

Pitt Meadows Secondary School
Ecole Secondaire Pitt Meadows
Code of Conduct

Pitt Meadows Code of Conduct has been created to maintain a safe, caring and orderly school environment. The purposes of the Code of Conduct are

- (1) to encourage the development of *socially responsible behaviour* resulting in a positive reputation for students and the school community,
- (2) to foster *a safe and welcoming learning environment* for all students, staff and parents,
- (3) to clearly communicate behavioural expectations to the school community.

The Code of Conduct applies to all members of the school community at school, traveling to and from the school, at any school-related activity at any location, or any circumstance/activity that will have an impact on the school environment.

“The BC Human Rights Code identifies 13 protected grounds under the legislation. People are protected by virtue of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, and unrelated criminal or summary convictions.” Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide pages 9-13.

Members of the Pitt Meadows Secondary School Community are expected to:

- **Respect:**
themselves, other students and staff, the building and greater community;
be honest, responsible and have pride in themselves and their school
- **Strive for Excellence:**
by contributing to a positive, harassment-free environment, attending regularly, on time and prepared to learn;
- **Commit to our Community:**
by contributing to a harassment free environment, operating in a socially responsible manner, and care for the image and integrity of the Pitt Meadows community;

General Expectations:

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner allowing every teacher to teach without interruption, while allowing every student to achieve to his/her maximum potential. It is expected that the entire school community will work in harmony and in a socially responsible behaviour to create a climate that is healthy, safe, and positive. Behaviour that interferes with these outcomes is considered against the code of conduct and subject to review.

Expectations for student conduct for younger students and students with special needs differ those for older students as they do for students with special needs who are unable to meet expectations due to a disability. It is expected as students move through successive grades, become older and more mature that they will be more socially responsible.

PMSS and District #42 Expectations:

- The school district has a "zero tolerance" policy on weapons in schools. All weapons or instruments that have the appearance of a weapon are prohibited in all school environments. The administrator will use discretion when interpreting the use and intent of such objects. Consequence for violating this

policy will range from suspension to expulsion.

- The use or possession of intoxicants in or on school property is prohibited. The use, possession, or sale of intoxicants at school events, and attendance at school events while under the influence of intoxicants is prohibited.
- Consequences for intimidation, harassment, bullying, acts of violence or the possession or use of a weapon by anyone on school property, or at a school event considered to be a serious threat to both students and staff will range from suspension to expulsion.
- The use of cellular phones or other electronic devices cannot interfere with teaching and learning.
- Smoking or chewing tobacco is not permitted on School District #42 property.
- The Board requires pupils to be dressed for school attendance in neat, clean and tidy clothing appropriate to reasonable standards. Clothing should not interfere or affect the learning environment. Clothing logos must not display illegal activities, promote alcohol, or display inappropriate wording.

Pitt Meadows School Responses to Code of Conduct Violations

- PMSS responses to unacceptable conduct will be thoughtful, consistent and fair.
- The focus of any intervention will be preventative and restorative in nature, rather than merely punitive.
- Wherever possible, students will be encouraged to participate in the development of meaningful interventions through discussion and mediation.
- Decisions will be made with respect to the individual. Responses to conduct issues will take into consideration the student's age, maturity and past conduct. Interventions will not discriminate against a student who cannot meet an expectation because of a disability.
- Reasonable steps will be taken to prevent retaliation against the person who reported a code of conduct issue.
- Every effort will be made to support students. However, if there are ongoing conduct issues after having implemented interventions, progressive discipline may include, but is not limited to suspension, change of program, change of school, or involvement of the police when behaviour includes a criminal code violation.
- When responding to breaches in the Code of Conduct, school officials may inform a student's parent(s), the parents of other students who were involved, school district officials, the police or other agencies or the parents of all students when the whole school community needs to be reassured that a serious situation is being addressed.

Specifically we will look at four (4) important outcomes when addressing poor student behaviour:

1. The student understands why his/her behaviour is not acceptable.
2. An appropriate consequence may result.
3. Other students learn that the behaviour is not acceptable - this happens when nearby students hear what the adult says or students see that there is a tangible consequence for a behaviour.
4. The administrator communicates with the student to review the incident, allowing the student further review of and reflection of his/her behaviour.

In consideration of the information stated above, the following examples of infractions would be a representation of where a suspension from school is considered. It must be understood that the behaviours our students undertake within the community, in and out of regular school hours may negatively impact our educational environment. Once these behaviours enter our school and negatively influence education, students become subject to questioning and recommendation for behavioural change. Essentially, ***we are a school and community wrapped in one.*** It is expected that our students operate in a manner both positive and productive.

Each of these situations would be reviewed individually, and dealt with in a friendly, fair, yet firm manner.

Fighting: it is expected that students learn to work out their issues in a non-violent manner. It is hoped that students will find an adult/student leader to mediate differences. Students involved in fighting while they are under the jurisdiction of the school or where the conflict interferes with teaching or learning will be suspended.

Students who watch, encourage, promote, or participate in fighting are subject to consequences. It is expected that students who are aware of possible fights would exercise maturity and report (anonymously, if need be) the potential fight. This is viewed as contributing to a safe school environment.

Drugs/Alcohol: students who are under the influence or in possession of a drug or alcohol should expect to be suspended from school. Participation in an educational counseling program(s) may be presented as an option to reduce the length of suspension. A second offense of this nature may find the student referred to the District Suspension Review Committee for School District #42.

Harassment, Bullying, Intimidation is defined by the ministry of education as, “any unwelcome or unwanted act or comment that is hurtful, degrading, humiliating, or offensive to another person. Of particular concern is when that harassment behaviour persists after the aggressor has been asked to stop.” Escalating consequences will result until the unwanted behaviour has stopped.

Plagiarism: Defined as the use or close imitation of the language or ideas of another student or person and representation of them as one's own original work. Students can expect to receive a zero on that assignment, and may, if continued, lose credit for the course. Students who allow others to copy their work will also receive a zero on the assignment. Other consequences may also be imposed such as research on the consequences of plagiarizing at a post secondary institution.

Academic Dishonesty: Defined as plagiarism, giving or receiving aid in an examination or where otherwise prohibited, or any other deceptive act in connection with work submitted to meet course or graduation requirements. Consequences for academic dishonesty may include:

- Rewriting the test or assignment
- Writing an Alternate assignment or test
- A zero percent grade assigned
- Suspension from School
- Loss of credit for the course
- Referral to the District Review Committee

Pitt Meadows Secondary is a place that allows all students to learn in an environment without fear. It is expected that students understand and show respect for all individuals, regardless of their differing backgrounds, race, dress, or presentation. Students who harass, bully, or use intimidation to overpower, control, or harm an individual's self esteem or person are subject to consequence ranging from completing an educational project to suspension. Further to this, conversations will occur with parents/guardians and if warranted, the R.C.M.P.

Any of the following behaviours could be considered harassment:

- Condescending treatment that undermines another's self-respect, such as name-calling, teasing, disrespectful comments
- Gossiping, spreading malicious rumours, "dirty" looks, social ridicule, public embarrassment
- Social isolation ("freezing out" or rejecting others), exclusion from a group, threatening to withdraw friendship
- Repeated unwanted communication or attention
- Unwelcome jokes, innuendoes, insults, or put downs; taunts about a person's body, disability, religion, attire, age, economic status, ethnic or national origin
- Insulting graffiti directed at an individual or group
- Unwanted and uninvited sexual attention, particularly when it is intimidating, hostile, or offensive to the recipient.

Cyber Bullying: Students who harass, bully, or use intimidation behaviours carried out through the internet such as, but not limited to, e-mails, chat rooms, blogs, discussion groups, Facebook, or MySpace are subject to consequences as outlined by our Code of Conduct.

Inappropriate behaviour: (rudeness, willful disobedience, classroom disruptions) Students who interfere with teaching and learning may be suspended from school until they learn that this is unacceptable. The length of suspension may vary from one day to referral to Suspension Review, dependent on severity and repetition of behaviour.

Weapons or facsimiles of a weapon: Referral to the District Suspension Review Committee for School District #42. The use, possession, or sale of fireworks at school is a serious concern and students will be suspended and/or asked to participate in a fire safety program through the Pitt Meadows Fire Department's Tapp-C Program.

Truancy and tardiness: Students are expected to arrive on time and ready to learn. It is expected that students would not be away or be late any more than absolutely necessary. It is the responsibility of the student or parent of that student to report absences to the office. As per the school district's absentee and grad expectations policy, senior students may not be eligible to attend the PMSS Grad Ceremony after 60 period, or 15 days absences.

Vandalism: Issues of vandalism vary with the circumstance. Consequences for this type of disrespect fall from financial restitution, suspension to involvement with the RCMP.

Dress Code: It is expected that students would dress for school in a manner that would be found in a local, professional business or institution. These guidelines would include clothing that:

- is appropriate in language and message;
- is not too revealing, especially in the torso area;

- covers the body in an appropriate manner;
- does not include headgear (with exception to recognized ethnic or religious beliefs);
- does not show undergarments.

Situations do occur when a student disagrees with the views expressed by a teacher or administrator. This may happen in situations where a judgment is made about language or dress. In these difficult situations, students are required to *follow safe directions/guidelines/instructions by staff immediately in a controlled manner. At an appropriate time, students who wish to appeal this expectation may do so through an administrator.*

Suspensions

Many factors are considered when arriving at a decision to consequence a student who violates the Pitt Meadows Secondary School Code of Conduct. The decision to suspend a student is made when:

- the behaviour the student exhibited is in direct opposition to the Code of Conduct;
- the educational climate in the school is in jeopardy if the behaviour is not stopped;
- parents are supportive and share in the responsibility to impact a behaviour change with their child;
- resources are such that in-school consequences are not possible;
- the student interferes with the learning process of other students or the teaching of teachers;
- the student is a repeat offender and has already received previous consequences;
- outside resources (counseling agencies) are needed to help support a change;
- the student needs time away from school to re-think or re-group him/herself and return ready and willing to learn.

The decision to suspend a student from school or in school is always taken seriously and made only when consideration is given to the above stated circumstances. Where possible, students are given consequences that do not result in out of school consequence. Before a decision is made to consequence a behaviour in-school, administration would consider the following questions:

1. Will a decision to in-school the student result in the necessary behaviour change for the student?
2. What is the home situation for the student? Will the parent be supportive or will this suspension be a holiday? Are the parents able to supervise?
3. What is the age of the student? What has happened in the past with this student? How has a suspension worked in the past?
4. How did the student's behaviour impact the school population?
5. Is a 'cooling off' period needed (especially if a fight has occurred)?

The following alternatives to out of school suspension have been used and are currently in place at Pitt Meadows Secondary School:

1. Full or partial day in-school suspension.
2. Detentions at lunch or after school
3. Parent meetings.
4. Meetings with school counseling staff.
5. R.C.M.P. intervention.

6. Loss of privilege in areas of the school or in terms of time.
7. Schedule changes.
8. An extensive research project is assigned to the student. Oftentimes this project involves the student working at noon hour and after school researching information relating to the offense.
9. Mediation meetings between students, parents and administration.
10. Enrollment in a recognized program outside of the school that deals with the recurring student behaviour.

Should you wish clarification on any of Pitt Meadows Secondary's Code of Conduct please contact an administrator at 604-465-7141.