

Blackwater Creek Elementary School Code of Conduct

Statement of Purpose

The Blackwater Creek Elementary School Code of Conduct has been established to ensure that a safe, caring and orderly environment exists at our school. The Ministry of Education's Guide on Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools, the BC School Act, and School District 48 Policy support the Code of Conduct.

A. SCHOOL RULES

Everyone wants to be safe and comfortable at school. We believe that if all students follow the set of four positive agreements of a ‘Tribes Learning Community’ Blackwater Creek Elementary will be a safe and comfortable place to learn.

Positive Agreements include:

1. Attentive Listening
2. Appreciation/No Put-Downs
3. Right to Pass/Participate
4. Mutual Respect

The agreements are very general. We have been reluctant to set down a long list of behavioural do's and don'ts. Instead we have said to students to Respect Yourself, Respect Others, and Respect the School! We have found that both children and staff need to know the parameters of behaviour. On the following page are some guidelines to help students understand how the agreements are applied at the school.

The school agreements cover all rules of behaviour at school, going to and from school, and at school functions.

Attentive Listening

Attentive listening is a gift to be given. It depends upon:

- Acknowledging the person who is speaking with full attention and eye contact.
- Withholding one's own comments, opinions, and need to talk at the time.
- Paraphrasing key words to encourage the speaker and to let them know they have been heard.
- Affirming through body language that the speaker is being heard.
- Paying attention not only to the words but also to the feelings behind the words.

Appreciation/No Put-Downs

Put-downs are often used to convey affection: you goof-off, you jerk, you crazy kid. Though off-hand or flippant, they not only damage self-esteem but undermine the level of

trust within a group. A positive climate that builds self-worth cannot develop unless the following occurs:

- Children and adults challenge themselves to prohibit put-down remarks.
- We encourage students to exchange statements of appreciation (positive regard and recognition).
- Children use the three problem solving steps to peacefully solve problems.
 1. “I feel sad when I’m called ‘stupid.’ It’s a put-down and hurts. Please stop!
 2. “Please stop or I will get help.”
 3. Get help.

The Right to Pass – The Right to Participate

The right to pass means that each person has the right to choose the extent to which she or he will share in a group activity. Choosing the right to pass means that the student prefers not to share the personal information or feelings, or to actively participate in the group at the moment. The agreement does not apply when individual accountability is required on learning tasks. Students do not have the right to pass on homework, taking tests, responding to the teacher, etc. They do, however, have the right to pass on peer-led interaction. It is important to keep in mind that:

- Temporarily withdrawing from activity does not mean a student is not learning.
- You can count on the group (tribe), or peer group, to draw who usually passes back into an activity working role.

Mutual Respect

The purpose of the mutual respect agreement is to assure everyone that their individual cultural values, beliefs, and needs will be considered and properly honoured. It also means respect by adults for children’s rights, needs, and differences. Within the school community this agreement means respect for

- Others – no matter what their race, gender, age, colour, or learning ability.
- Newcomers from other cities, states, or countries.
- Teachers, parents, and other caring adults.
- Personal property and individual privacy.
- Individual skills, talents, and contributions.

B. BEHAVIOUR GUIDELINES

Most student misbehaviour is minor and is dealt with by the teacher. In most cases the parents are not contacted because the problem is solved by a simple discussion.

When further behavioural interventions are called for, they will reinforce appropriate behaviour and discourage inappropriate behaviour. Appropriate interventions may include:

- a. A student conference;
- b. A school detention at recess and/or lunch;
- c. Parent conference/contact;
- d. In-school suspension;
- e. Referral for school-based student services;
- f. Counseling for the student (if available);
- g. Course or program modification; or
- h. Referral to District staff for programs or services.

Parents/guardians will be appraised regarding interventions (c) through (h) above or for repetitive interventions.

In very rare situations, a child may become physically abusive towards an adult. This is a serious violation and will be dealt with accordingly. Equally so, abusive language towards an adult is a serious violation.

Acceptable Conduct

1. Looking at and listening to person talking.
2. Sitting properly in chair.
3. Following directions.
4. Using a kind, respectful voice.
5. Playing inside the school playground. The parking lot and forested hillside are out of bounds.
6. Keeping the school interior and playing fields litter-free and tidy.
7. Children must not leave the school grounds during school hours without being accompanied by an adult.
8. All outdoor footwear must be removed and stored in mudrooms. Inside shoes are worn at all times in school.
9. Children must dress appropriate to the weather and the school culture. Halter tops and 'spaghetti' strap shirts/dresses are not permitted.
10. All children will be expected to go outside.
11. Classrooms during lunch:
 - a) students must sit in their own desks
 - b) students can go to the washrooms or trash cans with permission
 - c) students must sit to eat
 - d) hats are permitted outside during recess and lunch

Unacceptable Conduct

The following are examples of conduct that is unacceptable at Blackwater Creek Elementary. The list provides examples and is not an all-inclusive list.

o behaviours that

- interfere with the learning of others
- interfere with an orderly environment
- create unsafe conditions

o acts of

- bullying, harassment or intimidation
- physical violence
- retribution against a person who has reported incidents

o illegal acts, such as:

- possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances
- possession or use of weapons
- theft of or damage to property
- vandalism

Rising Expectations

Expectations for student conduct increase as students become older, more mature and move through successive grades. Consequences and student responsibility increase accordingly.

What to expect if you misbehave:

Minor Offenses

For minor offenses like running in halls, usually the following will happen:

1. A teacher will ask you which rule is being broken and remind of what the rule is and why it is important. If you are polite and follow the instructions of the teacher or supervisor, the problem will be solved.
2. If the problem continues and/or you are rude or uncooperative with the teacher or the supervisor, the vice-principal will contact parents. We expect that most problems will be solved at step one.

Major Offenses - Office Referral

If something very serious like violence, swearing, destroying property, or bullying happens, or if you have repeated minor offenses, you may have to see the vice-principal, who will contact your parents.

Important

The school district Code of Conduct applies at Blackwater Creek Elementary so please go over it with your parent or guardian. For very serious incidents, (severe violence,

weapons, drugs or alcohol, vandalism) students may be suspended to the Board which means students with their parents must meet with a School Board committee to decide if the student is allowed to return to school and under what conditions. This is very rare at Blackwater Creek.

Students Rights

In disciplinary situations students will have the opportunity:

- " to know what they are being accused of
- " to explain their side of the story
- " to involve witnesses if necessary
- " to have their parents contacted
- " to know what their consequence is
- " to know what is expected of them in the future
- " to know what the possible consequences will be if the problem continues

C. CONSEQUENCES

In the early primary grades low-level misbehaviours are viewed as an opportunity for students to learn through appropriate consequences to their actions. This will involve a talk with the student by their teacher. Discipline will be preventative and restorative. The intent is for the student to learn from their actions. Students will be given a chance to explain themselves and help solve the problem.

How to Solve Problems

Students are taught to solve problems in "The Second Step" program.

They learn to:

- a. identify the problem
- b. think of solutions
- c. choose a solution and use it
- d. see if it works

They also learn to be assertive in a respectful way by using the "I" statement (i.e.: I feel ... when ... Please stop..) Also, students are supported by an adult when they walk away from a problem and ask an adult to help immediately. All staff is expected to help every student.

D. REPORTING/NOTIFICATION

Bullying is not tolerated. Every incident of bullying must be reported by both the students and parents. Students and parents can talk to the principal in a timely manner.

Bullying requires that a pattern be determined. Therefore, it is very important that inappropriate behaviours like name-calling, physical violence, threats and verbal abuse be reported quickly. A note or a phone call will alert staff to the problem thereby requiring

them to begin a discreet investigation. The vice-principal plays a central role in the process.

The process includes:

- " an investigation of all parties involved (parents of student, victim and parents of student offender at all times
- " written records
- " acknowledgment and support of victim
- " contact with parents of student offender in every instance
- " consequence
- " report to School District when required
- " police and/or other agencies as required by law
- " all parents if necessary

E. TIMELY INFORMATION

Information must be shared in a quick manner. Incident Reports must be submitted quickly. Records must be kept. Following an investigation a final report is written and the people involved are informed of the outcome. Privacy of students will be respected.

F. PREVENTION

Second Step

All students at Blackwater Creek Elementary are taught the Second Step program. This program is designed to teach students about how to resolve conflict, how to control anger and how to get along with others in difficult situations.

Tribes Learning Communities

All students at Blackwater Creek Elementary are guided through the sequential stages of group development using the Tribes model. This process teaches cooperation rather than competition. A positive climate is built through inclusion, sharing and caring, encouragement of participation, and high expectations for each and every child.