

Code of Conduct

For more detailed information see the TLDSB Code of Conduct Policy OP-6020 and Procedure OP-6021 or speak to your school Principal

At our school we believe relationships are the key to safe and caring communities. We strive to learn and practice the skills that will make us safe and caring individuals. We know certain behaviours are never acceptable in a safe and caring school community and we recognize there are many different approaches to correcting or managing behaviour. The use of a variety of tools and methods when dealing with behaviours demonstrates that we value a safe and caring school.

Safe and Caring Schools

Our purpose in providing progressive discipline and a code of conduct is to foster individual growth in all of our students. We aim to provide a safe and caring, restorative culture in our schools where all members of our school community are held accountable for their actions while at the same time developing character traits such as empathy. When harm is done, we seek to repair that harm, so that all students can feel comfortable in a safe and caring school community.

Progressive Discipline

Discipline is one method that teaches students proper behaviour and corrects behaviour mistakes.

The process of progressive discipline provides opportunities for students to change their behaviour before it becomes a significant concern. Typically, behaviour requiring correction falls into four categories of discipline that are used progressively over time based on the frequency and severity of misbehaviours. Depending on the nature of the incident, students may enter the discipline cycle at different levels.

1. Student behaviour error is infrequent, minor, and not severe
2. Chronic pattern is identified
3. Severity and frequency identify a need for more long term and targeted intervention
4. Severity and type of misbehavior means consideration of suspension

Restorative Practice

Trillium Lakelands District School Board is committed to building safe and caring school communities through the use of restorative practices. Restorative practice seeks to foster healthy behaviours and strengthen relationships. This is best achieved when teachers, students, and parents learn to engage with one another in restorative ways.

Restorative practice has two main goals:

1. **To strengthen and build relationships.** One of the structures we use to do this is classroom circles. During classroom circles students sit in a circle and an issue or topic that is relevant to everyone is introduced to be discussed. Each member of the class is given a chance to speak and present their ideas and thoughts. The classroom circle allows students to get to know each other and build relationships that lead to increased respect and empathy for each other.
2. **Manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm as a way of building community.** Restorative practice puts a premium on fair process through the use of the restorative questions to resolve conflicts. Questions include:
 - a. What happened?
 - b. What were you thinking at the time?
 - c. What have you thought about since?
 - d. Who has been affected? In what ways?
 - e. What do you think needs to happen to make things better?

These questions allow us to focus on the past (what happened), the present (who has been affected), and the future (what do you think needs to happen). Students are held accountable for their actions while the harm is repaired and relationships are re-established.

It is increasingly evident that schools and communities around the world are safer, more able to successfully address issues like bullying, and experience improved student achievement when they embrace restorative practices. The use of restorative practices has been shown to reliably reduce misbehaviour, bullying, violence, and crime among students and improve the overall climate for learning.

Bullying Prevention

Trillium Lakelands District School Board is committed to the development of positive school climates in all schools to ensure environments where students and staff can feel happy, comfortable, welcome and safe. Schools have committed resources and work to build capacity on an ongoing basis to help students deal with difficult situations.

As a school board however, we realize that incidents of bullying do occur and **a student who is the target of bullying must tell an adult in their school, their parents, a friend, or report the incident on line.** It is important for the student to tell someone so that school personnel can take steps to assist all individuals involved to repair the harm and restore the relationship. Counseling and mental health services are available for the student who feels vulnerable in the school. Parents are encouraged to be partners in focused solutions.

All schools have a formal response to bullying plan in place. The schools response to bullying will typically involve the **5 Step Bullying Response Strategy:**

STEP ONE

Parents and Guardians will be called and/or contacted by mail when:

- a) There has been a complaint against your child for bullying behaviours
- b) Investigation has confirmed that there is substance to this complaint

- Please talk to your child regarding this behaviour
- We are willing to assist in this communication with your child should you wish to come in
- If there is another complaint against your child, or an associate of your child, we will move to Step Two.

There may be opportunity at this stage to engage in restorative practices.

STEP TWO

If there is another confirmed complaint, then the consequences may escalate for the student(s) participating in the bullying behaviour.

Typical consequences at this level include:

- Contact with the home again as per step 1
- Loss of recess or similar privilege for a period of time
- Notice to student and parent that the next confirmed complaint may lead to suspension out of school
- Request to meet with the student and the parent

- There may be opportunity at this stage to engage in restorative practices.

STEP THREE

Out of school suspension may be applied (generally duration of less than 5 days), also:

- Meeting with parent and student
- Involvement in a supportive program to assist the student in dealing with these behaviours
- Notice to student and parent that the next confirmed complaint may lead to lengthier out of school suspension and possible police involvement
- There may be opportunity at this stage to engage in restorative practices.

STEP FOUR

Depending upon the severity of the behaviours, the next step may be out of school suspension; generally a duration of 6 – 15 days and possible police involvement. There may be an opportunity at this state to engage in restorative practices.

STEP FIVE

Depending upon the severity of the behaviours, the next step may be suspension/pending expulsion and possible police involvement. Restorative practices also possible at this stage.

Appropriate Use of Technology

APPROPRIATE USE OF INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Users of technology and technology services will follow the procedures outlined in the Appropriate Use of Information/Communication Technology and Technology Services Policy BD 3035 and Procedure BD 3036, available at tldsb.ca

Users will access school board technology for educational purposes by:

- Observing standards of courtesy and behaviour consistent with the practices and policies of the Trillium Lakelands District School Board when sending or publishing messages or other information on the Internet;
- Refraining from using technology equipment, systems, and/or services for any purpose which violates the law;
- Using only the login password provided to them.

No user may disrupt other users or compromise the functionality of the school board network by:

- using the school board technology for illegal purposes;
- knowingly use ways to get around school board digital security;
- downloading files without permission;
- posting, publishing, or displaying any defamatory, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually orientated, threatening, or racially offensive messages or pictures from any source;
- transmitting or downloading information or software in violation of copyright laws;
- impersonating others;
- transmitting or knowingly receive software or malware;
- harming, destroying, altering, copying, or gaining access to data of any person, computer, or network linked to the school board;
- damaging or altering software components of any school board network device;
- Sharing passwords or accounts with others.

Failure to observe these rules could result in the loss of computer privileges. The sequence of the interventions used to discipline students will depend on the circumstances and behaviour of each individual pupil. Although progressive discipline approaches are encouraged where appropriate, a serious incident may warrant a suspension even on the first occurrence. Parents may refer to the Code of Conduct Policy OP6020 and Procedure OP6021 available at tldsb.ca.

Consequences

Consequences will focus on helping children to develop appropriate social skills, self-discipline and learn to accept responsibility for personal actions.

Counselling is a regular part of the process of discussing behaviour and assessing appropriate consequences. A student will have the opportunity to explain the reason for behaviours that have been questioned or referred to the principal. School staff will provide a fair process in establishing the credibility of information. **It is our belief that having students reflect on how their behaviours have impacted others will help guide them to make better decisions in the future.** The age and grade level, and the previous record of conduct, will be considered when assessing appropriate disciplinary consequences.

The range of consequences includes:

- counselling
- reprimand
- notification to parents
- corrective activity
- loss of privilege
- detention(s)
- restitution
- **Restorative Circle**
- **Restorative Conference**
- involvement of community or school resources
- in-school suspension
- police contact
- reflective time out of school
- discretionary or mandatory suspension/expulsion from school

All members of our school community must:

- **Respect themselves:**
 - Choose to use appropriate language
 - Model respectful and appropriate behaviour
 - Comply with the school dress code
 - Make healthy lifestyle choices
 - Engage in learning opportunities
- **Respect others:**
 - Interact with others in a kind, compassionate, honest and appropriate manner
 - Listen to others – peers and persons in authority alike
 - Comply with Board and School policies and procedures
 - Comply with the law
- **Respect property:**
 - Respect school/board property
 - Respect personal property
 - Respect peers/others' property

Suspensions and Expulsions

Suspensions

Principals may consider suspension for the following:

- Threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person
- Possessing alcohol or restricted drugs
- Being under 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 or property located at the pupil's school
- Bullying (repetitive behaviour injurious to the mental or physical well-being of another person)
- Any act considered by the principal to be contrary to the Board or School Code of Conduct
- Giving alcohol or illegal/restricted drugs to minor
- An act considered by the principal to be injurious to the moral tone of the school and/or to the physical or mental well-being of others
- 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
- 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
- Activities engaged in by the pupil on or off property that have caused extensive damage to the property of the Board or to goods that are/were on Board property
- The pupil has demonstrated that she or he has not prospered by the instruction available and is persistently resistant to changing behaviour
- Any act considered by the principal to be a serious violation of the Board or School Code of Conduct
- Conduct which demonstrates that the student is unwilling to respect or respond to authority and/or respect the rights or dignity of other school community members

Suspensions Pending Expulsion

Suspension pending expulsion **must** be considered in the following cases:

- Possession of a weapon
- Use of weapon to cause or threaten bodily harm to another person
- Physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a doctor
- Sexual assault
- Trafficking - weapons or illegal/restricted drugs
- Robbery

Mitigating factors

Mitigating factors will be considered in reaching a decision regarding consequences for student behaviours. Mitigating factors are:

- The student does not have the ability to control his or her behaviour;
- The student does not have the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour;
- Despite either of the above being true, the student's continued presence in the school does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any person;
- The student's history;
- Whether a progressive discipline approach has been used with the student;
- Whether the activity for which the student may be or is being suspended or expelled was related to any harassment of the student because of his or her race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation or to any other harassment;
- How the suspension or expulsion would affect the student's ongoing education.

Emergency Response in TLDSB Schools

Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB) is committed to providing a safe environment for all members of our school community. Although infrequent, the possibility of a major threatening incident in our school is a reality. The level of preparedness to deal with such an incident by the school staff, students, police, and parents/guardians will have a major impact on the outcome of the incident. Our goal is to ensure the safety of all of our community members in a coordinated, effective and expedient way.¹

Below are some frequently asked questions by parents and guardians:

How does my child's school handle an emergency situation?

Every school in the TLDSB has an Emergency Response Plan which is based on the TLDSB Lockdown Emergency Response Plan (OP-6450). Each school has a set of unique circumstances which necessitates specific items to be included. A copy of our Emergency Response Plan is located in the School Office and the Custodian Office. Our School Emergency Response Plan includes the following:

- Terms and Definitions
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Communications with Parents/Guardians
- Training and Drills (a minimum of 3 drills required to be held per school year including at least one during non-instructional time)
- Procedures for Responding to a Threatening Incident e.g., checklists, reference guides
- Maintenance of a Portable Emergency Response Kit that contains key information and supplies
- Emergency Procedures Quick Reference Flip Charts located in each room in the building and in each Occasional Teacher Binder
- Emergency Kit located in each classroom which includes but is not limited to Band aids, antiseptic wipes.

What is a Lockdown? ²

A Lockdown is a response to an emergency situation inside a school or an emergency situation on or very near to school property, wherein the evacuation of the school building is not safe. During a lockdown, steps are taken to isolate students, staff and visitors from the emergency situation by having everyone remain in designated locations inside the school building. In all Lockdown situations, school staff establishes communication with the police by calling 9-1-1.

Much the same way as schools practice fire drills, Lockdown drills are also practiced in an age appropriate manner. As part of the TLDSB Lockdown Emergency Response Plan drills are required to be held a minimum of three (3) times per school year as indicated above.

During a Lockdown, Hold and Secure or Shelter in Place, students are not encouraged to use electronic devices, such as cellular phones, as their use may impede the ability of the police and school staff to respond to the situation at hand. It may also result in the dissemination of inaccurate information. IN the event of an emergency at our school, the TLDSB will inform parents by using a number of communication formats including but not limited to:

- The TLDSB and school websites
- The media

What is Hold and Secure?³

Hold and Secure is a term used when it is desirable to secure the school due to an ongoing situation outside and not necessarily related to the school (e.g., a bank robbery occurring downtown). Awareness of such an event would be brought to the school by local Law Enforcement. In this situation, the school continues to function

¹ Trillium Lakelands DSB, *Emergency Response Plan*, p. 1

² Halton District School Board, *Threats to School Safety Procedures Frequently Asked Questions by Parents*, p. 2

³ Trillium Lakelands DSB, *Emergency Response Plan*, pp. 2-3

normally, with the exterior doors being locked until such a time as the administrator of the school becomes aware through communication with Law Enforcement that the situation is resolved.

What is Shelter in Place?

Shelter in Place is a term used for an environmental or weather-related situation, where it is necessary to keep all occupants within the school, to protect them from an external situation (e.g., chemical spill in the community, blackouts, explosions, or extreme weather conditions).

What will my child's school do if an emergency occurs during school hours?

The specific actions to be taken will depend on the specifics of the situation. Any decisions are dependent on several factors including the level of threat and the advice/directive of local, provincial or federal agencies. The safety of students, staff, and visitors will always be the primary concern in any decision.

Am I allowed to pick up my child?

In the case of an emergency, the school's intent is to ensure that students are safe inside their schools until there is no longer a threat to their safety. Parents will be informed and reunited with their children as soon as it is safe to do so. Although some parents may wish to pick up their child during an emergency, allowing anyone to enter or exit the building during an emergency situation could expose the students, staff and visitors inside the school to further danger.

What is the plan to reunite parents and children?

In the case that the students are still in our building following the conclusion of an emergency response, students will be reunited with parents at the school. If public safety officials require a school to be evacuated, students, staff and visitors will be safely directed to the designated evacuation site. Parents will be informed of this evacuation/reunification location using a number of communication formats, including but not limited to:

- The TLDSB and school websites
- The media

Who can pick up my child(ren)?

Child(ren) will not be released to individuals who are not authorized to do so on the student's emergency contact information or do not have written parent consent. Parents and guardians are asked to ensure that all contact information, including emergency contact information, on file at the school is accurate and up to date at all times.

What if my child is on the bus at the time of a crisis?

Our Transportation Department will be in contact with the Board and the School for instructions in the event of a crisis while the students are in transport. They will communicate directly with our transportation providers. Bus drivers will be given an alternate safe drop off location if necessary. The Board will inform parents of this location by using a number of communication formats, including but not limited to:

- The TLDSB and school websites
- The media

What if my child is on a field trip at the time of a crisis?

School Administration will communicate with any staff supervising classes that may be off-site at the time of the occurrence. Staff and students will not return to the school until it has been cleared by the Administration to do so.

What about my child's medication?

If your child takes medication regularly, you should make sure the school has an appropriate amount of additional medication on hand. In the event of an Emergency Response, Emergency Medical Services personnel and Emergency Response personnel will be notified of any specific medical needs. Students who require emergency puffers or Epi Pens, should have the medicine on their person in an appropriate bag/container e.g., waist pouch.

Privacy and Release of Information

Under Ontario law, schools and the school board may not release identifying information about individual students to members of the public without the consent of the parent or guardian. This includes release of information to a third party as well as publication of the information in various media, including newspapers, yearbooks, and websites.

The law *does* allow disclosure of personal information when it is collected with consent, or if collected with reasonable expectation that it will be published (for example a school team photograph in a yearbook.)

Please note: When spectators – including parents or media – are invited to school events off school property, the event becomes a public event, and anyone in attendance is allowed to take photographs without first obtaining consent. On school property, however, schools need to obtain student or parental consent before allowing anyone outside the school, including parents, visitors, or media to take photographs.

Please contact your school principal or the Trillium Lakelands District School Board Communications Office if you wish further clarification. (1-888-526-5552 ext 22129)

Community Information

Information about events and registrations taking place in our community are found on the school board website tldsb.ca, school websites, and in school newsletters. Non-profit agencies wishing to include information for publication must seek approval through the Director of Education's Office. Please send community information to info@tldsb.on.ca at least one month in advance.

Over the course of the school year as part of its mandate to educate its students, Trillium Lakelands District School Board under the authority of the Education Act, (R.S.O. 1990 c.E.2) ss. 58.5, 265, and 266 as amended, will collect personal information about each student. The information collected may be written, oral, or visual. This personal information will be used to register and place the student in a school or for a consistent purpose such as the allocation of staff and resources and to give information to employees to carry out their job duties. In addition, the information may be used to deal with matters of health and safety or discipline and that may be required to be disclosed in compelling circumstances or for law enforcement matters or in accordance with any other Act. The information will be used in accordance with the Education Act, the regulations, and guidelines issued by the Minister of Education governing the establishment, maintenance, use, retention, transfer, and disposal of pupil records. For questions about this collection, speak to the school principal.

School Bus Safety

Co-operation and consideration are the keys that make travel on the school bus safe and comfortable. The following conduct is required:

- Follow the school bus driver's instructions
- Remain in your seat while the bus is in motion
- Respect the safety of others on the bus
- Speak quietly and use acceptable language
- Respect the property of others
- Do not eat or drink on the school bus
- Keep all parts of your body inside the bus at all times
- Do not smoke

The school bus is considered to be an extension of the classroom and students are responsible to their school principal for conduct on the bus. The first time any rules are broken, the bus driver warns the student and contacts the principal. For a second infraction, the Principal is notified, discipline is undertaken, and the student's parents will be notified. For a third infraction, the Principal will be notified, the student's bus riding service will be suspended and the student's parents will be notified.

Parents are fully responsible for getting students safely to and from bus pick-up and drop-off locations.

What About Bus Cancellations?

In case of unsafe road conditions, cancellations are reported on the Board website, www.tldsb.ca or www.mybustoschool.ca , and repeated on local radio stations. The decision to cancel buses is made in conjunction with bus operators as soon as road conditions are known in the morning. Decisions are made for each area of the School Board independently, as weather conditions vary.

If buses are cancelled in the morning, they will not run in the afternoon. Therefore, if you drive your child to school on a bus cancellation day, you must also pick up your child. If road conditions deteriorate during the day, or if the school facilities experience mechanical or electrical breakdown, or a power failure, students may be dismissed early. In this event, the school will follow its emergency plan to dismiss students. For more information on your school's emergency plan, contact the Principal.

Parents can subscribe to their child's bus delays and cancellations at www.mybustoschool.ca