

Durham Catholic District School Board  
"The Board"

**POLICY**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

POLICY AREA: **STUDENT CONDUCT AND  
SAFETY**  
Policy # **PO610**

**INTRODUCTION**

A school should be a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted.

All students, parents/guardians, teachers, other staff members, trustees, volunteers, visitors, parish and community members have the right to be safe, and to feel safe, in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to contribute to a positive school climate.

Catechism of the Catholic Church in section 1807:

1807 *Justice* is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbour. Justice toward God is called the "virtue of religion." Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good. The just man, often mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbour. "You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbour."

The promotion of the Catholic Social Teachings and the Catholic Graduate Expectations establishes our foundation. Through various strategies and initiatives such as Student Success and character development, along with the employment of prevention and intervention strategies to address inappropriate behaviour, fosters a positive school climate that supports academic achievement for all students. The Durham Catholic District School Board and its schools therefore focuses on prevention, early intervention and progressive discipline as the key to maintaining a positive school environment in which students can learn and teachers can teach.

When inappropriate behaviour occurs, schools in the Board will be required to utilize a range of interventions, supports and consequences that are developmentally appropriate, that include opportunities for students to learn from mistakes, and that focus on improving behaviour. In some circumstance, short term suspension may be a useful tool, In the case of a serious incident, long-term suspension or expulsion, which is further along the continuum of progressive discipline, may be the response that is required.

**PURPOSE**

The provincial Code of Conduct sets clear provincial standards of behaviour. These standards of behaviour apply not only to students, but also to all individuals involved in the publicly funded school system whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school-related events or activities, or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

**The purpose of the Durham Catholic District Code of Conduct Policy is:**

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

This policy identifies the Code of Conduct for the Durham Catholic District School Board and provides direction to assist and ensure that every elementary and secondary school develops and maintains an approved Code of Conduct that communicates to all members of the school community acceptable behavioural expectations and consequences for infractions.

**DEFINITIONS****The following definitions apply for the purposes of student discipline**

**Adult Pupil-** is a pupil who is 18 years or older, or 16 or 17 and has removed him/herself from parental control.

**Alternative Suspension Program (ASP)** - this program is provincially mandated where a pupil has been suspended for six (6) or more days.

**DEFINITIONS – cont'd**

**Arrest** - the taking of physical control or custody of a person by a peace officer or other person as empowered by statute or common law.

**Assaults Causing Bodily Harm** - the intentional application of force resulting in an injury requiring medical attention, but not including instances where medical attention is sought solely on a cautionary basis.

**Board Employee** - any person employed by any of the District School Boards who are a party to this protocol agreement on a temporary, part-time or full-time basis.

**Board Expulsion**- is an expulsion from all schools of the Board.

**Bullying** - is typically a form of repeated, persistent , and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another persons body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

**Child** - a person who is, or appears to be in the absence of evidence to the contrary, less than twelve years of age, except with reference to the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA), wherein child is defined as any person under the age of sixteen.

**Child Abuse** - an act or omission resulting in or reasonably leading an individual to believe a child is at risk of being a “child in need of protection” as defined in the Child and Family Services Act. (CFSA)

**Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB)** - The Child and Family Services Review Board is the body empowered to hear Appeals of Expulsions imposed by a District School Board as per the Education Act and Regulations.

**Criminal Harassment** - any course of conduct intended or resulting in a person feeling tormented, troubled, worried continually or chronically, plagued, bedeviled, badgered, vexed, or annoyed continually or chronically such that police or legal authorities believe the conduct is of sufficient severity that criminal charges are or may be laid.

**Daily Care** - a person with daily care is an adult person (18 years of age or older) who is not the custodial parent/guardian of a pupil, who is less than 18 years old, but is a person who cares for the pupil on a daily basis and is known by the school to provide daily care, for example a relative.

**DEFINITIONS – cont'd**

**Detention (legal definition - not the school definition)** - includes both a deprivation of liberty or physical constraint other than arrest and a demand or direction by a person in authority other than a Board employee which may have significant legal consequences.

**Discipline Committee** – a committee of three or more trustees designated to determine suspension appeals and recommendations for expulsion.

**Expulsion** - an expulsion is a student's removal from school and related activities, academic and social, for a period of at least 21 days. A student may be expelled from his or her school only or all the schools of the Board.

**Expulsion Program** - if a student is expelled from all the schools of the Board, he or she must be assigned to a Board program for expelled students. The student and/or his or her parent(s) must notify the principal verbally or in writing that the student is committed to attending the program. Once the principal has received this notification, development of the Student Action Plan (SAP) must begin immediately.

**Extortion** - by threat, accusation, menace or violence inducing or attempting to induce any person to do or not to do something or to cause something to be done or not done.

**Gang** - two or more persons engaged in antisocial behaviour who form an allegiance for a common criminal purpose, and who individually or collectively are creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation within a community.

**Harassment** – words, conduct or action that is directed at an individual that serves no legitimate purpose, and which annoys, alarms, or causes that individual emotional distress.

**Hate and/or Bias-Motivated Incidents** - any incident motivated or apparently or primarily motivated by hatred or bias towards an identifiable group (i.e. distinguished by colour, race, religion, or ethnic origin), or intended to incite or encourage bias or hatred against such a group.

**Impact of School Climate** - an incident or activity which has a negative impact on the school community.

**Incendiary Device** - any device or item used or intended to be used for the setting of fires other than for socially acceptable or reasonable purposes.

**DEFINITIONS – cont'd**

**Indictable Offence** - any offence under the Criminal Code, Controlled Drugs and Substances Act or other federal legislation upon which a prosecutor can and may choose to proceed by indictment.

**Mitigating and Other Factors:**

- 1) the student does not have the ability to control his or her behaviour;
- 2) the student does not have the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour; or
- 3) the continuing presence of the pupil in the school does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any person in the school.

**Other Factors:**

- 1) the pupil's history;
- 2) whether a progressive discipline approach has been used with the pupil;
- 3) whether the activity for which the pupil may be or is being suspended or expelled was related to any harassment of the pupil because of his or her race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation or to any other harassment;
- 4) how the suspension or expulsion would affect the pupil's ongoing education;
- 5) the age of the pupil; or
- 6) in the case of a pupil whom an individual education plan has been developed:
  - (i) whether the behaviour was a manifestation of a disability identified in the pupil's individual education plan
  - (ii) whether appropriate individualized accommodation has been provided, and
  - (iii) whether the suspension or expulsion is likely to result in an aggravation or worsening of the pupil's behaviour or conduct.

**Parent/Guardian-** where there is a reference to involving or informing a parent/guardian it means the custodial parent or guardian of a minor child who is not 16 or 17 and removed from parental control.

**Police Involvement** - the course of action determined to be appropriate by the police for the investigation of an incident to which they have been called, including any follow-up and proactive measures.

**Positive Practices:** the Board supports the use of positive practices such as: program modifications or accommodations; class placement; positive encouragement and reinforcement; individual peer and group counselling; conflict resolution; anti-bullying and violence prevention programs; sensitivity programs; and School, Board, and Community Support Programs.

**DEFINITIONS – cont'd**

**Principal Designate** - Board employee to whom authority and responsibility has been delegated by the school principal.

**Program for Expelled Students** - this program is provincially mandated for those students who are expelled from all the schools of the Board. Successful completion of the Program and the Student Action Plan is a requirement for the re-entry of the student into the Board.

**Progressive Discipline**- Progressive Discipline is a whole school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. Progressive Discipline may include, but not limited to, consultation; school community service; withdrawal of privileges; withdrawal from class; detention; restitution for damages; peer mediation; restorative practice; suspension; and/or expulsion.

**Requiring Medical Attention** - injury such that a physician's treatment is reasonably necessary or prudent.

**Robbery** - theft or intended theft, during which violence, threat of violence or a weapon is used or threatened.

**School Activity** - any Board or school sponsored activity, included but not limited to field trips, bus trips, sporting activities and dances.

**School Community** - the school community is composed of staff, pupils and parents of the school, and associate schools, as well as the community of people and businesses that are served by or located in the greater neighbourhood of the school.

**School Expulsion** - is an expulsion from the school of the Board that the pupil was attending at the time of the incident.

**School Premises** - school buildings and grounds including parking lots and playing fields.

**Sexual Assault** - touching of a person in a sexual manner without the informed and valid consent of the person touched.

**DEFINITIONS – cont'd**

**Student Action Plan (SAP)** – A Student Action Plan (SAP) must be developed for every student on a long-term suspension or expulsion from the board, who make a commitment to attend the board program.

**Suspension** - A suspension is a student's removal from school and related activities both academic and social for a period of at least one school day but not exceeding 20 school days.

**Suspension Appeal Committee** - a Suspension Appeal Committee is a Standing Committee of the Board consisting of three Trustees who will adjudicate Appeals.

**Threat** - any statement, act or communication intended or apparently intended to intimidate a person, in circumstances where the person threatened believes, or has reasonable grounds to believe, the threat may be carried out.

**Trafficking in Drugs** - the selling, administering, offering, transferring, transporting, sending or delivering of any unlawful or controlled drug or substance, or substance held out to be an unlawful or controlled substance, or authorization to obtain any unlawful or controlled drug or substance for use of or on behalf of another person, whether or not for consideration, or the offering to do any of the foregoing except as may be prescribed or dispensed to the person for medical reasons.

**Trespass** - the attending at or presence on a private premise without permission of a person in authority having care and control of the premises or engaging in a prohibited activity thereon (e.g. Posting a "No Skateboarding" sign means that those skateboarding on that location are trespassing and can be removed).

**Vandalism** - the defacing, damaging or destruction of property.

**Weapons** - is any object or thing used, or threatened to be used, to intimidate, threaten or cause death or harm on another person, and includes, but is not limited to, knives, guns, replica guns, and animals.

**APPLICATION/SCOPE**

The Board Code of Conduct is consistent with the Board's belief, as expressed in its Mission Statement:

“The Durham Catholic District School Board, as followers of Jesus, is a Catholic Learning Community, committed to educating students to contribute their God-given talents in the service of others.”

This policy is commensurate with the Education Act, the Provincial Code of Conduct, and the Durham Catholic District School Board Progressive Discipline and School Safety Policy which create expectations for behaviour for all persons on school property, during a school related activity or event, and/or in circumstances where a behaviour has an impact on the school climate. This policy applies to every person involved in the school system. It will be communicated to all students, parents or guardians, teachers, other staff members, volunteers and visitors annually. This policy will be reviewed every three years.

**PRINCIPLES**

- The Board recognizes and accepts the authority of the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church in respect of matters of faith and morals, as it's entitled to do under Section 93(1) of the Constitution Act, 1867. The teachings of the Church will be taken into account in interpretation and application of this policy and any subsequent procedures emanating from this policy.
- The Board recognizes the behaviour within our school communities should be in accordance with the Gospel values of Jesus Christ, the Board's Mission Statement, the Curriculum Expectations and the requirements set forth by the Education Act and the applicable Regulations.
- The Board recognizes that each school community shall in accordance with the Education Act and Regulations establish a School Code of Conduct congruent with this Policy and its applicable procedures. the duties of Principals, teachers and students and the rights of all members of the school community are defined in the Education Act and Regulations.
- The Board recognizes that the Principal, subject to the authority of the appropriate Supervisory Officer is in charge of the school and may take specific disciplinary action as outlined in the Education Act, Regulations and respective Board Policy and Procedures.

**PRINCIPLES cont'd**

- The Board recognizes and affirms that the Principal has the sole discretion to decide if a pupil shall be subject to a suspension or recommended for an expulsion deemed in accordance with the Safe School Student Discipline Policy and Procedures.
- The Board recognizes that responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community.
- The Board recognizes that members of the school community are expected to use non-violent means to resolve conflict.
- The Board recognizes that physically aggressive behaviour is not a responsible way to interact with others.
- The Board recognizes that the possession, use or threatened use of any object to injure another person endangers the safety of oneself and others.
- The Board recognizes that alcohol and illegal drugs are addictive and present a health hazard.
- The Board recognizes that the school will work cooperatively with police, drug and alcohol agencies to promote prevention strategies and, where necessary, respond to school members who are in possession of, or under the influence of, alcohol or illegal drugs.
- The Board recognizes that insults, disrespect, and other hurtful acts disrupt learning and teaching in a school community.
- The Board recognizes that members of the school community have a responsibility to maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.
- The Board recognizes that parents/guardians, students who are at least 18 years of age or students who are 16 or 17 years of age, and have withdrawn from parental control, shall have recourse to the Appeal Procedures established for Suspensions and for Expulsions and that such Appeal Procedures shall be in accordance with the Education Act, the Regulations and this Policy and its applicable Procedures.

**PRINCIPLES cont'd**

- The Board recognizes that the school community is comprised of students, parents or guardians, teachers, other staff members, volunteers, visitors and that all should be involved in the development of the School Code of Conduct in cooperation with the Catholic School Council.

## REQUIREMENTS

The standards of behaviour in the Durham Catholic District School Board are consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct.

The standards of behaviour are for all members of the school community (e.g., parent(s)/guardian(s), students, teachers, other staff, visitors, volunteers, trustees, parish and community members)

The Standards of Behaviour are for all persons on school property, during a school related activity or event, and/or in circumstances where a behaviour has an impact on the school climate(e.g., in school sports activities, on school buses, in off-site school-sponsored activities)

**Standards of Behaviour** in the Durham Catholic District School Board include:

### **1) Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship**

All members of the 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;

## REQUIREMENTS cont'd

- 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;
- not swear at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority.

## **II) Safety**

All members of the Durham Catholic District School Board community must not:

- engage in bullying behaviours;
- commit sexual assault;
- traffic weapons or illegal drugs;
- give alcohol 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, or provide others with alcohol or illegal drugs;
- 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

**REQUIREMENTS cont'd****Consequences of Behaviour** in the Durham Catholic District School Board:

Commensurate with our Progressive Discipline Policy, when inappropriate behaviour occurs schools are required to utilize a range of interventions, supports, and consequences that are developmentally appropriate that include opportunities for students to learn from mistakes, and that focus on improving behaviour. In some circumstances, short-term suspension may be a useful tool. In the case of a serious incident, long-term suspension or expulsion, which is further along the continuum of progressive discipline may be the response that is required.

**Suspension**

The infractions for which a suspension may be considered by the principal include:

- uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person;
- possessing alcohol or illegal drugs;
- being under the influence of alcohol;
- swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority;
- committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school;
- bullying;
- possession and/or use of tobacco products;
- uttering a racial slur or comment;
- sexual slurs or harassment;
- being in possession of or under the influence of drugs;
- disrespect towards or desecration of the religious dimension of the school; and/or
- conduct deemed to be unacceptable: e.g.
  - Fighting
  - Persistent tardiness and/or truancy including "skipping" classes
  - Use of profane or improper language
  - Persistent opposition to authority
  - any other behaviours deemed to be unacceptable behaviours

A student may be suspended for a minimum of one (1) school day and a maximum of twenty (20) school days.

**REQUIREMENTS cont'd****Expulsion**

The infractions for which a principal shall suspend and may consider recommending to the Board that a pupil be expelled from the pupil's school or from all schools of the Board include:

- possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm;
- using a weapon to cause or to 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 restricted or illegal drugs;
- committing robbery;
- giving alcohol to a minor;
- engaging in activities or patterns of behaviour on or off school property that cause the pupil's continuing presence in the school to create an unacceptable risk to the physical or mental well-being of other person(s) in the school or Board;
- engaging in activities on or off school property that have caused extensive damage to the property of the Board or to goods that are/were on Board property;
- conduct deemed to be unacceptable:
  - Any act considered by the Principal and Family of Schools Superintendent to be a serious violation of the Board or school Code of Conduct.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES****The Durham Catholic District School Board-**

School Boards provide direction to their schools to ensure opportunity, academic excellence, and accountability in the education system. It is the responsibility of the D.C.D.S.B. to:

- model Christian behaviours founded in Catholic tradition;
- develop policies that set out how their schools will implement and enforce the provincial Code of Conduct and all other rules that they develop that are related to the provincial standards that promote and support respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
- review these policies regularly with students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the community;
- seek input from school councils, their Parent Involvement Committee, their Special Education Advisory Committee, parents, students, staff members, and the school community;
- establish a process that clearly communicates the provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct to all parents, students, staff members, and members of the school community in order to obtain their commitment and support;
- develop effective intervention strategies and respond to all infractions related to the standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
- provide opportunities for all of the staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment.

Wherever possible, Boards should collaborate to provide coordinated prevention and intervention programs and services, and should endeavour to share effective practices.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES cont'd****Principals**

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

- modeling Christian behaviours founded in Catholic tradition;
- demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to academic excellence in a safe teaching and learning environment;
- demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to academic excellence in a safe 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 Members**

Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff members 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 school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- model Christian behaviours founded in Catholic tradition;
- 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 standards of behaviour for all students;
- demonstrate respect for all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the members of the school community;
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – cont'd****Students**

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:

- models Christian behaviours founded in Catholic tradition;
- comes to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- shows respect for himself or herself, for others, and for those in 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.

**Parents**

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

- support the values of our Catholic school system;
- conduct themselves in an appropriate manner;
- take responsibility and support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students;
- show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- communicate regularly with the school;
- help their child be neat, 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.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – cont'd****Community Partners and the Police**

Through outreach, partnerships already in place may be enhanced and new partnerships with community agencies and members of the community (e.g., Aboriginal Elders) may also be created. Community agencies are resources that boards can use to deliver prevention or intervention programs. Protocols are effective ways of establishing linkages between boards and community agencies and of formalizing the relationship between them. These partnerships must respect all applicable collective agreements. The police play an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. The police investigate incidents in accordance with the protocol developed with the local school board. These protocols are based on a provincial model that was developed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ministry of Education.

**SOURCES**

Education Act  
Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety), 2007  
PPM 128 - Provincial Code of Conduct  
PPM 144 - Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy  
PPM 145 – Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour Policy  
PPM 141 – School Board Programs for Students on Long - Term Suspension  
PPM 142 – School Board Programs for Students Expelled

**RELATED ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

Code of Conduct Administrative Procedure (AP610-1)  
Student Discipline Administrative Procedure  
Progressive Discipline Administrative Procedure  
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Administrative Procedure