

Preamble

The purpose of this Policy is to support and encourage a safe and caring school environment which is conducive to effective learning, and to nurture attitudes of mutual respect and trust. This Policy is anchored in the biblical principles stated below and promotes accepted standards of behaviour.

This Policy should serve as an umbrella policy for other policies that should be read in conjunction with it, such as *Progressive Discipline Policy*, *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy*, etc.

Policy

1. Principles

In keeping with the mission, vision, and values of Cambridge Christian School (the "School"), we declare that the objectives and context of all activities at this institution stem from a Christian world and life view to serve and educate students. To wit:

- We believe that each person is created in the image of God and has dignity and worth.
- We believe the work of the Holy Spirit enables each student to love God and neighbour, to submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and to display the fruit of the Spirit.
- We believe the Bible is the authoritative Word of God which provides the standards of conduct for all human behaviour, including that of students.
- We believe in understanding the needs of the student so that discipline is supportive, nurturing, and restorative.
- We believe that parents^[2] are active participants in the education, conduct, and discipline of their children at school, and are called to model good God honouring standards for their children.

The School is dedicated to the education of students in a safe and caring community that fosters the development of a passion for learning and discipleship, character, courage, and creativity.

The School promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning environment.

The School promotes a positive school climate where members of the School community feel safe and actively promotes positive behaviours and interactions. All students, parents, teachers, and staff members have the right to feel and be safe in the school community. With this right comes the responsibility to contribute to a positive school climate. The promotion of strategies and initiatives such as 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 School is committed to encouraging responsible citizenship that involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the School community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.

2. Standards

The standards of behaviour apply not only to students, but to all individuals involved in the School community—parents, volunteers, teachers, and other staff members—while on school property, school buses, at school-related events or activities, or in related circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

Enrollment in the School signifies agreement with the obligation to comply with the provisions of this document and that each student will follow certain standards of behaviour.

The purpose for these standards includes the following:

- to engage each other in the ways of God and His Word;
- to ensure that all members of the 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 differences 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 School;
- to discourage the use of alcohol, illegal drugs and, cannabis (except by a medical cannabis user); and
- to prevent bullying in the School.

For the students, the standards of behaviour communicated in this policy can be summarized succinctly in the Student Code of Conduct statement. (see Appendix A).

Standards Concerning Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship

All students/individuals of the School community must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
- comply with this Policy;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, especially when there is disagreement;
- 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; and
- respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching.

Standards Concerning Safety and Inappropriate Behaviour

All students/individuals of the school community must not:

- engage in bullying, intimidating, threatening behaviours;
- 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 harassment of any kind;
- distribute hate material;
- commit sexual assault;
- traffic in weapons, cannabis or illegal drugs;
- give alcohol, tobacco products or cannabis to a minor;
- be in possession of, or be under the influence and illegal drugs
- be in the possession of or under the influence of alcohol, unless the individual is of the age of majority, in which case they must not be in the possession of or under the influence of alcohol at the school or at any time they are acting in the capacity of a staff or volunteer in the school.
- commit robbery;
- be in possession of any weapon, including firearms;
- use any object or weapon to threaten or intimidate or harm another person;
- cause injury to any person with an object;
- commit an act of vandalism that causes damage to School property or to property located on the premises of the School;
- engage in academic dishonesty;
- swear at others;
- fight;
- engage in inappropriate use of electronic communications/media; including accessing inappropriate materials on the internet or posting or texting offensive, derogatory and/or degrading comments or images on personal or commercial websites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, www.ratemyteachers.com, and similar sites);
- have a conduct injurious to the moral tone of the school or to the physical or mental well-being of others.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Concerning the School

It is the responsibility of the School to:

- develop policies that set out how the School will implement standards of behaviour and other rules that promote and support respect, civility, responsible citizenship and safety;
- review policies regularly with students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the community;
- seek input from the Board of Directors, parents, students, staff, and the school community;
- establish a process that clearly communicates this Code of Conduct Policy 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; and
- provide opportunities for all staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment.

Concerning the Principal

Under the direction of the School Board, the Principal takes a leadership role in the daily operations of the School. The Principal will provide this leadership by:

- 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 their own behaviour and actions;
- empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of the school community;
- providing an example of respect and civility for all members of the school community;
- ensuring proper supervision is being discharged;
- helping to resolve conflicts as a fair, understanding, firm and patient arbitrator;
- being an active listener and, on occasion, counsellor for members of the school community who seek help in behaviour matters as they related to the School;
- working with other agencies to provide support if needed; and
- establishing a student discipline approach that is restorative, while implementing sound progressive discipline procedures.

Concerning the Teachers and Other School Staff Members

Under the leadership of the Principal, teachers and other School staff members maintain a positive learning environment 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:

- 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 responsibility of citizenship;
- assist the principal by reporting incidents and in conducting an investigation;
- define school rules and expectations, and the reasons for them, emphasizing the underlying calling of loving God and each other;
- provide counsel for the student and assist them in their adherence to standards;
- use appropriate measure of discipline and recognize closure once the incident has been appropriately dealt with; and
- are caring and aware of student needs

Concerning the Student

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 students:

- come to School prepared, on time, and ready to learn;

- adhere to dress code rules;
- adhere to rules regarding smoking, vaping, illicit drugs, alcohol, cannabis;
- show respect for themselves, for others, and for those in authority;
- refrain from bringing anything to School that may compromise the safety of others;
- follow the established rules and take responsibility for their own actions; and
- submit to the authority of School personnel in matters pertaining to School standards of behaviour.

Concerning the Parents and Guardians

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

- are engaged in their child's schoolwork 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 their child's absence or late arrival to the school;
- become familiar with the school rules and this Policy;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child;
- exercise discretion when discussing their opinions or concerns respecting the discipline of their children with the School or others; and
- recognize the right of the School to apply the necessary sanctions.

4. Sanctions

All School community members are responsible for observing both the letter and the spirit of the School's policies and procedures. As a general principle, the School reserves the right to apply a full range of sanctions, including expulsion, to any offence committed by a student. Although the specific provisions set out in this Policy or any other related policy outlines steps that the School will normally take in the event that a student contravenes, or attempts to contravene the provisions of established standards of behaviour and this Code of Conduct, they do not take away from the ultimate discretion of the School to apply any sanction that is appropriate in the particular circumstances of an offence, including the expulsion of a student.^[3] Recognizing the healing power of Christ's redemption, the School shall first explore, where it is warranted, possibilities of forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration.^[4]

When exercising its discretion to determine the appropriate sanction to apply to an offence, the School will take into account:

- the particular student and the circumstances (considering the student's history, ability to exercise self-control, ability to understand the circumstances and consequences, a disability);
- the nature and severity of the behaviour; and
- the impact on the school climate, including the impact on students or other individuals in the school community.

The range of sanctions that the School will apply to offences include:

- meeting with appropriate person(s) (such as peers, faculty, administrators);
- removal from a school activity, special program, or recess to complete work or a special assignment designated by the teacher;
- detention;
- probation;
- in-school suspension;
- behaviour or performance contract with the involvement of the student, teachers, and parents;
- financial restitution, reparation, or service in a case where damage is caused, or maintenance work made necessary;
- formal suspension from the School, with conditions to return to school to be discussed with parents and students in accordance with School policy; and/or
- expulsion from the School.

The School reserves the right to suspend a student from attendance at School where:

- the student's misbehaviour is of a most serious nature; (see policy 1004 Student Progressive Discipline)

The School reserves the right to expel a student when:

- the continued attendance of the student would not be in the best interests of the student or the School;
- the student's behaviour is in breach of the standards of this Policy;
- the behaviour seriously jeopardizes the School's ability to guarantee the dignity and safety of its students and/or interferes with learning;
- the behaviour involves conduct which is injurious to the School's moral tone or to the physical or mental well-being of others.
- the Principal recommends to the School Board that such action be taken.

^[1] This policy is based on the policy template created by Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (2019) and modified by Ted Postma, Consultant, used with permission.

Other sources:

- <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/070472/v3>
- <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.pdf>
- <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/code.html>

^[2] For the purpose of this policy, reference to parents includes, where applicable, custodial and non-custodial parents and/or guardians; reference to the School community includes students, teachers, parents and guardians, administration, and volunteers.

Appendix A: Student Code of Conduct

Standards for Younger Students:

Our Relationship with God

We will be respectful when we use God's name.
We will be respectful during prayer and Bible reading.
We will respect ourselves because God created us in His image.

Our Relationship with Those in Authority

We will listen to all the adults at school.
We will obey the school rules.

Our Relationship to Self and Others

We will be polite and respectful to the people around us because we are all God's children.
When we do or say wrong things we will learn to apologize and ask God to help us do what is right.
We will encourage everyone to feel included.
We will avoid touching except in friendship and to help.
We will respect the belongings of others.

Our Relationship to School Property

We will take care of our school and the things in it.
We will take care of the school grounds and playground equipment.

Our Care for Ourselves

We will take care of ourselves because we are God's children.

Standards for Older Students:

Our Relationship with God

We will speak of God in respectful ways.
We will be respectful during prayer and Bible reading.
We will respect ourselves because God created us in His image.

Our Relationship with Those in Authority

We will be respectful in our speech and conduct.
We will be obedient to those in authority over us.
We will encourage others to be respectful of authority.

Our Relationship to Others

We will be respectful of others.
We will address each other properly and not resort to name calling, swearing or dirty language towards each other.
We will respect each other's property and use it only with permission.
We will encourage everyone to feel included.
We will respect each other's person and avoid touching unless to help or in friendship.
We will learn to apologize and seek God's strength when we fail to continue building a community of love and respect.

Our Relationship to School Property

We will respect school property. This includes furniture, books, equipment and building.
We will take care of the school grounds and playground equipment.
We will report any damage done and volunteer to pay for damages if we are responsible.

Our Care for Ourselves

We will take care of ourselves because we are image-bearers of God.

What does it mean to be respectful?

polite, kind, courteous, gracious, humble, considerate

What does it mean to respect?

value, appreciate, consider, regard, honour, esteem