

ST. MARTHA STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

We recognize that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and are inherently deserving of dignity and respect. At St. Martha Catholic Elementary School, we are committed to providing a safe, caring, inclusive, and respectful learning environment for all.

We nurture the whole child—academically, socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually—while living out our Catholic values of love, peace, forgiveness, and respect. Together, we strive to build a community where every individual feels welcomed, valued, and supported.

Children are continually learning and growing, and at times may make mistakes. Our Code of Conduct supports students in learning from these experiences while respecting their unique needs and dignity. In accordance with the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, all members of our school community are afforded protection from discrimination. Discrimination includes any conduct that denies or limits access to services, opportunities, or participation based on protected grounds such as race, religion, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

Student Responsibilities

Students play an important role in creating a positive school environment. All students are expected to:

- Treat others with kindness, respect, and dignity
- Respect differences, including cultural, religious, and individual differences
- Follow school expectations and use good judgment at school, during school activities, and online
- Refrain from bullying, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, and aggression
- Refrain from engaging in violence
- Support a safe environment by reporting concerns to a trusted adult (unless doing so would place them at risk)
- Use technology and social media responsibly
- Take responsibility for their actions and work to repair harm when needed

In alignment with the **Education Act (Section 31)**, students are also expected to:

- Attend school regularly and be prepared to learn
- Engage in their learning and strive to do their best
- Respect themselves, others, and school property
- Follow school rules and cooperate with staff
- Be accountable for their conduct and contribute positively to the school community
- Refrain from bullying or harmful behaviour, whether at school or through electronic means

We believe in teaching and reinforcing positive behaviour.

Acceptable behaviour includes:

- Demonstrating kindness, cooperation, and responsibility
- Helping others feel safe, included, and respected
- Respecting school property and the property of others

Unacceptable behaviour includes:

- Bullying, harassment, or intimidation (in person or online)
- Discrimination based on protected human rights grounds
- Physical, verbal, or emotional aggression
- Any actions that interfere with the safety, learning, or well-being of others

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are important partners in creating a safe and caring school environment. In accordance with the **Education Act (Section 32)**, parents are expected to:

- Take an active role in their child's learning and school success
- Ensure their child attends school regularly

- Support school expectations and reinforce respectful behaviour
- Conduct themselves in a manner that supports a safe and caring learning environment through respectful and welcoming behaviour
- Foster positive relationships with staff and others in the school community
- Work collaboratively with the school to support student success

Staff Responsibilities

Staff play a key role in fostering a positive learning environment. Staff will:

- Model respect, Catholic values, and positive behaviour
- Provide quality instruction aligned with the Alberta Program of Studies
- Support student learning and individual needs
- Maintain open and respectful communication with students, parents, and colleagues

Serious Breaches of Conduct

Corrective responses reflect Catholic social justice principles and respect the dignity of each person while supporting the common good. Serious breaches of conduct may include:

- Threats or acts of physical, verbal, or sexual aggression
- Bullying, including cyberbullying
- Harassment or discrimination
- Possession or use of weapons
- Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, drugs, or vaping products
- Vandalism or theft
- Any activity with criminal intent

Belonging and Reporting Concerns

We are committed to fostering a sense of belonging where all students feel welcomed, valued, and respected.

If a student experiences or witnesses' behaviour that makes them feel unsafe or excluded, they are encouraged to speak with a trusted adult at school or at home. Families are encouraged to work with the school to address concerns promptly.

Edmonton Catholic Schools Administrative Procedure 172 outlines processes for reporting incidents of racism and discrimination.

Encouraging Appropriate Conduct

Dignity is at the heart of our approach to discipline. Responses to behaviour will:

- Respect student privacy while sharing information with appropriate staff and families
- Consider each student's age, maturity, and individual circumstances
- Include preventative, restorative, and supportive strategies

Minor Concerns

Minor concerns may include behaviours such as disruption, incomplete work, or minor disrespect. Responses may include:

- Reteaching expectations
- Reflection or restorative conversations
- Temporary removal from an activity
- Parent communication

Major Concerns

Major concerns involve behaviours that are unsafe, harmful, or significantly disruptive, including aggression, repeated bullying, or defiance. These may result in:

- Administrative involvement
- Loss of privileges
- In-school or out-of-school suspension

Severe breaches of conduct may result in suspension in accordance with Section 31 of the Education Act.

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to all school-related activities, including:

- School hours (instructional time, recess, lunch)

- Before and after school
- Field trips and extracurricular activities
- School transportation (e.g., buses)
- Online or electronic interactions connected to the school

Bullying

Bullying is defined as repeated and intentional behaviour that causes harm, fear, or distress and involves a real or perceived imbalance of power. Bullying may be:

- Physical (e.g., hitting, pushing)
- Verbal (e.g., insults, threats)
- Social (e.g., exclusion, spreading rumours)
- Cyber (e.g., online messages, social media)

Bullying is different from conflict, which is a normal part of relationships and involves disagreements between individuals. Students are expected to refrain from bullying and report concerns to a trusted adult. Reports may also be made through parents or guardians if a student is uncomfortable reporting directly. Bullying behaviours will be addressed promptly and may result in disciplinary action, including suspension where appropriate.

Addressing Behaviour and Supporting Students

When concerns arise, our focus is on learning, growth, and restoring relationships.

The implementation of our Code of Conduct recognizes that each student and situation is unique. Responses are guided by what is in the best interest of the student, the class, and staff, while maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment.

Our school uses a continuum of support and interventions that are developmentally appropriate and responsive to student needs. These may include:

- Restorative practices to repair relationships
- Preventative and supportive strategies
- Fair and consistent interventions when expectations are not met

Our goal is not only to address inappropriate behaviour, but also to support student growth. Support is provided to students impacted by inappropriate behaviour to ensure their safety and well-being. Creating a safe and welcoming school is a shared responsibility. By working together, we ensure every child feels safe, valued, and ready to learn.

Development and Review of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is developed in collaboration with students, staff, and families.

- It is shared annually with students and families and reviewed regularly and updated as needed
- It reflects Alberta Education requirements and the needs of our school community

Working Together: Parents and School

Strong partnerships support student success. Parents are asked to:

- Support school expectations
- Communicate concerns respectfully and in a timely manner
- Work collaboratively with staff to support student success

When concerns arise, the principle of **first contact** applies: Concerns should first be addressed directly with the individual(s) involved before being escalated. ***First contact “means that the person(s) who have the concern, have the responsibility to begin addressing the concern directly with those persons with whom they have the concern before taking their concern elsewhere”*** (Administrative Policy 152).