



**St Mary School
Choir & Orchestra Program**

**Code of Behaviour
and
Rights and Responsibilities**

St. Mary Choir School London

Code of Behaviour

The London District Catholic School Board Code of Conduct, “For the Good Of All”, Policy J 5.5 was revised and implemented effective February 1, 2008. This is the basis for the development of our *St. Mary School Code of Behaviour*. For more information regarding the London District Catholic School Board Safe Schools Policies, go to: http://www.ldcsb.on.ca/schoolservices/programs/SafeSchools/safe_policies.htm

Preamble:

We the members of St. Mary School Catholic School community, wish the atmosphere throughout our school to be conducive to learning, student growth and faith development.

As a Catholic School community, we are committed to creating a safe and healthy environment within the school for all members at all times. It is our goal that each person, through attitude and action, should reflect the goodness of Christ and see Christ in others.

We expect the members of our school community to develop a strong sense of reliability, respect and responsibility.

We expect students to behave responsibly, obey school rules, be courteous to staff, fellow students and school visitors and to develop a positive attitude towards learning and academic achievement.

We expect staff to be friendly, encouraging and considerate of individual differences, yet fair and firm in their expectation of responsible behaviour, good work habits and a reasonable standard of achievement from each student. Staff members are expected to model appropriate behaviours at all times for the students of the school.

We welcome an interested community and trust that parents and guardians will support the students and the school by encouraging regular, punctual attendance and by showing an interest in their child’s progress.

Expectations for Bus Behaviour

Riding the school bus is a privilege for students. Students from St. Mary School are expected to follow the same Code of Behaviour on the bus as they do at school.

The bus drivers are required to report any serious behaviour problems caused by students. A **School Bus Incident Report** is shared with the school and parents. If a student receives three of these reports, bus privileges will be taken away for one to three days, or a time deemed appropriate by the principal. The school reserves the right to suspend a student from riding the bus at any time as a result of inappropriate behaviour while riding the bus.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

1. **We have the right to be respected for who we are.**
We have the responsibility to show respect and be tolerant of our differences.
 - Students are expected to act as responsible members of the Catholic Community
 - Students will respect the Catholic nature of the school and behave appropriately in both learning and prayerful settings.
 - Students agree to use appropriate language while at school and on the bus, or when participating in any school sponsored activity.

2. **We have the right to experience a variety of learning opportunities.**
We have the responsibility to participate in a committed, loving way, putting forth our best effort.
 - Students are expected to be on time for classes.
 - When returning from each absence from school, the student will provide a written note signed by a parent or guardian.
 - Students who do not attend school regularly will be reported to the Board's Attendance Counselor.
 - Students are responsible for putting forth a strong, consistent effort into their studies.
 - It is expected that students will participate in daily learning activities and will complete daily and homework assignments. Daily homework should be a part of every student's routine. Suggested amount for St. Mary's students:
Gr. 5 & 6, 50 to 60 minutes per day; Gr. 7& 8, 70 to 80 minutes per day, on average ("10 minute rule")
 - Student agendas will be used daily to track assignments in all grades.
 - Students who encounter difficulties in their studies are encouraged to seek help from their teachers, peers or other staff members.
 - Students have a right to a classroom environment that fosters and facilitates learning.

3. **We have the right to be safe in the classroom, on the playground and on the bus.**
We have the responsibility to follow the rules of safety.
 - Students are accountable for their actions.
 - Students are responsible for following all rules of the school when attending any school or Board-sanctioned event, regardless of location.
 - Students are expected to follow the same rules on the bus as they do at school.
 - Students are expected to be aware of the Code of Behaviour and accept the consequences when its requirements are breached.
 - In compliance with the Board's Safe Schools Policy, if a student refuses to follow school rules or comply with disciplinary action, the matter will be treated as a serious infraction and subject to suspension or even expulsion.
 - Violence or the threat of violence will not be tolerated.
 - All incidents of threats or acts of violence will be acted upon.
 - Students agree that prohibited materials are not allowed at school or school-sponsored events. These materials include drugs, alcohol, weapons or articles intended for use as a weapon, sexually explicit materials, racist or sexist material, material glorifying violence and any other materials prohibited by law.
 - The student acknowledges that sexually explicit, racist or sexist material undermines the Christian respect and human dignity everyone deserves. Display or possession of

such material at the school or at school sponsored events will be considered in the same manner as an act of violence.

- Incidents of **bullying, cyber-bullying**, negative peer pressure and intimidation will not be tolerated and will be acted upon by the school in a swift and judicious manner, in keeping with the Policies and Procedures of the Safe Schools Act, Bill 212 (found at www.edu.gov.on.ca) and the LDCSB Safe Schools Policies
- Physical or verbal harassment and sexist and racist remarks or actions will be considered in the same manner as an act of violence.
- Students have the right to report any of the above behaviours without the fear of retaliation.

4. **We have the right to express our ideas and to be heard.**

We have the responsibility to speak appropriately and listen actively and openly.

- Students are expected to use appropriate language and behave in a respectful manner toward their teachers and all school staff at all times.
- Students are expected to use appropriate language at school and on the bus at all times and treat other students with mutual respect.
- Students will respectfully express opinions, while remaining open to the ideas and opinions of others.

5. **We have the right to learn with appropriate materials in a clean, comfortable environment.**

We have the responsibility to treat school property and materials with respect.

- Students will take proper care of school materials, including musical instruments, music folders and sheet music, in keeping with our school's "Student Use of String Instruments" policy.
- Students will be responsible for replacing textbooks and music in compliance with the Board's textbooks replacement policy.
- Students will respect the property of others when responsible for its damage.
- Destroying or defacing property will not be tolerated and will be considered an act of vandalism, as outlined in the Safe Schools Act, Bill 212 (www.edu.gov.on.ca) and the LDCSB Safe Schools Policies.

6. **We have the right to enjoy a clean, safe environment.**

We have the responsibility to play safely.

- Students are responsible of observing the 3 R's (Reduce, Recycle, Reuse).
- Students are encouraged to be active participants in the school's Recycling program.
- Students are not to deface or damage school property.
- Students are to contribute to the tidiness of their classroom, their own workspace and the school in general by being responsible for the proper storage of their own materials and belongings.
- Movement in the corridors between classes in an efficient manner and without making unnecessary noise is a sign of respect for those students and staff still in class.

7. **We have the right to be happy and to feel good about ourselves.**

We have the responsibility to create an inviting and welcoming community.

Students agree that their actions will reflect dignity for self and others.

- Students will treat others as they would wish to be treated.
- Students will demonstrate through their actions that each of us must be treated with kindness and respect.

Dress Code

Uniform days

- St. Mary School has an approved uniform for Performances and Liturgies and additional occasions deemed appropriate by the school.
 - All students are expected to *arrive* in full uniform to school and to scheduled events where the uniform is required
 - All students are expected to *leave* school on uniform days in full uniform as well
 - The golf shirt option can be worn only on days when specifically designated by the school
 - All students are expected to maintain their uniform pieces in a well laundered and tidy manner
 - On uniform days, girls will wear navy blue knee socks from September to the end of November, from April 1 to the end of June and navy blue tights from December 1 to March 31.
 - No jewelry is to be worn with the uniform

Non-uniform days

Appropriate casual clothing is acceptable for non-uniform days. A neat, respectable appearance demonstrates pride in oneself. It is also important to develop healthy grooming habits. While appropriate dress and grooming is primarily the responsibility of the student and parents, it is necessary from time to time to remind and reinforce a dress code that denotes a positive image and message about the person and reflects our Catholic values of modesty, self-respect, dignity and good taste and judgment.

- Students agree to comply with all of the school's dress expectations, which are:
 - Students have a responsibility to dress appropriately.
 - Students must dress appropriately for age,

physical development and weather condition

- Students must distinguish between beachwear and casual school wear and dress accordingly.
- All students must dress properly for Physical Education; shorts, gym shoes, T-shirts.

Not permissible:

- Tank tops/halter tops
- Tops that expose midriff
- Clothing with objectionable emblems or slogans
- Short shorts, short skirts
- Outer wear including hats, sunglasses inside the school
- Extreme hair colour and/or styles
- Body tattoos, excessive make-up
- Chains as jewelry or otherwise

Laundered school T-shirts are available on loan to any student whose shirt is deemed inappropriate by the school. These shirts need to be laundered and returned to the school after their use.

During the year, uniform days will occur on special occasions, i.e. school masses, performances and designated field trips. Students and their families will be informed of such days in advance. Students who are not in full uniform when required or forget their uniform will be required to

wear their uniform the next day.

School Rights and Responsibilities

The *London District Catholic School Board* is compelled to enforce the Ontario provincial **Code of Conduct**. All references to suspension and expulsion in this document are in accordance with the Education Act (as amended by the Safe Schools Act, Bill 212, 2007) and the Board Policies and Procedures regarding Safe Schools.

1. **When an infraction occurs, students and parents are assured that the school and the Board will use a “progressive discipline” approach for appropriate consequences. Normally, the initial actions will involve the teacher working with the student at the classroom level. Whenever necessary, parents and appropriate school staff will be involved.**

Progressive discipline is a whole school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports and consequences that include opportunities for reinforcing positive behaviour while helping students make good choices. (Bill 212, 2007)

Some of the following actions may be chosen as responses to an infraction:

- A verbal warning by teacher and/or principal
- School contact with parents
- Involvement of a Learning Services professional
- Loss of social time (recesses)
- Written performance agreements between the student and the teacher
- School or community service
- Loss of privileges (e.g. participation in school teams)
- Alternate supervised work/learning space in the school
- Suspension from 1- 20 days (with a Student Action Plan [SAP] in place for a suspension 6 days or longer)
- Involvement of community agencies
- Compensation for damaged or destroyed property, up to replacement or repair costs
- Police involvement in response to illegal acts
- Recommendation to the board of expulsion from school

2. Bill 212 – Section 310

A. Bullying

Bullying (including cyber-bullying on the Internet) is an infraction for which suspension must be considered.

The provincial definition of Bullying is as follows:

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 person’s body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

B. Activities leading to possible suspension

A principal shall consider whether or not 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 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**
- Inappropriate Personal Electronic Devices (PED) use (see # 3 of this section)
- Posting of inappropriate comments/material on internet
- Any other activity for which a principal may suspend a pupil under a policy of the Board

A suspension may be duration of 1 to 20 days.

If a suspension is 6 days or more (maximum 20 days), the school will provide the student with learning program to be carried out while the student is on suspension.

C. Activities leading to a Suspension

A principal shall suspend a student from his or her school and from engaging in all school-related activities if the student commits any of the following infractions:

- Possession of 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 illegal weapons or in illegal drugs
- Committing robbery
- Giving alcohol to a minor
- Any other activity that, under a policy of the board, is an activity for which a principal must suspend a pupil and, therefore in accordance with this Part, conduct an investigation to determine whether to recommend to the board that the pupil be expelled.

A pupil who is suspended under this section is suspended from his or her school and from engaging in all school-related activities.

- **The principal may suspend a student under this section for up to 20 days and, in considering how long the suspension should be, the principal shall take into account any mitigating or other factors prescribed by the regulations.**
 - **Mitigating factors**
 - The pupil does not have the ability to control his or her behaviour
 - The pupil does not have the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour
 - The pupil's continuing presence in the school does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any person
- **When a principal suspends a student under this section, he or she shall assign the pupil to a program for suspended pupils in accordance with any policies or guidelines issued by the Minister.**
- **Expelled students with the LDCSB will be able to participate in "Micah's Place" and the programs provided.**

[Micah's Place is an alternate learning environment provided and staffed by the LDCSB to provide support for students on long-term suspension or expulsion.]

In additional to the above, the school may also:

- **Report the infraction to the police;**
- **Recommend participation in a counseling program;**
- **Remove school privileges;**
- **Recommend expulsion from school to board officials if the infractions are severe or habitual.**

Note:

Parents or guardians of a minor can request an appeal of a decision to suspend or appeal a decision to expel a pupil. If the pupil is not a minor, the pupil may make this request.

In addition to the above, the school may also:

- Recommend the services of a community agency
- Recommend support services of Learning Services of the London District Catholic School Board (e.g. Social Worker)
- Report the incident to the police and the school may then:
 - Contact parents and inform them of the infraction.
 - Suspend the student for a minimum of twenty school days.
 - Contact a Board Superintendent to recommend expulsion (a disciplinary committee comprised of a panel of board trustees).

D. When a student is found to be in possession of prohibited material (eg. All weapons, all explosive materials, illicit drugs)

The School:

- Confiscates the weapon or material.
- Contacts parents and informs them of the situation.
- Issues a suspension of up to 20 school days with approval of a Board Superintendent in cases involving a threat of violence.
- Reports the incident to police.

The School will also:

- Report the incident to the appropriate Supervisory officer.

Note:

Students can no longer be expelled from all schools in the province but only from his/her school or from all schools in the Board.

**3. New Board Policy
Appropriate Use of Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs)
and of Online Social Networking**

What are PEDs?

PEDs are portable electronic handheld equipment that can be used for the purpose of communication, entertainment, data management, word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting ads/or receiving.

- To promote and maintain the respect and dignity of all members of our school community and to enhance student achievement and safety, the use of a PED is strictly prohibited on school premises except under limited conditions as authorized by the Principal.
- Failure to comply with this policy may result in the confiscation of the PED and/or disciplinary action as outlined in the Education Act. The school and the London district Catholic School Board assume no

responsibility for the theft, loss, recovery, repair or replacement of any PED brought onto school property, whether the item is lost, stolen or confiscated.

- **Cell phones at St. Mary School**

- Students at St. Mary School may have a cell phone in their belongings at school if and only if a parent has given permission and has deemed it necessary, for safety purposes, in order to contact parents before or after school hours and off school premises.
- Cell phones must remain concealed in the student's backpack throughout the school day and while the student is on school property or face consequences
- Students will request to use the school office phone throughout the school day to contact parents, if and when an emergency arises and only with the permission of their teacher.

What is on-line social networking?

- On-line social networking includes but is not limited to, existing and emerging networking sites, including Facebook, YouTube, MySpace, MSN, etc.
- All inappropriate references to board personnel, students and/or any member of the school community in computer-related mediums such as web pages or e-mail which is deemed to be conduct injurious to the moral tone of the school are violations of this policy and subject to consequences.

For more information regarding the London District Catholic School Board Safe Schools Policies, including the **Use of PEDs and Social Networking**, go to:

http://www.ldcsb.on.ca/schoolservices/programs/SafeSchools/safe_policies.htm

Parent Rights and Responsibilities

1. Parents are partners in the education of their children.

- Parents can expect the delivery of a quality education for their children within a safe and healthy environment.
- Parents agree to respect and support the Catholic nature of the school.
- Parents agree to sign permission forms when they approve a school request. Parents are invited to contact the school if they have questions or concerns about a request.
- Parents are encouraged to cooperate with the school if the student's program or performance requires special attention.
- Parents are encouraged to maintain open communication between home and school.

2. Parents agree to fulfill their responsibilities.

- Persons of compulsory school age must attend school punctually and regularly. Parents agree to support this legal requirement.
- When students are absent from school, parents are asked to inform the school of the reason and are requested to call the school before 8:45 a.m. They can do so in writing or by leaving a phone message.
- Parents are encouraged to work with school staff to resolve any behaviour problems that may arise.
- Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's learning.

We share a common belief that the school, the home and the Church work together. This common effort creates a welcoming environment that is safe, productive, caring and reflects the Gospel values. At St. Mary School, we strive to create an environment where positive behaviour is recognized and celebrated and negative behaviour is handled in a caring and judicious manner that reflects the rights and responsibilities of everyone.

“This is what Yaweh asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God.”

Micah 6