



**St. Clair Catholic**  
District School Board

***St. Clair Catholic District School Board – Senior Administration***

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**OUR MISSION**

**Learning together today, transforming tomorrow**

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

Parent Communication Guidelines

When parents/guardians have a concern or suggestion, it is expected that they will speak directly to the person with whom the issue has arisen – for example, the staff member or principal. If the matter is not resolved, they should proceed to the next level in the supervisory chain of responsibility.

**Step One** – speak to the staff member; **Step Two** – speak to the Principal; **Step Three** – speak to the Superintendent of Education.

It is expected that most matters will be resolved before they reach the Superintendent.

**The Role of the Principal** – The principal will involve the staff member in any discussions with the parent. The principal may request that concerns be put in writing and may involve others in the process, who may be helpful in resolving the concern.

**The Role of the School Council** – The school council is not a forum to discuss parent-teacher-student issues. If these matters are brought to any school council member, or any school council meeting, the concern is to be referred immediately to the principal, who will ensure the proper process is followed.

All other school-related concerns and suggestions, which do not involve a staff member, should be directed to the school principal. Concerns which arrive anonymously cannot be investigated sufficiently; therefore, anonymous complains or concerns will not be addressed.

Effective use of these communication guidelines will result in the fair and timely resolution of concerns.

***Kids Help Phone***

Since 1989, Kids Help Phone has been providing confidential, anonymous and professional counseling and information to young people five to 20 years old across Canada. No problem is too big or too small. Youth can call free anytime to speak to a counselor about an issue. Kids Help Phone does not subscribe to caller ID so that all contact is confidential. Young people can also access information or post a question to a counselor on-line at [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

Kids Help Phone is a registered charity and receives no core government funding; however, it is supported by many individual contributors and corporate partners.

**1 800 668 6868**  
**KidsHelpPhone.ca**

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### Transportation

Transportation services for the St. Clair Catholic District School Board are provided by Chatham-Kent Lambton Administrative School Services (CLASS). Under the CLASS policy, students are eligible to ride the bus if they live farther than 1.6 kilometers (elementary) and 3.2 kilometers (secondary) from their eligible school. For more details about student transportation please visit [www.schoolbusinfo.com](http://www.schoolbusinfo.com). CLASS recently launched a new and improved PARENT PORTAL to provide users access to up-to-date transportation information, web tools such as courtesy seats, bus pass and shared custody applications, email notifications and much more. CLASS also offers an APP (MYSBI) that provides real-time service updates and notifications regarding inclement weather cancellations, available for free on Android and iPhones. For all other questions about student transportation CLASS can be reached at 1-877-330-4287.

### Fog Days

When dangerous fog conditions exist, morning buses will be cancelled. However, **in most situations students will be bussed home after school.** The decision whether to cancel morning buses will be made by the bus operators in consultation with the transportation department. Parents should download the free MySBI app onto their mobile device to receive real time updates on school bus cancellations or delays. Bus cancellation information is also available through local radio stations and on the CLASS transportation website at [www.schoolbusinfo.com](http://www.schoolbusinfo.com)

### Bus Cancellations and School Closings due to Winter Storms

Safety of students is the primary consideration when the decision is made to cancel buses because of drifting snow or icy roads. On occasions when dangerous travel results in school buildings being closed, students must not attend. However, when buses are cancelled but schools remain open, it is expected that parents will determine whether it is safe to send their children to school. It is also understood that, should they decide to bring their children to school, it is the responsibility of parents to deliver them and pick them up at the end of the day **at the scheduled dismissal time.**

Students who arrive at school on days when the buses have been cancelled will be met by teachers who are prepared to provide instruction. If a majority of the class is present, the teacher will proceed with the planned program. However, on low attendance days, activities will be rescheduled and students will be given an opportunity to review material, practice previously learned skills or participate in other meaningful educational activities.

For students who are unable to get to school when the buses are cancelled, work packages for home study are available on the Board's website at [www.st-clair.net](http://www.st-clair.net) Go to Parent Resources, then click on Home Study Activities.

### School Security – Locked Doors

Exterior doors at all elementary schools will be locked during school hours. Doors will be unlocked during recess time only, to permit students access from the yard. Front doors of school buildings are equipped with cameras and a remote control locking and release mechanisms, to permit controlled access.

### Attendance

Regular attendance and punctuality are important to ensure quality education for the student. It is also an excellent life skill that should be developed at a young age. The school office must be notified whenever a student is to be absent. When a student is to be excused for an appointment during school hours, a note must be provided to the school office indicating the time the student will be picked up and whether or not the student will be returning to school.

Students will attend school on scheduled school days and take holidays according to the school year calendar. In the event that parents choose to take their child out of school at times other than school holidays, the responsibility lies with the parent to provide opportunities for learning. Teachers cannot provide detailed daily homework assignments that replicate the missed school program. However, when students are away from school due to a prolonged illness or injury, arrangements will be made with the parents to provide support.

### Illness While at School

If your child becomes ill during school hours, the office or classroom teacher will call the parent/guardian or designated contacts recorded on the student's file in priority sequence provided. A student who becomes ill will not be permitted to go home alone. We recommend that a parent/guardian pick up the student at the school.

### Volunteers

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board believes that school volunteers are an important resource in supporting educational programs, and is committed to promoting and supporting the involvement of volunteers within our schools. The Board also recognizes the need to ensure the safety and well-being of all students. All volunteers who have regular contact with students must complete a *Vulnerable Sector Criminal Background Check* before commencing their duties. Anyone who is interested in becoming a volunteer should speak to the school principal.

### Medication

The Board recognizes that on occasion there may be the need for students to receive medication during the school day in order to enable education of the student to continue. In order for prescribed medication to be administered, parents/guardians must provide the necessary authorizations and school administrators must follow the guidelines as outlined in *Sec. C Policy – Health Support*.

If injection medication is required, arrangements for the injections must be made by the parent or guardians. School personnel can assume no responsibility for injections (i.e. juvenile diabetes requiring mid-day insulin).

Board personnel will not administer non-prescription drugs.

#### Responsible Use of Technology

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board recognizes the important role of technology in helping students to learn and communicate effectively. In keeping with its mission, the Board requires that all devices be used in a morally responsible and legal manner. Policy and Procedures regarding *Responsible Use of Technology* can be found on the Board website <http://www.st-clair.net/policies.aspx> Go to Section B – Administration.

It is a privilege for students to access the school network and to access the internet and other resources. The person to whom the account is issued is responsible at all times for its use. All user accounts must be accessed solely to support the educational objectives of the St. Clair Catholic District School Board.

#### Consent Form for Use of Students' Names, Photographs or Work

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board Social Media and Electronic Communications policy and procedures can be found on the Board website at <http://www.st-clair.net/policies.aspx> Go to Section B – Administration.

The policy requires a signed consent form, either granting or withholding consent, for release of student photographs, videos, classroom work, etc. for various publications, including Board websites or social media sites, school yearbooks, newspapers, television and radio newscasts. The form remains in effect for the student's entire school career; however, consent can be either withdrawn or granted at any time by contacting the school office and completing a new form.

#### Personal Student Information

The St. Clair Catholic District School Board and your school use the personal information you provide in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). MFIPPA sets out guidelines which schools and district school boards must follow when collecting, using and/or disclosing students' personal information. Under this Act, personal information refers to recorded information about an identifiable individual.

The Education Act sets out duties and powers of the Board and authorizes school boards to collect personal information for the purpose of planning and delivering educational programs and services, which best meet students' needs and for reporting to the Minister of Education, as required. For a detailed explanation of how the Board uses this personal information, please refer to the Board website, or your school's website, at [www.st-clair.net/schools.aspx](http://www.st-clair.net/schools.aspx)

#### Privacy Considerations

Our families and staff enjoy opportunities to share activities with parents and the school community through teams, clubs, school performances and special events. Many of these are memory making for families; and as such, photos and videos are often recorded. We ask that families exercise discretion when taking photos and videos at school events; and consider the privacy of other students, who may also appear in those pictures. We ask that families not upload to the internet (i.e., YouTube, Facebook, etc.) images of students other than their own children. For more about *Sec. B Policy and Procedures – Privacy* visit the Board's website at the link below.

<http://www.st-clair.net/Data/Sites/1/media/public/Corporate/B-Administration/Privacy-Pol.pdf>

#### Parental Access to Ontario Student Records

Schools are charged with the legal responsibility for maintaining and holding Ontario Student Records (OSR). These documents must not leave the school office. Parents may have access to these records; however, they are requested to speak with the principal to arrange a time when they can review the document together.

#### Custody

In cases where custody is an issue, the parent will provide a copy of the court's custodial order to be placed in the student's OSR folder. If at any time, the information contained in the custodial order is changed, the parent will provide a copy of the new order.

#### Sacramental and Religious Instruction

Religion is integrated within all aspects of the educational experience and that is one of the reasons we can say that Catholic schools are "schools with a difference." Parents, priests and teachers prepare the children to receive the Sacraments.

All children are encouraged to take part in all aspects of religious instruction and celebrations. We also encourage the children to attend Sunday Mass regularly with their parents, as the Mass is the very centre of our worship.

Periodically, the teacher will send home information about the programs being used with ideas for parents/guardians to use with their child at home. We hope you will use these materials to make the spiritual development of your child a joint effort of Church, school and home.

### Dress Code

The values evident in all aspects of a Catholic school should reflect the faith and Christian commitment of the school community. Popular social trends may be in conflict with the values taught in school; consequently, clothing popular at a particular time may clash with the school's values and be unacceptable.

All clothing worn must be clean, neat, free from slashes, comfortable and appropriate for the business of attending school. No clothing may be worn to school which has pictures, symbols or writing which may be interpreted as discriminatory, degrading, demeaning or disrespectful of Catholic educational values. For further information, please refer to *Sec. C Policy – Dress Code for Elementary and Secondary Students*.

### Police Protocol

Police services have the responsibility to:

- enforce the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *Police Services Act and Regulations*, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, and other federal, provincial and municipal laws and regulations;
- assist victims of crime;
- assist in the development of young people's understanding of good citizenship;
- promote and foster a reduction of crime, both against and committed by young people;
- divert young people away from crime and antisocial behaviour; and
- work in partnership with the school to support positive development.

## SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

### *Standards of Behaviour*

The school standards of behaviour apply to all members of the school community, including students, parents and guardians, teachers or other school staff members, volunteers and visitors.

The standards of behaviour apply:

- on school property;
- while travelling on a school bus that is owned by the Board or that is under contract to the Board;
- in-school sports activities;
- in off-site school-sponsored activities; or
- in circumstances where engaging in an activity could have a negative impact on the school climate (e.g. on-line).

All members of the school community must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability;
- respect the rights of others;
- 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;
- respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching.

All members of the school community must **not**:

- engage in bullying behaviours;
- commit sexual assault;
- traffic weapons or illegal drugs;
- give alcohol to a minor;
- commit robbery;
- be in possession of any weapon, including firearms;
- use any object to threaten or intimidate another person;
- cause injury to any person with an object;
- be in possession of, or be under the influence of, or provide others with alcohol or illegal drugs;
- 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 an act of vandalism that causes damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school;
- swear at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority.

### ***Roles and Responsibilities***

The School Code of Conduct recognizes that all members of the school community, including principals, teachers and other staff members, students and parents have an obligation to comply with the standards of behaviour outlined in this policy. Each member of the school community has the following roles and responsibilities:

#### **Students**

Students must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a student:

- comes to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- shows respect for himself or herself, for others, and for those in authority;
- refrains from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others; and
- follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his or her own actions.

Students are also expected to:

- display the contents of clothing, backpacks, etc. that are worn or carried on school property if directed by the school principal or the vice-principal. Desks and lockers are school property and a search is permissible by school administration;
- be dressed in a neat and well-groomed manner, according to *Sec. C Policy – Dress Code for Elementary and Secondary Students*.

#### **Parents**

Parents 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, inclusive and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill their role when they:

- show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- communicate regularly with the school;
- help their child be neat, appropriately dressed and prepared for school;
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
- show that they are familiar with the Provincial Code of Conduct, the Board's Code of Conduct and school rules;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour; and
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

#### **Teachers and Other School Staff Members**

Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff members maintain order in the school 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.

#### **Community Partners and the Police**

Through outreach, partnerships already in place may be enhanced and new partnerships with community-based service providers and members of the community (e.g., Aboriginal Elders) may also be created. Community-based service providers are resources that the St. Clair Catholic District School Board may use to deliver prevention or intervention programs.

The police play an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. Police investigate incidents in accordance with a protocol developed with the Board. The protocol is based on a provincial model that was revised in 2011 by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the Ministry of Education.

### ***Procedures for Reporting Incidents of Bullying and Harassment***

All students have the right to a caring, respectful and safe school environment, which is free from all forms of bullying and harassment. All school staff will take steps to prevent bullying and harassment and to assist and support students, who are being bullied.

Students or parents should report issues of bullying to any school staff member or administrator as soon as possible. A bullying incident report form will be completed by the parent, student or school staff member. The form will be retained by the administrator as needed for possible progressive discipline. Forms will be available in the school office or on-line at [www.st-clair.net](http://www.st-clair.net)

### ***Progressive Discipline***

In order to promote positive pupil behaviours that contribute to safe learning environments, the school supports the use of positive practices for prevention and behaviour management. Progressive discipline is a non-punitive, whole school approach that uses a continuum of corrective and supportive interventions, supports and consequences to address inappropriate behaviour. When addressing inappropriate behaviour, school staff will consider the particular pupil and circumstances, including mitigating and other factors.

Early and ongoing intervention strategies may include:

- Contact with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Oral reminders
- Review of expectations
- Written work assignment with a learning component
- Volunteer services to the school community
- Referral to counselling
- Conflict mediation and resolution
- Consultation

When inappropriate behaviour has occurred, progressive discipline may also include a range of interventions, supports and consequences such as:

- Meeting with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s), pupil and principal, teachers, school and related personnel;
- Referral to a community agency for anger management or substance abuse counselling/intervention
- Detentions
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class
- Restitution for damages
- Restorative practices
- Transfer to another class within the school
- Transfer to another school within the board
- Suspension or Expulsion

### **Suspensions**

A pupil in junior kindergarten, kindergarten, grade 1, 2, or 3 shall not be suspended as per *Education Act* section 306 subsection 306(1) and section 310 subsection 310(1). Activities listed in subsection 310(1) will still be subject to mandatory suspensions, pending the results of an investigation.

The infractions for which a suspension may be considered by the principal include:

1. Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person;
2. Possessing alcohol, cannabis, illegal and/or restricted drugs;
3. Being under the influence of alcohol or cannabis;
4. Swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority;
5. 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;
6. Bullying (a form of repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour) that is 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. Bullying behaviour can include physical, verbal, electronic (cyber bullying), written, or other means;

7. Any act that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any similar factor;
8. Any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the moral tone of the school;
9. Any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the physical or mental well-being of any member of the school community; or
10. Any act considered by the principal to be contrary to the Board or School Code of Conduct.

A pupil may be suspended only once for any one incidence of an infraction and may be suspended for a minimum of one (1) school day and a maximum of twenty (20) school days.

### **Expulsions**

The infractions for which a principal may consider recommending to the Board that a pupil be expelled from the pupil's school or from all schools of the Board include:

1. Possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm;
2. Using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person;
3. Committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner;
4. Committing sexual assault;
5. Trafficking in weapons, legal, illegal and/or restricted drugs;
6. Committing robbery;
7. Any act that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any similar factor;
8. Cases in which the student has been previously suspended for bullying and the student's continuing presence in the school creates, in the opinion of the principal, an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person;
9. Giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor;
10. An act considered by the principal to be significantly injurious to the moral tone of the school and/or to the physical or mental well-being of others;
11. A pattern of behaviour that is so inappropriate that the pupil's continued presence is injurious to the effective learning and/or working environment of others;
12. Activities engaged in by the pupil on or off school property that cause the pupil's continuing presence in the school to create an unacceptable risk to the physical or mental well-being of other person(s) in the school or Board;
13. Activities engaged in by the pupil on or off school property that have caused extensive damage to the property of the Board or to goods that are/were on Board property;
14. The pupil has demonstrated through a pattern of behaviour that s/he has not prospered by the instruction available to him or her and that s/he is persistently resistant to making changes in behaviour which would enable him or her to prosper; or
15. Any act considered by the principal to be a serious violation of the Board or School Code of Conduct.

Further details, including the appeal process for suspensions and expulsions, are outlined in the St. Clair Catholic District School Board's *Sec. C Policy – Student Discipline*.