

**CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2023 – 2025**

Reviewed on August 28, 2023

Rationale

Each person is created in God's image and thus possesses an inherent dignity that must be revered. In the Catholic tradition, "discipline," derived from the word "disciple," should be understood as self-discipline, a growth into the self-control and integrity that allows us to live as a disciple of Jesus in our relationship with self, others and God.

In establishing a Code of Conduct, the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board (NPSCDSB) expects to foster schools that are places that promote responsibility, respect, civility, academic excellence, and well-being in a safe, inclusive and accepting learning and teaching environment.

The Code of Conduct, along with policies related to progressive Discipline, Promoting Positive Student Behaviour and Bullying Prevention and Intervention set out clear standards of behaviour which apply to all individuals involved in our Catholic schools – staff, visitors, volunteers, parents or guardians – whether they are on school property, on school buses or at school-related events or activities, or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

At St. Francis, we are committed to making our Catholic school a place where:

- students, parents, teachers, other school staff, volunteers and community groups have the right to be safe, and to feel safe, welcomed and accepted;
- healthy and respectful relationships based on Christ's teachings are promoted among all members of the school community;
- students are encouraged to be leaders;
- students, staff, parents and community members are expected to be positive role models and actively engaged;
- positive behaviour is reinforced and celebrated;
- the Catholic Graduate Expectations are emphasized and support the improvement of learning outcomes for all students;
- everyone is respected and valued.

Purpose of the Code

- To ensure that all members of the Catholic school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity;
- To promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community;
- To maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility;
- To encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict;
- To promote the safety of people in the schools;

- To discourage the use of alcohol and illegal drugs and, except by a medical cannabis user, cannabis¹
- To prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, in schools;
- To respect the teachings, traditions and principles of the Roman Catholic Church.

Standards of Behaviour: Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship

All members of the Catholic school community must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability;
- respect the rights of others;
- show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others;
- take appropriate measures to help those in need;
- seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully;
- respect all members of the school community, especially persons in positions of authority;
- respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching including by ensuring that personal mobile devices are only used during instructional time for educational purposes, as directed by an educator, for health and medical purposes or to support special education needs;
- use appropriate and respectful language with teachers and all members of the school community

Safety Standards

All members of the school community must not:

- engage in bullying behaviours, including cyberbullying
- commit sexual assault;
- traffic in weapons or illegal drugs;
- give alcohol or cannabis to a minor;
- commit robbery;
- be in possession of any weapon, including firearms;
- use any object to threaten or intimidate another person;
- cause injury to any person with an object;
- be in possession of, or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or cannabis;

¹Policy Program Memorandum 128: As defined in the Education Act, a medical cannabis user is a person who is authorized to possess cannabis for the person's own medical purposes in accordance with applicable federal law.

- provide others with alcohol, illegal drugs or cannabis (unless the recipient is an individual who has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes);
- inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person;
- engage in hate propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias;
- commit an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school.

The students at St. Francis will not engage in bullying behaviour and are committed to reporting bullying behaviour to a staff member.

Definition of Bullying (Bill 13)

“Bullying” means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where:

(a) the behaviour is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of,

(i) causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual’s reputation or harm to the individual’s property, or

(ii) creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and

(b) the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education; (“intimidation”).

For the purposes of the definition of “bullying” behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying includes bullying by electronic means, including,

- (a) creating a web page or a blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- (b) impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet; and
- (c) communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals.

Principal’s Roles and Responsibilities

Under the direction of the Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic District School Board, principals take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school. They provide this leadership by:

- demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to academic excellence in a safe, inclusive, and accepting teaching and learning environment;
- holding everyone under their authority accountable for his or her behaviour and actions;
- empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community.

Teachers and Other School Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, teachers and other school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth;
- empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community;
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
- maintain consistent and fair standards of behaviour for all students;
- demonstrate respect for one another, all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and other members of the school community;
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship.

Student Responsibilities

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a student:

- comes to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- shows respect for himself or herself, for others, and for those in positions of authority;
- refrains from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others;
- follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his or her own actions.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents play an important role in the education of their children and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe, inclusive, accepting, and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill their role when they:

- are engaged in their child's school work and progress;
- communicate regularly with the school;
- help their child be appropriately dressed and prepared for school;
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
- show that they are familiar with the provincial Code of Conduct, the board's Code of Conduct, and school rules;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

Use of Personal Mobile Devices During Instructional Time

Use of personal mobile devices and social media will adhere to the expectations of the Provincial Code of Conduct, the NPSCDSB Code of Conduct, this school Code of Conduct and to Board Policy AG 34.2 Use of Electronic Social Media.

The use of personal mobile devices during instructional time is permitted under the following circumstances:

- for educational purposes, as directed by an educator
- for health and medical purposes
- to support special education needs
- The use of cell phones and electronic devices will not, in any way, interfere with teaching conducted by the staff, and/or the learning of any student(s) during the school instructional day.
- The use of cell phones or other personal mobile devices, for any purpose; including telephone calls, text messaging, games, taking pictures and other functions, are not permitted at any time, other than for the circumstances outlined above, on school grounds, without permission and supervision from the classroom teacher and/or school administration (include designated times and places).
- Cell phones or other personal mobile devices need to be stored in a secure location, pocket, purse, backpack, etc. They are not to be visible unless permitted by the teacher.
- The use of cell phones or other devices is not allowed; especially in private areas such as, washrooms, dressing room areas, buses or classrooms. Camera phone or digital recording device violations may be considered a criminal offence
- Any phone communication during the instructional day will take place only through the use of school telephones and, only with permission from administration, staff, or, office staff (with the exception of emergency situations as deemed by the principal). Parents should continue to contact their child/children through the normal school channels for any emergency situation.
- Possession of a cell phone and/or other personal mobile devices by a student is a privilege which may be denied to any student not abiding by the terms of this code. Students shall be personally and solely responsible for the security of their cell phones and/or other electronic devices.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in a tidy and modest manner. Clothing offensive to race or Christian teachings is not permitted. Clothing should not be a distraction to others.

Clothing that promotes alcohol, drugs, vulgar language, tobacco products or violence is inappropriate in the school. If the school dress code is not adhered to, students will be asked to change the clothing and parents will be notified.

Code of Sportsmanship for Participants and Coaches

“The purpose of competition is to enhance personal development and to make us better people. Winning is a bonus.” (Fr. Mike Cundari)

- Doing one’s best is more important than winning or losing;
- Respect the rules and spirit of the game;
- Treat officials, opponents, teammates and spectators with respect;
- Commit to your activity and your team;
- Play hard, play fair, play under control.

Parents/Spectators/Volunteers Code of Sportsmanship

- Cheer in a positive manner
- Respect officials'/coaches' decisions
- Do not interfere with the competition
- Keep clear of the playing area
- Be courteous and respectful

Failure to comply with this Code of Behaviour may lead to ejection.

Attendance/Tuancy

Regular attendance and punctuality on the part of the student is vital to learning and for academic success. In case of absence, a student's parent or guardian is expected to call the school at (number) to inform the office. If the office has not been notified, when returning from an absence, a note or a telephone call authorizing the absence must be received. A note may explain an absence but will not necessarily excuse or approve an absence. Any unauthorized absence will be investigated as per the safe arrival policy. Please note that repeated concerns about punctuality or absence will be addressed by the school administration.

Immunization

The Immunization of School Pupil's Act, 1982, states that parents/guardians are required to complete the prescribed program of immunization for each pupil. Failure to do so will result in suspension and/or exclusion from school by the Public Health Unit. All parents/guardians are urged to make sure that all children have the required up-to- date immunization.

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90i01_e.htm

Intervention and Supports

Infractions of the Code of Conduct will be investigated and addressed through the teacher and/or principal/vice-principal. In addressing infractions the following mitigating factors will be kept in mind such as age, circumstances, history, IEP, and a progressive discipline approach which could include the following:

- contact with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s);
- verbal reminders;
- review of expectations;
- written work assignment with a learning component relevant to the behaviour;
- peer mentoring;
- detention;
- peer mediation;
- restorative justice;
- referrals for consultation; and
- transfer.

In some circumstances suspensions and expulsions may result.

Offences That May Lead to Suspension

Under subsection 306 (1) of the Education Act, a principal shall consider whether to suspend a pupil if he or she believes that the pupil has engaged in any of the following activities while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate:

- uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person
- possessing alcohol, cannabis (unless the student is authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes), or illegal drugs
- being under the influence of alcohol or cannabis (unless the student is authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes)
- swearing at a teacher or at any person in a position of authority
- committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the student's school or to property on school premises
- bullying, including cyber-bullying
- any other activities identified in school board policy

Offences that Lead to Suspension Pending Possible Expulsion

Under subsection 310 (1) of the Education Act, a principal shall suspend a pupil if he or she believes that the pupil has engaged in any of the following activities while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate:

- possessing a weapon, including a firearm
- using a weapon to cause or threaten bodily harm to another person
- committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner
- committing sexual assault
- trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs
- committing robbery
- giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor
- bullying – if the student (between grade 4 to 12) has previously been suspended for bullying and the student's presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person
- any activity for which a student can be suspended (see section on suspension) that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate
- any other activities identified in school board policy

Search and Seizure

Desks and lockers are school property and as such there is no expectation of privacy on the part of students; therefore, a search of such property is permissible by the school administrator. In this case, the principal or the vice-principal is acting under the authority of the Education Act to maintain proper order and discipline in the school, and not as an agent of the police.

Supports and Follow-up

Students who contravene the Code of Conduct will receive support which may include but is not limited to the following:

- one-on-one and/or group meetings;
- learning opportunities;
- restorative justice;
- contracts or behaviour plans;
- referrals to board-based supports and services;
- referrals to community partner agencies.

Notification of the Use of Student Personal Information

Over the course of the school year as part of its mandate to educate its students, the Nipissing Parry Sound Catholic District School Board under authority of the Education Act, (R.S.O. 1990 c. E.2.) ss.58.5, 265 and 266 as amended, will collect personal information about each student. The information collected may be written, oral or visual.

This personal information will be used to register and place the student in a school or for a consistent purpose such as the allocation of staff and resources and to give information to employees to carry out their job duties. In addition, the information may be used to deal with matters of health and safety or discipline and that may be required to be disclosed in compelling circumstances or for law enforcement matters or in accordance with any other Act. The information will be used in accordance with the Education Act, the regulations, and guidelines issued by the Minister of Education governing the establishment, maintenance, use, retention, transfer and disposal of pupil records.

Should you have any questions about this collection, please contact the Superintendent of Education.

Staff, parents, guardians and students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Code of Conduct so as to better support the learning environment. Working together, we can all contribute to a healthy, safe and enriching school community.