

STUDENT CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

A. PREFACE

A1. The present CODE is the result of consultative meetings with and input from Parents, Staff and Students of St. Michael's Choir School.

A2. The CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL of SMCS shall have the authority and responsibility to recommend and initiate proceedings for revisions to this CODE. This COUNCIL shall consist of the Principal and elected representatives of Parents, Staff and Students and appointed representatives of the Community and Parish. All revisions are subject to Provincial and Board Policy.

A3. The CODE of SMCS reflects the MISSION STATEMENT, VISION AND GOALS of the Toronto Catholic School Board which:

i) Recognizes "the shared responsibility for education that exists among the school, the students, the family, the parish and the community"

ii) Prescribes "a safe and welcoming learning environment that is an example of Christian community"

iii) Envisions students who "apply Christian values to life's opportunities, challenges and choices" and who display self-esteem and self respect".

A4. All Toronto Catholic School Board schools are subject to Toronto Catholic School Board policies and guidelines including Violence Prevention, Alcohol and other Drug Abuse, Suspension and Expulsion, and Safety at Inter-school Athletic Events. Full copies of these policies are available through the Toronto Catholic School Board or with the Principal. Mandated excerpts from these policies are now included in APPENDIX A and APPENDIX B.

A5. All students and staff are subject to and protected by the laws and rights of the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments.

A6. Clubs, teams and organizations operating within the Choir School community may develop their own procedures and policies. These must be consistent with overall school policies and principles, be sanctioned by the Principal and the appropriate school committee and be made accessible and public.

A7. School policies and student behaviour are subject to the following over-riding principles and aims:
To create for students and staff a community:

i) Which provides a Catholic Education. All activities and policies should be designed to foster positive social feeling, intellectual potential and moral character, and encourage the virtues of honesty, self-discipline, perseverance, faith, hope, and love.

ii) Which promotes and adheres to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

iii) In which students can be confident that there will always be the opportunity for forgiveness and reconciliation.

iv) Which promotes, facilitates and urges students to achieve academic success.

v) Which recognizes the authority and responsibility of all staff members to enforce school policies.

vi) Which will not tolerate violence, intimidation, harassment, illegal discrimination, deliberate degradation, unlawful or destructive behaviour or blatant and persistent defiance of rules and policies.

vii) Which compels its members to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and for the well-being, safety, peace and order of the community as a whole.

viii) Which recognizes the right of parents and guardians to be informed and consulted on the behaviour and progress of their children and their responsibility to support the school Code.

ix) In which rules and procedures are established with regard to the principles of fairness, reason and simple justice.

A8. Respect is given to all persons because they are all made in God's image. Respect, care and concern for each other are the foundations of the St. Michael's Choir School community. Any word or action of goodwill, honesty, sincerity, politeness or help which builds up a person is encouraged. Impoliteness, taunting, intimidation, sarcasm, harassment, bullying or causing a person to lose respect is unacceptable.

B. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Respect for the learning situation and for other persons makes demands in attendance and punctuality.

B1. Attendance is obligatory at all classes and private music lessons in which a student is enrolled, as well as at any choral function in which he is expected to participate. Regular attendance is a requirement for successful completion of courses at SMCS. Absences will be reported to the main office and will result in contact with the student's parents or guardians.

CONSEQUENCES:

If a student "skips" a class, the student is given a warning and the parents are notified. A suspension is automatic on the second "skip".

B2. (i) Holidays are not to be taken on school-days including scheduled concert tour days. Plans to extend vacation periods must be discussed by parents with the principal prior to arrangements being finalized.

(ii) Students vacationing on legal school-days will not be eligible for make-up tests, pre-teaching, or re-teaching. This includes students vacationing during tour.

(iii) Absence from end-of-semester formal examinations will result in a "zero" unless the student presents a doctor's certificate indicating serious illness, or evidence of unavoidable emergency - NOT including vacations.

B3. (i) Parents are urged to examine the school calendar and take advantage of PA days for appointments that otherwise cause absences during the school day.

(ii) If an early dismissal or late arrival is required by reason of an appointment, a parent should send a note with the student. The note should be handed to the homeroom teacher when attendance is taken, or handed in to the office when the student signs in. The note should state the reason for the late arrival or early dismissal, and in the former case estimate the time of arrival, or in the latter case the time of early dismissal.

B4. There is a pay phone in the school for the convenience of students. Parents are asked to ensure that their son always has 50 cents to enable him to use the pay phone with the permission of his teacher. School office phones should only be used by students in special cases and with the permission of the office staff and their teacher. The office cannot accept messages to be passed on to students during class hours unless the messages are of an emergency nature.

B5. Absences require a note or phone call from the parent or guardian notifying the office of such absence. Evening and early morning messages may be recorded by the answering service. A student who is ill during the day must first report to his classroom teacher and then to the office. He will not be allowed to go home unless he has obtained permission from a parent.

B6. If a student is late for school, he must go to the office for an "admit to class" slip, and then proceed without delay to his class. A high school student is late if he is not in his period 1 class and ready to work by 8:30 am.

B7. Punctuality is a matter of personal responsibility for the student. The office will keep a record of all late arrivals.

B8. The principal will write the parents or guardians if a student continues to be late without just cause. Persistent lateness may warrant a conference with the parents or guardians or a suspension if the problem is not rectified.

B9. No student from Grades 3 – 10 may leave school property without permission from the office during the school day.

B10. In the event that a grade 12 student has a first period spare, they are to sign in at the main office. If a Grade 12 student has a last period spare, he will be dismissed at the beginning of that period-usually 2:09 p.m. It is understood, of course, that the student must still meet any obligations such as attendance at after-school rehearsals, athletics practices, meetings, etc.

B11. A student 18 years and older has reached the age of majority and may assume responsibility for attendance and may sign himself in and out of school without home contact. However, he must take full responsibility for missed work.

Cathedral Duties.

Respect for the Holiness of God, who is the beginning and end of all things, and for His House, compels St. Michael's Choir School to bring nothing less than whole-hearted, devout service to the liturgy of St. Michael's Cathedral.

B12. All choristers are expected to attend choral rehearsals for performances in the Cathedral and other locations.

- If any student is not present for rehearsal, he may not perform.
- The right to perform may also be denied a student who does not conform to the standards of deportment expected of a chorister.
- Good choral deportment means *no talking* during rehearsals. Anything that distracts from the group work required of a choir is unacceptable.
- All choristers must be on time for their week-end services, meaning that they must be in place and ready to sing in their designated choral rooms at the following times:

Junior Choir: Auditorium: 9:15 a.m. for 10:30 Mass
Senior Choirs: Auditorium : Saturday – 4:00 p.m. for 5:00 p.m. Mass;
Sunday – 11:00 a.m. for noon Mass

- If a chorister cannot attend a Cathedral function, parents or guardians are required to send a note to the conductor one week ahead of time. In case of unforeseen emergency, leave a phone message with their conductor. Perfect attendance is an attainable goal. **Attendance below**

80% over the year will result in re-evaluation of enrolment at the Choir School.

B13. All choristers will arrive and leave the school in Sunday uniform. This includes any student serving as organist, cantor, server or lector. Gum is not permitted.

B14. All choristers have responsibility for maintaining their music copies and folders in good order.

B15. All students taking private music lessons must arrive on time for such lessons, and before returning to class have an "admit to class" slip signed by the private teacher indicating the actual start and end times of the lesson.

B16. Changes in the regular music lesson schedule are to be discouraged, but if a change is necessary, the classroom teacher(s) must be consulted before the change takes place.

If a private lesson conflicts with a scheduled test, the student must make an alternative arrangement with the private teacher in the week prior to the test. Any teacher affected by the change must be informed by the private teacher and the student before the lesson takes place.

B17. Unjustified absence from private lessons will be considered a "skip".

C. UNIFORM AND PERSONAL GROOMING

Respect for the school community can be fostered by the uniform. It is a constant reminder of the ideals and objectives to which those who have come to the Choir School have committed themselves.

C1. School uniform must be worn on all school days of the year. The uniform must be worn to and from school. Within the building, no extras or over-clothes may be worn.

C2. Uniforms must be obtained from R.J. McCarthy Ltd., 360 Evans Avenue, Etobicoke, M8Z 1K5 Tel # (416) 593-6900.

C3. School day uniform for elementary students (grades 3-8) consists of the dark blue pants, maroon shirt, maroon tie and a maroon sweater.

School day uniform for high school students (grades 9-12) consists of grey pants, light blue shirt, maroon tie, navy blue sweater or navy blue blazer.

School day shoes for all students are black dress shoes, or athletic footwear that does not mark the floor. Socks are required. Sandals are not permitted. In warm weather, when announced by the principal, students may wear the official crested golf shirt instead of the regulation shirt and tie. In the high school, the golf shirt is navy blue; in the elementary school, the golf shirt is maroon.

C4. The uniform shirt or golf shirt is to be worn tucked inside the waistband of the uniform pants. The shirt must be buttoned to the top button, and the tie must be worn with the knot high enough to cover the top button.

C5. Each student is expected to have his uniform clean and neat at all times.

C6. Appropriate athletic uniforms and athletic shoes are required to be worn in gym class and at athletic events.

C7. A student may be allowed in school without some part of his uniform if he brings a parent's note. This exemption should not be for more than one day.

C8. Sunday uniform is worn for all official choir functions (except noon masses on school days), for piano and other instrument recitals, and for Closing Ceremonies.

- For the Sunday uniform of elementary students, the pants are grey, the shirt is white, the tie is maroon and the blazer is maroon.
- High school students in Sunday uniform wear grey pants, a light blue shirt, a maroon tie and a navy blue blazer.
- All students in Sunday uniform wear black leather dress shoes and black socks.

Respect for our school community can be continually fostered by personal appearance.

C9. Personal appearance must be a priority for all students. The practice of looking neat and clean every day at school enhances the ability to look good at all public appearances, each week in St. Michael's Cathedral for Mass, and at all other choir obligations throughout the school year. The school reserves the right to determine what is acceptable in this area.

- Uniforms must be clean and neat at all times, and must not be altered except for proper fit.
- Hair is to be neat and trim. Extreme or unconventional hair styles or colours which detract from the appearance of the choir are unacceptable.
- No facial hair is acceptable as part of the uniform for Choir School students. Therefore beards and moustaches are not part of the uniform.

C10. If a student's personal appearance at school is unacceptable, he will be dealt with immediately by the school staff.

C11. If a student's personal appearance is unacceptable for a public Choir School function, he will be asked to correct the problem. If this is not possible, the choir conductor or director may decide that the student will not be permitted to perform. In this case parents will be contacted as soon as possible.

D. BEHAVIOUR IN THE CLASSROOM.

There must be respect for the learning environment. Any deliberate action which disturbs the class, from within or without, is unacceptable.

D1. As a sign of respect and courtesy, a class should stand and greet a teacher or guest who has come to visit the class, at the direction of the teacher.

D2. Students should come to class with the required textbooks and equipment. They should have assigned homework and study completed. They should show in their attitude to school work that, increasingly, they are accepting responsibility for their own learning.

D3. In the elementary school, students are expected to keep their desks clean and neat.

D4. A student who is sent out of a class must report to the office without delay and the classroom teacher must notify the office of the reason.

D5. If a student is asked to sit in the hall outside a class, the classroom door must be open, and the student may not leave the area.

D6. When a student's behaviour is unacceptable, a teacher may assign a detention to that student. The office must be notified of the detention and the reason for it.

D7. If a student skips a detention, the office will be notified so that action may be taken to remedy the situation. Repeated defiance is a serious offence.

E. BEHAVIOUR IN THE SCHOOL IN GENERAL.

E1. Students in the elementary school must go to the schoolyard upon arrival at school in the morning. For the students' safety, there is a supervisor in the yard from 7:00 a.m. until the students are taken to their classrooms by their classroom teachers.

(i) In bad weather, elementary students may use the North hallway in the high school until 8:25 a.m., when the teachers will take them to class.

(ii) No student may stay in his classroom before, during or after school without the permission of his classroom teacher. Under no circumstances may a student be in a classroom alone.

E2. At the end of the school day, those elementary students who wait for their ride home must go to the schoolyard (through the school building, not on the sidewalk), or to the designated study area. The supervisor will be in the yard from 3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

E3. All visitors to the school should be greeted politely and directed to the office.

E4. Students may not use the gym except in the presence of a teacher. Students may not enter the science lab or computer lab unless a teacher is present. Food and drink are not allowed in these areas of the school for safety reasons.

E5. In a fire drill, all students must vacate the building in an orderly fashion and as quickly and quietly as possible. There should be no talking. Students are to proceed to the assigned areas outside the building. Students will remain in the assigned areas until instructed to return to class.

E6. Students are encouraged to show consideration for others as they move around the school. Behaviour which may lead to injury, for example throwing chalk or snowballs, or running and jumping in the stairwells, is forbidden.

E7. Students in Grades 3 – 6 must be accompanied by a teacher when they cross Bond Street on their way to and from classes held in the 66 Bond St. building and the gym.

E8. Elementary students and high school students in grades 9 and 10 must eat lunch on school property. For all students, food and drink must be consumed in the cafeteria unless a teacher gives permission in his/her class.

E9. School accidents must be reported to the office as soon as possible. In a case of personal injury to a student, the principal or designate may decide to send the student to the emergency department of St. Michael's Hospital. The injured student will be accompanied by a staff member, and parents or guardians will be informed as soon as possible.

F. PROPERTY

Students must show respect for school property and for personal property of all kinds.

F1. In the high school, students are expected to keep their lockers clean and neat. Lockers must be locked at all times. Locker combinations must not be given to anyone. A student may only use the locker assigned to him at the beginning of the school year.

F2. The school does not accept responsibility for any loss of personal belongings. Students are encouraged to leave expensive items of jewelry, electronic equipment, and clothing at home.

F3. The use of **personal electronic devices** (PED's) is strictly prohibited in the school and/or during school-related activities (such as retreats, field trips, sports events, etc.) In this regard, all personal electronic devices must be kept **out of sight and turned off**. Failure to comply may result in the confiscation of the PED and disciplinary action by the school administration. In exceptional circumstances, permission may be granted by the director and/or principal for the use of a PED on school premises or during a school related activity.

Personal Electronic Devices are wireless and portable electronic handheld equipment that include, but are not limited to, cell phones, pagers, Blackberry™ handsets, Palm@ organizers, handheld video games and other portable entertainment systems, cameras, audio or video recorders, Spy Gadgets, and similar devices.

F4. Students have a responsibility to the school community not to abuse the library or its materials. Library materials must be properly checked out, and they may only be returned when the library is open. Students may not bring food or drink into the library. The high school lunch period is a silent study period in the library.

F5. A student who damages property by accident must report it to the office so that it can be repaired. A student who damages property through carelessness, for example throwing an object which breaks a window, must be prepared to pay for the repairs. Deliberate damage to property (vandalism) will be dealt with according to the seriousness of the offence including possible suspension.

F6. Students are encouraged to keep the school environment clean and tidy, by using the cafeteria to eat lunch, leaving the eating area free of litter, and by putting waste in the proper containers provided by the school. Elementary students, and high school students in grades 9 and 10 must eat lunch on school property. Senior high school students may leave the school during their lunch or spare period, provided they return in time for their next class. Persistent lateness to class will be dealt with by the class teacher.

G. RESPECT FOR OTHERS

St. Michael's Choir School must be a place where all students feel safe, welcomed and respected.

G1. There shall be no tolerance of "bullying" in the school. Bullying will be considered as any on-going physical, verbal, or emotional harassment, intimidation or victimization.

G2. Board Policy on Bullying

Under the TCDSB Safe Schools Policy (2002), a student shall be suspended for a fixed period of one to twenty instructional days for bullying. For purposes of this policy, bullying is defined as negative conduct by a person(s) who engages in a course of action or behaviour that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. It includes but is not limited to:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on a fellow student, or
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim/targeted child reason to fear or expect bodily harm, or
3. Any willful act that has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student, or
4. Any willful act or threat to socially ostracize and/or vilify a student or group of students or to exclude them from relationships and/or activities

G3. What is Bullying?

Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour that is hurtful and deliberate. Underlying most bullying behaviour is an abuse of personal power and a desire to intimidate and dominate others. Bullying can be physical, verbal or relational. Often it takes very subtle forms and can be difficult to detect. Some examples of bullying include:

- hitting, tripping or deliberately pushing or hurting a other person.
- intentionally damaging another's belongings.
- threatening another person with physical or relational harm.
- name-calling, sneering, or gossiping.
- teasing or humiliating another student.
- making fun of another's appearance, size, disability, race, gender, language, culture, clothing, family or grades.
- directing insulting remarks, gestures, or actions of a sexual nature towards another.
- isolating others or threatening to exclude them from social events, games and conversations.
- using telephone or e-mail for intimidating or threatening purposes

G4. Students found to be bullying will face one or more of the following responses:

- a meeting with a teacher or administrator or school counselor
- student to student mediation
- report to the parent; parent meeting with school administration
- parent to parent meeting
- referral to Board counselors through the School Based Support Team
- suspension from school to protect the physical and mental well-being of other students.

G5. Any person in the school who is a victim of bullying or who sees others being victims, is expected to inform a teacher, or the Principal.

G6. Respect for others requires that the words we use be polite, sincere and considerate, especially when there is a disagreement. Language which is coarse, vulgar, profane or obscene has no place in a Catholic school community. Persistent use of such language is considered a serious offence.

G7. Some actions have a harmful effect on the school community as a whole, for example repeated acts of defiance, theft, fighting, chronic absenteeism, drug or alcohol abuse. Offences of this nature are considered serious.

G8. A serious offence will be dealt with by the school administration, always with parents or guardians involved. Students and parents should be aware that a suspension or expulsion from school is a possible result of serious offences.

G9. In accordance with Board policy S-15 and Board practice, the Choir School recognizes that some cases will call for assistance from or reporting to public authorities, including the police and Children's Aid, Board staff and consultants retained on behalf of the Board.

Under the Police/School Board Protocol, police response at a school is required for very serious occurrences, including many cases where a student is subject to a mandatory suspension or expulsion.

H. BEHAVIOUR ON SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES.

H1. On school outings, students are expected to follow the instructions of the teachers in charge of the outing. Students 18 years of age and older agree to follow these instructions when they sign the consent form.

H2. Students must leave the school and stay with the group at all times.

H3. Respect, courtesy and cooperation should be given to persons taking on the duties of guides at a specific venue. Particular attention must be paid to instructions given in matters of safety.

H4. Any student who does not follow the instructions of guides or teachers will be dealt with by the teacher in charge. Parents may be contacted by the teacher or school administration.

H5. Students must attend school related activities in regular school day uniform unless otherwise instructed. Where casual dress is permitted, jeans or other casual pants, and casual shirts such as sweatshirts or T-shirts may be worn. Clothes must be clean and neat. All messages, images and logos on clothing must conform to the standards expected in a Catholic school community. For example, there should be no sexist or racist message on a T-shirt. In group situations, students may be required to wear a uniform sweater.

H6. Smoking is not permitted during any school related activity.

H7. Possession or use of alcohol or illegal drugs on school time or in any activity is strictly forbidden.

H8. No student is permitted to attend a school excursion without the written consent of a parent or guardian.

I. CONCERTS AND TOURS

I1. St. Michael's Choir School performs at many musical events in an academic year. The scope of these activities ranges from one student singing as a cantor at a Mass to hundreds of students singing together on stage at Massey Hall. In all these cases the students must behave with dignity and respect.

I2. All of the requirements for behaviour on school-related activities apply to tours. In addition, there are several specific requirements relating to travelling. These requirements are listed in the school booklet "Of Concerts and Tours". Copies of this booklet may be obtained by parents from the school office. The contents of the booklet are also included in the first pages of each student's tour itinerary.

The particular additions relate to the student's conduct in the following situations:

- on a bus, train, or airplane
- in and around a concert venue
- on stage
- in a host home
- in a group overnight lodging
- on an educational trip while on tour
- relating to safety matters.

J. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

J1. As outlined in Appendix A, very serious offences will be dealt with immediately and firmly, always with parents or guardian involved.

J2. Most school-related failures to abide by the student code of behaviour may be handled in one of the following ways:

1. Minor or infrequent offences
 - student-teacher conferences
 - detention (no longer than 30 minutes)
2. More serious or more frequent offences
 - student meeting with the principal
 - contact with parents
3. Very serious offences or repeated offences
 - student meeting with principal
 - formal discipline notice
 - parent/administration/teacher conferences
 - loss of privileges
 - loss of right to represent the school in sports or activities
 - suspension
 - expulsion

K. PLAGIARISM POLICY

When you are asked to complete an assignment, you must hand in your own work, not someone else's. If you need to copy some ideas or information to complete assignments, you must acknowledge the source. Ask your teacher how to do this.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the ideas, words, or other intellectual property of another as one's own work. This applies to words or ideas taken without proper acknowledgement from any published source, including newspapers, books, journals, magazines, Internet sites, and other students' essays.

If your teacher finds that you copied and presented the work as your own, the teacher (and / or department head) will determine the severity of the penalty imposed. This may range from a reduction of one letter grade to a mark of zero for the assignment.

Some specific examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying a paper, in whole or in part, from a source
- Copying materials from a source
- Buying any materials from a research service and claiming it as your own.