

Student Code Of Conduct (Discipline, Suspension and Expulsion Information)

Effective Date: September 1st, 2015

Approved By: Board of Directors, Spring 2015

Purpose: In keeping with The Canadian Montessori School's mission and Alberta's School Act regarding the Creation of Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments, The Canadian Montessori School is committed to:

- Establishing and maintaining a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment for all students and school staff.
- Establishing and maintaining an appropriate balance between individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities in the school community.
- Establishing and publishing expectations for student behaviour while at school, at a school-related activity or while engaging in an activity that may have an impact on others in the school.

Expected Conduct

Each student is responsible for acting positively in support of a welcoming and caring learning environment by:

- Acting at all times in keeping with the vision and mission underlying the school;
- Respecting oneself and the rights of others in the school;
- Conducting oneself in a manner that contributes to a welcoming, caring and respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging;
- Refraining from and refusing to tolerate bullying whether in or outside of the school or school hours or electronically;
- Informing a responsible, trusted and caring adult in a timely manner of incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation or other unwelcoming or uncaring acts;
- Attending school regularly and punctually;
- Diligently and actively being prepared to learn and actively pursue learning;
- Being accountable for individual behaviours to teachers and school staff;
- Cooperating with school staff to make the school a positive learning environment for all; and,
- Knowing and following the rules of the school.

Unacceptable Conduct

Unacceptable behaviours that may negatively affect a member of The Canadian Montessori School community or the school's learning environment, whether in or outside of the school or school hours or electronically, include, but are not limited to:

- *Discrimination.* In keeping with the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, no student or person may discriminate against a student on the basis of an individual student's race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender (including pregnancy, sexual harassment, and gender identity) physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income or sexual orientation.
- *Acts of bullying, harassment or intimidation.* As defined by the School Act, Section 1.1(b.1) **bullying** is defined as the “*repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one more individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation.*”
- Physical violence.
- *Acts of retribution* against an individual who has intervened to prevent bullying or informed about bullying or other unacceptable behavior.
- *Illegal activities* including, those involving illegal or restricted substances, possession or use or threat of use of weapons, and theft or damage to property.

Consequences

Students are expected to conduct themselves in keeping with their responsibilities as students. The school will investigate each instance of unacceptable conduct and pursue disciplinary action in a matter consistent with the principles of fundamental justice and the school's student discipline policy.

Progressive Discipline Policy

Step 1: Remediation and Support

In order to foster a positive learning environment, The Canadian Montessori School will engage in reasonable and caring efforts to support both the individual(s) who may have been the subject or victim(s) of unacceptable behaviour(s) and to support perpetrators of unacceptable conduct to improve their conduct.

Supportive actions pursued by The Canadian Montessori School may include, but are not limited to:

- Mentoring of individual students by older students
- More focused attention to individual students
- Regular follow-up meetings of specific teachers with individual students
- Student Peer Support Groups, including GSA's as appropriate
- Counselling and
- Restorative justice processes focusing on accountability and reconciliation.

When, after investigation, the conduct of a student is deemed detrimental to others or the school, or when a student refuses to comply with defined expectations, further corrective measures will be taken. Parental support/participation is seen as a critical part of any remediation process. A formal parent conference will focus on:

- Reviewing expectations for conduct
- Reinforcing those attitudes and behaviours which support the school rules and expectations
- Teaching the value of responsibility by supporting one's child when he/she is faced with the challenge of accepting responsibility for his/her inappropriate behaviour

Step 2: Suspension

Definition

In grave circumstances, an individual found to have engaged in unacceptable conduct may be subject to possible suspension or expulsion. A suspension means a student is removed from school temporarily for a specific period of time (1 to 5 days duration). Students cannot take part in school activities or events while suspended. Only the principal can suspend students. Suspensions will require a formal meeting with parents. The principal can decide on different consequences for each student, based on mitigating and other factors such as:

- The student's age
- The student's history (disciplinary history, personal history such as a recent trauma is the student's life)
- Whether the student can control his/her behaviour
- Whether the student can understand the possible consequences of his/her behaviour
- Whether the student's presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to anyone else
- Whether the behaviour is related to harassment because of the student's race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation or any other type of harassment
- Whether the behaviour was a manifestation of a disability identified in a student's IPP

What can lead to suspension?

Suspension will be considered whether the incident happens at school, on a school-related activity (e.g., a field-trip), or in any other circumstances where the student's behaviour has a negative impact on the school climate. The following behaviours are grounds for suspension and possible expulsion.

- Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person
- 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 student's school or to property on school premises
- Bullying
- Physical violence

Suspended students are allowed to return to school after the suspension is over. A re-entry meeting with the principal, teacher, student and the student's parents will be scheduled in advance of the student's return to school to make the student's transition back to school a positive one, and to identify any additional supports that may need to be put in place to promote positive behaviour.

Step 3: Expulsion

Definition

Expelled students are removed from school for an indefinite time period. Students are suspended first, while the principal and The Canadian Montessori School's Board of Directors are considering expulsion.

What can lead to expulsion?

If a student is found to have engaged in any of the behaviours listed below, the principal must immediately suspend him/her and expulsion will be considered during a formal meeting between the principal and The Canadian Montessori School's Board of Directors. This will happen whether the incident took place at school, at a school-related activity (e.g., a field-trip), or in any other circumstances where the activity has a negative impact on the school climate.

- Possessing a weapon, including a firearm
- Using a weapon to cause or threaten bodily harm to another person
- Committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner
- Committing a robbery

The administration will continue to be responsible for the expelled student's education program and will ensure the student has access to an education program for the remainder of the school year.