

Westmount School

Student Code of Conduct



Westmount School is committed to working with families and community partners to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and working environment that respects diversity, fosters a sense of belonging, and promotes student wellbeing.

Our purpose is to promote student learning, growth and understanding as well as ensure that students possess a strong connection to their schools as welcoming, caring, respectful and safe places focused on their individual success. The Student Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually and publicly available on the school's website.

This Student Code of Conduct is intended to establish and maintain an appropriate balance between individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities in the school community. All those involved with the school including staff, students, parents, volunteers, and community members must share in the responsibility for eliminating bullying, discrimination, harassment, and violence. Investigation of allegations of such behavior will be conducted in a timely and respectful manner.

The Student Code of Conduct establishes expectations, interventions, and consequences for student behavior. Students will be held accountable for unacceptable behavior and conduct that occurs both inside and outside of the school building or school day if the conduct negatively affects a member of the school or interferes with the school environment. Behavior may include the use of electronic means (e.g., social media).

Consequences of unacceptable behavior will consider the student's age, maturity and/or individual circumstances. Support will be provided for any students who are impacted by inappropriate behavior as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behavior. Although the code of conduct will address issues such as consequences for unacceptable behavior, the primary focus of the student code of conduct is to help students learn how to address issues of dispute, develop empathy, and become good citizens both within and outside of the school community.

Responsibilities of Students, Staff and Parents: The development of positive student behaviour is a shared responsibility between students, staff, and parents. (*Education Act, Aug 2021*)

1. Students

Students have a responsibility to respect the rights and dignity of others and to become actively and productively involved in their own academic learning and social growth. Students are valued and contributing members of their school community and accept the responsibility for their behaviour while at school, at school sponsored activities, or while engaging in other non-school activities that have a direct

influence on maintaining a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment in the school. While school staff is not able to control what students do outside of school, when the behaviour has a detrimental impact on the school environment, there may be consequences or interventions for inappropriate behaviour.

In accordance with the *Education Act* students are expected to conduct themselves according to the School Student Code of Conduct developed by school leadership, staff, students, and community.

Examples of (but not limited to) acceptable behaviour for students, as a partner in education, include:

- Attend school regularly and punctually.
- Be ready to learn, and actively engage in, and diligently pursue your education.
- Co-operate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services.
- Responsibly use of technology and demonstrate responsible digital citizenship (see below for specifics).
- Respect yourself and the rights of others in the school by demonstrating appreciation of diversity of all school members regardless of their race, religious beliefs, color, gender, gender identity, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation of that person or class of persons.
- Know and comply with the Core Values of Westmount School and the policies of the Board ensuring your conduct positively contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful inclusive and safe learning environment that fosters a sense of belonging of others in Westmount School.
- Refrain from, report and discourage bullying or bullying behavior directed toward others in the school, whether it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means, and inform an adult you trust in a timely manner of incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or other safety concerns in the school.
- Dress in a manner that respects the community (see below for specifics).

Examples of unacceptable behaviour may include:

- Behaviors that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment or that create unsafe conditions.
- Wearing inappropriate school attire which in the professional judgement of staff detracts from the learning environment (see below for specifics).
- Acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation/discrimination.
- Acts of violence, physical aggression, or threatening behavior.
- Retribution against any person in the school who has intervened to prevent or report bullying, harassment, or stop an incident that might cause harm to others.
- Illegal activity such as: possession or use of weapons; possession or use of alcohol, drugs, vapes, vape-pens, e-cigarettes, or other forms of intoxicants on school property or at any other school related function (i.e., graduation, field trips).
- Theft or damage of property.
- Irresponsible use of technology.

1.1. Personal Device Use Policy

1.1.1. General

Foothills School Division provides technology resources that support learning for students. Students agree to the conditions of use listed in *Administrative Procedure (AP) 144 Responsible Use of*

Technology each time they log onto the FSD Network using a school owned or personal device. Foothills School Division owns all network resources and has the right to monitor use of the network resources. All network resources are for educational use only and should be used responsibly. Students who discover material on the network that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable should report the material to a staff member. Students are responsible for the security of access (login and password) to their network resources. Consequences of inappropriate use of network resources could include loss of network privileges, withdrawal from a course, suspension, and financial liability for damages. Administration will involve the Director of Learning Technologies in cases where investigation into stored digital information is required.

- The classroom teacher is encouraged to set clear and visible expectations regarding cell phones, music devices, laptops, chrome books, tablets, etc. for their classroom. These classroom specific rules must not contradict or lessen the school rules.
- Personal device use is **strictly prohibited** in bathrooms and change rooms.
- Personal device use is **not permitted** at lunch or recess for students' grades K-6. Students will be allowed to check their phones at these break times for important phone messages. Students may be invited to use phones (if available) for specific learning activities at the direction of the teacher.
- Filming, taking pictures, or recording of any person without their knowledge or consent is **strictly prohibited**.
- Students are responsible for the safekeeping of their individual property and are encouraged to keep devices on their person or locked in their locker. In allowing personal devices on the school property the school assumes no liability for the loss or damage of the device unless it is in the care and control of a staff member.
- Staff members, other than administration, should not assume the liability of caring for a student's personal device.
- Students will use the classroom or office phone if needing to communicate with parents during class time or communicate with/respond to parent texts during breaks when access to phones is permissible. If there is an urgent need to call/text outside of break times, or as part of an individualized safety plan, students may be granted permission by the teacher to use their personal cell phone.
- Online correspondence between staff and students must be related to course work, or school sanctioned clubs/activities. Division staff shall not initiate or accept electronic "friend" invitations from students unless the networking is part of an existing school course or school club structure and at least one (1) other staff member has administrative access to the electronic social media group.
- Staff will direct students to turn off cell phones in the event of an Emergency as per our Critical Response Plan.

1.1.2. Classroom Use

- The intent of allowing personal device use in the classroom is to enhance student learning. Any decision to allow personal device use in a classroom is driven by function and purpose.
- Teachers will indicate, visually and verbally, when, and for what purpose, personal devices may be used in class.

- Teachers will provide guidance and clarification regularly as well as model responsible use of devices during class time.

1.1.3. Misuse

- Students will be made aware of, and regularly reminded of, the personal device use policy for Westmount School and specific practices for individual classrooms.
- On the first instance of misuse the student will be asked to put their device away, out of sight, and silent.
- On the second breach, the student will be asked to place their device out of reach or in their locker.
- Teachers will communicate with parents, in a two-way conversation, if they have concerns regarding a student's device use in class.
- At the discretion of the teacher, the teacher may refer repeated, or flagrant, misuse of personal devices to administration.
- Students who do not comply with the personal device use policy may lose their ability to bring a device to school or may be suspended from school.
- Students accessing division owned computer networks via both personal and school-owned devices are bound by *AP 144 Responsible Use of Technology*.

1.2. Dress Code

Westmount School is focused on the academic and personal growth of our students. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the School Student Code of Conduct developed by school leadership, staff, students, and community. We ask that staff, students and parents dress in a manner that respects the community. Students are expected to present themselves in a way that enhances the school's learning climate and respects the age range and diversity of our school community. Some current fashion may be inappropriate for the school setting, so students and parents are asked to use good judgement when choosing school attire. Clothing that promotes drugs, alcohol, violent images or language, hate or prejudice, pornography, images or language that create a hostile or intimidating environment or that threatens the health and safety of staff or students is prohibited. Clothing must also meet safety requirements for activities such as PE, CTF programs and labs. Students regularly participate in outdoor activities as well as practice safety drill procedures. Students are expected to come to school with appropriate footwear for the weather conditions and in the event, we need to evacuate the building. Students who do not follow the recommended dress guidelines will be asked to put on alternative clothing, or at the discretion of administration, may be sent home.

2. Staff

2.1. Supports, Interventions and Consequences

Westmount School uses a Continuum of Supports, Interventions and Responses including such evidence-based practices as mentoring, restorative processes, student advisories, peer support networks, regular check-ins with teachers or school counsellors, counselling, time-out, suspension and/or expulsion. Support will be provided to students impacted by inappropriate behaviour and to those students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.

A continuum of supports addresses how Westmount School creates a safe and caring environment and positive school climate in which structure, support and encouragement is provided to assist the student in understanding the importance of education and developing a sense of self-discipline and responsibility while making a positive contribution to society. Evidence-based best practices such as mentoring, restorative processes, student advisories, peer support networks, regular check-ins with teachers or school counsellors, and counselling will be utilized, along with fair and predictable consequences which may include time-out, suspension and/or expulsion.

Consequences must consider the student's age, maturity, and individual circumstances rather than a "zero tolerance" approach to behavior with a "one size fits all" approach to consequences, which is not consistent with the *Education Act*. The specific circumstances of the situation and of the student must be considered when determining appropriate consequences; for example, consideration of needs including physical, behavioral, communicational, cognitive, mental health, trauma, as well as student's age, history, past interventions trialed, and accommodations/supports must be considered.

In creating a continuum of supports staff consider:

- Using proactive and preventative approaches to reduce the occurrence of unacceptable behavior and maintain environments that are welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and are conducive to teaching and learning.
- When responding to unacceptable behavior, first consideration will be given to the safety and security of students, staff, and other members of the school community.
- Students feel safe, important, and trusted and have the opportunity to develop, assume and maintain responsibility and self-motivation for their behavior and learning.
- A joint effort to learn and show mutual respect among staff, students, and parents.
- Appropriate behavior is consistently encouraged and reinforced, thus increasing social emotional competencies including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.
- On-going and timely communication exists between staff and parents to encourage and provide the opportunity for active and constructive parental involvement in the education of their children.

3. Parents

Parents are partners in respect to their child(ren)'s education. They have a responsibility to take an active role in their child(ren)'s educational success and support their child(ren) in complying with their responsibilities as students. Parent conduct should contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment. Parents contribution to supporting student success in school will include:

- Take an active role in the child(ren)'s educational success and school community.
- Ensure that the child(ren) attends school regularly and is punctual.
- Ensure that your conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.
- Support your child(ren) to come to school wearing appropriate attire that promotes a positive learning environment.
- Be aware of, and support, the expectations from the School Code of Conduct.

- Communicate and collaborate with school staff about any concerns regarding Student Code of Conduct.
- Support the school personal device use policy with the understanding that students will have access to communicate during breaks. If communication is needed with a student during school learning time you are required to call or email the front office as personal devices will only be allowed in class for specific learning activities to maximize success during school hours.
- It is recognized that Foothills School Division does not have any jurisdiction over parents' personal use of social media. However, defamatory statements regarding Foothills School Division staff members or students within the context of school-related events or instruction, will be defined as harassment. Sanctions may include those delineated in the Division (*AP 402 Protection of Staff and AP 403 Harassment, Prevention, Reporting and Investigation*)

Definitions

Respect: To show regard or consideration for others.

Harassment: Any conduct, comment, gesture, or physical contact that a reasonable person should know would be unwelcome, inappropriate or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals. Alberta law explicitly protects Albertans from discrimination for a wide variety of reasons under the Alberta Human Rights Act.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, references related to age, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race and/or sources of income or family status. Such behavior may directly or indirectly affect or threaten to affect in an adverse manner a student's well-being and/or learning environment. The behavior does not need to be intended as harassing to be considered as personal harassment. It is sufficient that one knows, or ought reasonably to know, that his/her behaviour is offensive and unwelcome.

Discrimination: The denial of individual rights and freedoms in a manner, which contravenes the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and/or the *Alberta Human Rights Act* (AHRA). Discrimination based on race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, creed, sexual orientation, and citizenship is prohibited.

Bullying: Bullying means repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behavior is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to a person's reputation.

Bullying behaviours are a form of aggression and can be:

- Physical – e.g. poking, elbowing, hitting
- Verbal – e.g. name calling, insults, racist, sexist, homophobic or transphobic comments, put-downs or threats
- Social – e.g. gossiping, spreading rumours, excluding someone from the group, isolating, ganging up
- Cyber – e.g. social or verbal bullying using email, text messages or social media including the sharing of intimate images.

Progressive Discipline: In a whole school approach that utilizes a continuum of prevention programs, interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behavior and to build upon strategies that promote and foster positive behavior. When inappropriate behavior occurs, disciplinary measures should be applied within a framework that shifts the focus from one that is solely punitive to one that is both corrective and supportive.