

# Code of Conduct

Dear Student:

You are a unique individual. You and your education are very important to us. We encourage you to be energetic, enthusiastic, and committed to learning.

To create the conditions for your success, our school must have a safe, positive, orderly and nurturing school and online environment. We share the responsibility to promote respect, civility, and responsible citizenship, and to treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, and physical or intellectual ability.

We will assist you in solving problems and protect your right to learn. While recognizing the wide range of ages and stages of maturity and development of the students in our school, expectations will be clearly communicated, and if required, discipline will be progressive, fair and consistent.

We look forward to helping make your school experience positive and rewarding.

## Cultivating Character

### **Fairness**

Treating everyone in a just and excepting manner

### **Honesty**

Being Trustworthy, sincere and truthful

### **Empathy**

Understanding how someone else feels

### **Respect**

Valuing self, others and our world

### **Courage**

Facing the challenge

### **Integrity**

Doing what is right and honourable

### **Optimism**

Choosing to be positive

### **Compassion**

Showing care and consideration

### **Perseverance**

Staying Purposeful and committed

### **Responsibility**

Being reliable and accountable

## Introduction to the Code of Conduct

There is a *Code of Conduct* for all schools in the Avon Maitland District School Board. Included in this Code are the standards of behaviour and mandatory consequences outlined in the *Provincial Code of Conduct*, legislated by the provincial government.

These standards of behaviour apply not only to students, but to all members of the school and school-related online community. The school community includes parents/guardians, volunteers, support workers, school staff, and all those who contribute to the school. These standards apply on school property, school buses, online, and at school-authorized events and activities. In fact, these standards govern any activity (in school, online or out of school) that will have an impact on the climate of the school.

The information provided outlines:

- Guiding Principles
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Standards of Behaviour
- Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviour

## Guiding Principles

All members of the school community are to be treated with respect and dignity whether in person or online. Members of the school community are expected to maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility. Non-violent strategies shall be used to resolve conflict.

The Avon Maitland District School Board believes that school learning environments must be safe, positive, respectful and orderly. They must be free from abuse, bullying, discrimination, intimidation, hateful words and deeds, and physical violence in any form.

The Board is committed to establishing and maintaining high expectations for behaviour in order to help students develop appropriate behaviours and self-discipline as responsible members of a democratic society. It also supports the efforts of principals, staff, and community agencies who provide programs that emphasize early identification, conflict prevention and intervention, counselling and the inclusion of social skills in the curriculum.

### Responsibility

Responsibility creates a community of respectful individuals. It is not always easy to make responsible choices, especially if someone else is not acting appropriately. It is important to remember that individuals control their own actions.

Why?

Before respecting other people or other people's authority or property, one must demonstrate self-respect. Students are capable of making appropriate choices. Drug and alcohol abuse, inappropriate sexual behaviour, physical or verbal assault, and bullying (including online/cyber) are not compatible with the dignity of the school community.

## Respect for the Rights and Property of Others

Everyone has the right to be safe and feel safe in the school and online communities. Individuals are expected to be courteous to, respectful of, and compassionate to those in need. Respect for school property and the personal property of others must be demonstrated at all times.

Why?

Our school communities are better places to learn and work when the rights and property of others are respected. This includes being polite, accepting differences among people, and encouraging others to do their best. Bullying and harassment, in person or online, are unacceptable behaviours.

## Bullying

Bullying is a form of repeated, persistent, aggressive behavior that is directed at an individual or individuals and is intended to cause (or could be known to cause) fear, distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation.

Bullying adversely affects students' ability to learn and undermines healthy relationships and the school culture. Bullying will not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses, online, or in any other circumstances where engaging in bullying will have a negative impact on the school climate.

## Academic Expectations

Students are expected to attend school, be on time and be prepared for all classes. Prepared means bringing all notebooks, textbooks, iPads, and necessary material to class and completing assigned homework.

Why?

Daily school attendance is important for student success. Missing class time affects student achievement and the progress of the class. Best effort generates best results.

# **Roles and Responsibilities**

## Students

All students are to be treated with respect and dignity. Students must demonstrate respect for self and others in our school and online communities. Students are expected to demonstrate responsible global and digital citizenship.

Students are responsible citizens when they:

- come to school prepared, on time and ready to learn;
- show respect for themselves, for others, and for those in authority, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical or intellectual ability;
- include all students in their school activities;
- refrain from bringing any object to school that may compromise the safety of others;
- follow established rules and take responsibility for their own actions; and,
- comply with the school's dress code and Code of Conduct.

## Staff

Teachers and school staff, under the leadership of school administration, are expected to adhere to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour.

As role models, staff uphold these high standards when they:

- demonstrate and model respect for all students and colleagues;
- model inclusive behaviours and actions;
- help students maximize their outcomes;
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
- maintain high expectations and consistent standards of behavior for all students; and,
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship, both locally and globally.

## Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians have a responsibility to support the school community.

Parents/Guardians fulfil this responsibility when they:

- communicate regularly with teachers and promptly report to the school children's absence or late arrival;
- encourage inclusive and respectful behavior for all;
- ensure that children attend school regularly, on time and prepared to learn;
- encourage and assist children to follow the Code of Conduct, school and online expectations.
- work in partnership with school staff to address student concerns and disciplinary issues; and
- promote good hygiene and appropriate clothing choices.

## Principals

All principals and vice principals must comply with the requirements of the *Education Act* and Regulations.

Principals, as school leaders, have a duty to manage the operations of the school. They provide leadership by:

- demonstrating care and commitment to student success and a safe teaching, learning and working environment;
- modeling an inclusive school and online environment;
- holding everyone accountable for behaviour and actions;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with school communities; and,
- assisting staff in meeting individual student needs.

## Community Partners

Police and community agencies work in partnership with the Board to actively promote, support and recognize appropriate and positive student behavior. The Police respond and investigate incidents at the school in accordance with the Police-School Board Protocol. Where inappropriate behavior occurs, disciplinary measures will be both corrective and supportive.

- Community partners play an essential role in safe schools.
- Community resource agencies deliver prevention and intervention programs.

## Standards of Behaviour

The following standards apply to all school communities in the Avon Maitland District School Board.

### Respect, Civility and Responsible Global and Digital Citizenship

All school community members:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- treat each other with dignity;
- respect differences in people and treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical or intellectual ability;
- respect the rights of others in school and online;
- seek assistance, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully;
- show proper care and regard for school property and for the property of others; and,
- assist those in need.

## Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviour

Students are at various stages of learning acceptable behaviours. Consequences for misbehavior, shall require consideration for mitigating factors, include a number of progressive options, and will be appropriate to the individual and related to the circumstances.

Consequences may include:

- warnings;
- notification of parents/guardians;
- time-outs;
- restricted privileges;
- withdrawal from classes;
- restorative practices including restitution or community service;
- detentions;
- conflict mediation and resolution;
- peer mentoring;
- referral to counseling and/or consultation;
- suspension; and/or
- expulsion.

Principals and teachers take into account the student's age, level of maturity, and other mitigating factors when considering appropriate consequences. The goal of any consequence is to help the student learn acceptable behaviour. Principals will access the Board's support services when required.

Suspension is the denial of a student's privilege to attend school and/or school activities for a specified period of time

Expulsion is the full-time withdrawal of a student's right to attend a particular school or every school in the board.

## Special Circumstances

When deciding to impose a suspension or expulsion, a principal will consider:

- whether the student has the ability to control his or her behaviour;
- whether the student has the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour; and,
- whether the student's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety or well-being of any other individual at school.

## Infractions for which a suspension may be considered:

- uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person;  
possessing alcohol or restricted drugs;  
swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority;
- committing an act of vandalism against any school property or to property located on the school premises;
- bullying (including cyber bullying);
- persistent opposition to authority;
- willful destruction of school property;
- habitual neglect of duty;
- the use of profane language or gestures which convey a disrespectful or inappropriate message;
- any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the moral tone of the school;
- any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the physical or mental well-being of any member of the school community; or
- any act considered by the principal to be contrary to the Board or School Code of Conduct.

## Long Term Suspensions

- Where a student is suspended for six (6) or more days, the student will be assigned an alternative program (Alternative Suspension Program, ASP). A Student Action Plan (SAP) will be developed for every pupil who agrees to participate in an Alternative Suspension Program.
- The principal/designate will hold a planning meeting to develop the SAP.
- A student suspended for eleven (11) or more school days will be provided with educational and social supports where appropriate and available.

## Tobacco Control Act

The purpose of the Ontario Tobacco Control Act is to reduce smoking. Under the Act, smoking and/or using a tobacco product, including e-cigarettes, is prohibited on all Avon Maitland District School Board properties, school buses and at school or board sponsored events. Principals and Vice-Principals are required to notify the Tobacco Enforcement Officer at the local health unit of any infractions. Consequences may include warnings, suspensions and/or a Provincial Offence ticket.