



# New Horizons School

## Code of Conduct

### *Our Social Contract*

*We Believe ...*

*Our school is a place of learning.*

*It is a place where we treat each other with respect and honesty.*

*Our school is a place where we work and play in a way that is safe and fair.*



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# INTRODUCTION

## New Horizons Code of Conduct

### Purpose

The purpose of this code of conduct is to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment. In creating this environment, this code of conduct reflects the need for an appropriate balance between individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities.

### Scope

The expectations in the code of conduct are in effect in the following circumstances:

- on school premises,
- on the school bus,
- during activities that are off school premises and that are organized or sponsored by the school,
- behaviour beyond these times when it affects the safe, caring or orderly environment of the school.
  - Such expectations include website postings, blogs, text messages by or about students or staff using electronic devices, and other means that negatively affect other members of the school community and student learning.
  - Such expectations also include the times arriving to and from school, and during lunch hour times when junior high students leave the school premises.

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## Major Infractions

### **Bottom Line Behaviors**

Major infractions are called *bottom line* behaviors. Minor infractions are those not identified in the *bottom line* behaviors. *Bottom line* behaviors include the following:

1. Any illegal activity ( eg. behaviors related to drugs and alcohol, weapons, theft, vandalism, etc.).
2. Use of tobacco in or on school property within one block of the school.
3. Habitual minor infractions.
4. Deliberately striking or pushing a teacher or another person in authority.
5. Swearing at a teacher or another person of authority.
6. Direct or persistent opposition to authority.
7. Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm or harm to property (eg. saying “I’m going to kill you” even in jest; threats to injure, bomb threats).
8. Physical assault causing bodily harm (eg. hitting, pushing, kicking, fighting).
9. Retribution against a person who has reported an incident.
10. Conduct injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school including, but not limited to bullying, fighting, false fire alarms, dangerous use of equipment, hate-motivated incidents. This includes harassment on any of the protected or prohibited grounds identified in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. These prohibited grounds are identified below:
  - Race
  - Religious Beliefs
  - Colour
  - Gender
  - Mental Disability
  - Physical Disability
  - Ancestry
  - Place of Origin-Place of Birth
  - Family Status
  - Sexual Orientation

## Minor Infractions

Minor infractions of the code of conduct are those that are not identified as major infractions or *bottom line* behaviors.

Minor infractions are those behaviors which infringe upon the needs of others. Our **social contract** on page 2 expresses the kind of school community we want. Behaviors that go against our social contract are considered infractions.

***Please go to page 6 for examples of minor infractions and expected behavior.***

## Considerations

### ***Rising Expectations***

Rising expectations mean that students have varying levels of understanding as they grow older and more mature. Behavior expectations for students in primary grades may be different than what is expected as students become older and eventually enter Grade 9. Such differences in maturity levels will be reflected in both expectations and consequences for conduct.

### ***Students With Special Needs***

The application of this code of conduct will not discriminate against a student who can not meet a behavioural expectation because of a disability. Some students with certain types of special needs are unable to understand conduct expectations or rationally control their conduct. Differences resulting from such disabilities will be reflected in both expectations and consequences for conduct.

## Responding to Minor Infractions

### ***Making Mistakes: Minor Infractions***

We live in a human environment and face a diverse set of needs daily. Our job when we are together is treat each other in a way that respects the needs of others and reflects our *social contract*.

As we go through our days, there may be times when we interfere with the needs of others as we try to meet our own needs. We call these actions

*None of us are perfect. We all make mistakes, When we make a mistake and infringe on the needs of others, our job is to “fix up” the mistake.*

*“Fixing up” the mistake means to do something for the person that we hurt so that he or she feels ok again.*

**mistakes.** When this happens, the expectation is to “**fix up**” the mistake. Often, that involves making a **restitution** - saying or doing something that will make the person who was hurt feel ok once again. Students are expected to learn from their mistakes and not repeat the behavior.

Ideally, when we hurt others in some way, we should be able to recognize that and “fix up” the mistake on our own.

But that doesn’t always happen. When a person does not fix up the mistake by himself or herself, a teacher or supervisor may need to help. Below are some ways teachers may respond to minor infractions.

### ***Teacher Response to Minor Infractions***

Mistakes are learning opportunities. When students make a behavioral choice that infringes on the needs of others, teachers will help those students learn from their mistakes, find ways to makes amends with the person they hurt, and make a pan to do better.

Teachers may respond to minor infractions in several possible ways including the following:

- discussion
- problem solving
- helping with a restitution
- using a “planning sheet”
- providing an alternate work space
- “cool down” room and “think sheet”
- in-class consequences (loss of privilege, community service, etc.)
- suspending a student of one class period

***Depending on the severity and frequency of the behavior and parents will be notified.***

If the minor infractions keep repeating themselves, the infraction becomes a **bottom line** behavior and the student will be referred to the principal.

*“And now that you don't have to be perfect, you can be good.”*

— John Steinbeck

## Responding to Bottom Line Behaviors

Bottom Line behaviors have the automatic consequence of removal from the classroom group or school group for a period of time.

Depending on the frequency and severity of the infraction, a student may be removed from the group in the following ways:

- with an in-school suspension for a partial day, or full days,
- suspension from a certain courses for one or more days,
- out-of-school suspension to a maximum of five days,
- out-of-school suspension to a maximum of five days, or
- out-of-school suspension to a maximum of five days with the recommendation to the Board of Directors for expulsion.

As well, depending on the nature of the infraction, other measures may be taken.

- The RCMP may be notified.
- In the case of threats, students who utter threats may be expected to undergo a threat-risk assessment by a trained professional.

*“If you want to make a difference in someone's life, you don't need to be gorgeous, rich, famous, brilliant or perfect. you just have to care.”*  
— Karen Salmansohn

## Expected Behavior

Identifying all possible infractions in a human environment such as our school is a difficult task and would take up many pages. The next few pages, therefore, identify **examples** of acceptable and examples of unacceptable behavior in relation to our code of conduct.

*All behaviors that are acceptable and unacceptable **are not** identified in the lists. Instead, on the next few pages are **examples** of what are considered **acceptable** and **unacceptable** behaviors. The list of the following examples was generated by the students, staff, and parents of New Horizons School.*

### Examples of Expected Behavior

#### 1. Our School Is a Place of Learning

*Below are some examples of how we can support learning and some examples of how we can interfere with learning.*

##### **We can make a school a place of learning by**

- working diligently and to the best of our abilities
- behaving in ways that supports a positive learning environment for oneself and others
- keeping learning and playing environments such as classrooms and playgrounds tidy for others who use the space
- listening to instructions
- encouraging others
- helping others
- turning off cell phones and other electronic devices that can disrupt learning while in school

##### **We interfere with the learning in our school by**

- behaving in ways that disrupts the teaching and learning
- being unnecessarily absent or late
- not cleaning up messes that are made in the learning environment
- using learning time in inappropriate ways
- putting in minimal effort into learning activities and assessments
- plagiarism and copying from others
- giving all the answers

*“Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.”*  
- Chinese Proverb

*“I am defeated, and know it, if I meet any human being from whom I find myself unable to learn anything.”* - George Herbert Palmer

## **2. Our School Is a Place Where We Treat Each Other With Respect**

*Below are some examples of how we can show respect and some examples of how we show disrespect.*

### **We can show respect by**

- avoiding abusive and offensive language such as put downs, racist comments, sexist comments, and swearing
- wearing clothing without words or images that are offensive to others, that doesn't reveal under-wear, and if wearing shorts or skirts, have hemlines that are below the fingertips when the arms are at one's side
- responding to instructions given from teachers, assistants, supervisors, and others who are working or volunteering at the school.
- resolving conflicts without hurting others
- seeking permission before touching someone's personal property, or the school's property including plants
- playing with people you both like and don't like
- listening to what others have to say
- speaking in a tone of voice that invites discussion

### **We show disrespect by**

- habitually neglecting to do one's duty
- saying or doing things that make others feel uncomfortable or hurt
- not obeying those with authority (school staff and supervisors)
- misusing school equipment and property
- laughing at the misfortune of others
- making fun of others when they have a comment or ask a question
- using an unfriendly tone of voice
- not tattling

*“Respect for the fragility and importance of an individual life is still the mark of an educated man.” - Norman Cousins*

### **3. Our School Is a Place Where We Treat Each Other With Honesty**

*Below are some examples of how we can show honesty and some examples of how we show dishonesty.*

#### **We can show honesty by**

- being responsible for our actions
- knowing that it's ok to make a mistake and trying to "fix things up"
- telling the truth when problem solving
- informing a school staff in a timely manner of incidents of bullying, harassment or intimidation
- avoiding blaming others for our mistakes
- telling the *whole* truth
- being true to what you say

#### **We can show dishonesty by**

- withholding important information when solving conflicts
- making up stories that are different than the truth when problem solving
- not taking responsibility for our actions
- falsely accusing others
- spreading false information
- exaggerating
- "setting others up"

### **4) Our School Is a Place Where We Work and Play in a Way That Is Fair**

*Below are some examples of how we can behave fairly and some examples of how we show can behave unfairly.*

#### **We can act fairly by**

- "playing by the rules"
- sharing when resources are lacking
- taking turns
- including others in games and activities
- congratulating others when they succeed

#### **We can act unfairly by**

cheating  
always wanting to be first  
not letting others be a part of the group (excluding others)

*"Honesty is like an icicle; if once it melts that is the end of it."*  
- Anonymous

*"Fairness is what justice really is."*

- Potter Stewart

*"Always tell the truth. Then you'll never have to remember what you said the last time."*  
- Sam Rayburn

*"Live so that when your children think of fairness and integrity, they think of you."*

- H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

being nice to some people and not others  
making up” rules  
bragging when we do better than others  
being a “sore loser”

**5) Our School is a Place Where We Work and Play in a Way that is Safe.**

*Below are some examples of how we can create a safe environment and examples of how we can create an unsafe environment.*

**We can create a safe environment by**

- using all equipment in a safe manner
- solving conflicts in a way that does not hurt others
- wearing shoes at all times
- being a positive role model
- being gentle in PE

**We can create an unsafe environment by**

- throwing things
- running in the halls
- pushing, hitting, and kicking others
- emotionally hurting others with put downs, racist comments, sexist comments, swearing, and threats
- bullying
- roughhousing
- picking on one person
- teasing and name-calling

*“Safety is understanding, it is an attitude of mind – it is not necessarily a simply following of rules or directions.”*  
- Garry Richards,