catholic Schools and St. Nicholas are responsible for the safe and caring environment for all of our students and the actions that take place outside of the school cannot be permitted to negatively impact the learning environment within our school as well as student behaviour during the school day cannot have a negative impact upon the learning environment.

Acceptable Behaviours

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 School is committed to providing students with a 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.

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 welcoming, 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 or sit with their group outside, or working 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

Parents Can Help Students Meet Their Responsibilities by:

- modelling kindness
- 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 Welcoming, 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

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

General Expectations for Behaviour

At St. Nicholas, we are dedicated to learning in a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment. Anything that interferes with teaching or learning is not allowed. This includes inappropriate dress, gum-chewing, head gear, sunglasses, inappropriate use of electronic devices or games, behavior that is in conflict with our district 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 announcements, through the school newsletter, through the Swift K12 messaging system, 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 Behaviour

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, educational assistant, support and caretaking staff) will take the most appropriate action.

We recognize that making mistakes and learning from such are part of the growth process but that the welfare and security of the entire community must be ensured and as such will specify the establishment of a continuum of three equally important and interrelated components:

1) Preventative procedures, (2) Supportive procedures for minor breaches of conduct; and (3) Fair, corrective interventions to address major breaches of conduct.

Preventative interventions will reflect

- a) Fundamental Catholic beliefs of acceptance, caring, hope, and reconciliation;
- b) Setting of realistic goals and a clear knowledge of expectations and responsibilities;
- c) Close collaboration among students, parents and staff members of the school community; and
- d) Opportunities to celebrate success.

Supportive interventions focus on serving the student within the school area and include

- a) Ongoing contact with parents as key partners in the process;
- b) Behavioural strategies appropriate to the needs and developmental level of the individual students which are to be implemented at the first signs of inappropriate conduct;
- c) A specific range of logical consequences that are consistent, fair to the individual and that are reflective of the community standards;
- d) Strategies for problem solving and growth in self-discipline which may involve District level and/or community agency support; and
- e) Recognition of positive conduct.

Corrective interventions reflecting Catholic social justice principles that protect the dignity of both the individual person and the common good involve the administration of fair and consistent disciplinary procedures in response to the following severe breaches of conduct:

- a) Disruptive behaviour,
- b) Verbal, physical or sexual threats or assaults,
- c) Harassment,
- d) Bullying, including cyberbullying,
- e) Use or possession of weapons,
- f) Use, possession or sale of alcohol and illicit substances,
- g) Vandalism or theft, or
- h) Any activities with criminal intent.

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 behavior 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
- Alternative suspension
- Referral to Attendance Board
- Behavior contract
- Involvement of outside agencies
- Involvement of Edmonton City Police
- Expulsion
- Record of incident retained in PowerSchool

Any student committing a severe breach of conduct will be suspended in accordance with Administrative Procedure 355 – Student Suspension and Expulsion and with Section 12 of the School Act. Parent involvement is crucial at this level of intervention. Subsequent actions can include threat assessment strategies, counselling services, access to alternate educational settings, and expulsion. In some instances, the Principal may require involvement of outside agencies and services.

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 severe the behavior, the more severe the consequence. The context, frequency, and maturity of the students is always considered. A “one-size fits all” approach is inconsistent with the School Act.

Unacceptable Behaviour

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.

The following are considered major forms of misbehavior and will be dealt with appropriately and reasonably, however, it must be noted that this list is not exhaustive. Any student behaviours that develop, yet, may not necessarily be listed in this Conduct Policy, may be contrary to the culture and climate of St. Nicholas, or contrary to the Alberta School Act. In instances such as this, school administration has the authority under the Alberta School Act to address those behaviours.

◆ 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.

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Bullying or cyberbullying of students could result in an 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 through the involvement of Edmonton City Police.

St. Nicholas will establish a culture of respect for the God given dignity of all who participate within it and pursue the common good of everyone, as we build a community of faith, hope, and love through the example of Jesus Christ. However, in order to assure that this culture will prevail, St. Nicholas is committed to a safe and caring environment in which:

- No action toward another person, regardless of the intent of that action will cause harm, fear, or distress to that person
 - No action toward another person within the school community will diminish the person's reputation within the school community
 - Any action that humiliates or contributes to diminishing the reputation of a person because of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status of parents, source of income of parents, family circumstances, sexual identity or sexual orientation of a person is deemed to be an act of bullying
 - No report by a person that he/or she is being "bullied" will be ignored by school staff. Staff will respond as if an incident has happened and report the incident to school administration
 - In establishing consequences for bullying, staff and school administration will use corrective interventions that consider the context of the circumstance, the behavioural history of the persons involved, and the age / stage of development of the person
 - If in the opinion of the staff and administration an act of bullying has occurred, interventions will be applied dedicated to stopping the behaviour in the future, and educating the person victimized about how to address the issue in the future
 - Those disciplined for their involvement in bullying will be communicated what to "stop" doing, and "start" doing in order to further a safe and caring culture within St. Nicholas and the school community
 - Parents play a primary role in assisting with the resolution of matters pertaining to bullying. Apprising them of issues in this area as they have impacted their children should occur at the earliest opportunity.
- Incidences of bullying that adversely impact the safety of individuals or are an affront to the common good of the school community may be addressed through application of Sections 24 or 25 of the School Act.
- Any action that contributes to a perception of bullying, whether it occurs during school hours, or after school hours, or whether by electronic or other means, will be addressed by the school if it is determined that the actions impact the well-being of the alleged victim within the school community

Students will:

- refrain from bullying,
- refuse to tolerate bullying that occurs within the school, during the school day or by electronic means,
- stand up for friends or others if they see bullying behavior,
- immediately report incidences of bullying to staff and parents through dialogue and/or in writing.

Students may report bullying by:

- telling an adult staff member at the school,
- telling a parent/guardian,
- calling the Kids' Help Line at 1-800-668-6868.

CONTINUUM OF SUPPORTS offered at St. Nicholas

A continuum of supports may be provided to students who engage in inappropriate behavior as well as for students who are impacted by such behaviors.

This may include:

- services provided by the school Inclusive Support team (psychologist and family-school liaison worker)
 - Services provided by the Alternative Suspension Program offered by the YMCA
- services provided by RCSD and Alberta Health Services (occupational therapist, mental health therapist, speech-language pathologist)

❖ Defiance

Any act of defiance, that is, refusing to comply with a reasonable request from a staff member, will be dealt with immediately and the consequences can range from corrective measures, to detention, to various degrees of 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, 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.

Students who choose to watch or 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 and by behaviour professionals 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. Drug paraphernalia is not acceptable and will be treated as the equivalent of drug possession. In cases of drug use, the police will be involved in the investigation and charges could be laid.

◆Smoking

Is not permitted on school property. It is an offence to smoke on public property and The Prevention of Youth Tobacco Act of Alberta states:

- a. No person under the age of 18 years may possess, or*
- b. Smoke or otherwise consume tobacco products in a public place.*

Vape Pens or ePens are not permitted on school property. Students caught smoking or in possession of Vape or ePens will be subject to the school discipline proceedings and/or charges and fines through the Edmonton City Police or By-Law Enforcement Officers.

Student Dress Code

School is your professional place for learning and students are expected to dress accordingly. In essence, school is a workplace and the clothing choices must reflect a work environment. Therefore, the following clothing is NOT acceptable at St. Nicholas School:

- Clothing with abusive or suggestive language or symbolism
- Clothing that exposes the mid-section or any under garments
- Any top that does not cover the shoulders or is low cut
- Any skirt or shorts that are deemed short or inappropriate
- Jackets and coats are not allowed in classrooms
- Any non-religious headwear

Remember to dress modestly and make respectful choices in accordance with our Catholic Core Values of Dignity and Respect.

◆ 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, guns and includes pellet guns and BB 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.