



Parent & Guardian Code of Conduct Policy

Saplings Nature School

August 2023

Rationale

The standards of behaviour and personal conduct described in this *Parent/ Guardian Code of Conduct* apply to all parents and guardians of children enrolled at Saplings Nature School. Parents and guardians play a critical role in shaping the ethos of the school community through the role modeling they provide to their children and through their support of the educational programme and its values.

Saplings Nature School has high social and ethical standards. Staff, faculty, students, and parents are expected to be respectful and responsible citizens who support a safe, positive, and caring learning environment. All stakeholders are expected to be courteous and considerate towards all members of the Saplings community at all times. This applies to both face-to-face interactions and online behaviour conducted via email, SMS, and various social media, such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

The *Parent/ Guardian Code of Conduct* guides all correspondence and interactions that involve the school, including written and verbal communication. The expectations that follow suggest the kind of community we wish to build for all who are associated with Saplings.

The Role of Parents and Guardians

Parents have a key role in the education of their children and have a responsibility to support the efforts of school employees in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents and guardians fulfill their role when they:

- exercise personal regard for all school employees, including staff, faculty, administration and facilities personnel;
- exercise personal regard for all school community members, including students and their family members;
- discuss sensitive needs or issues with staff while their student is not present
- model the values of the school with - and for - their child
- show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- read school communications and stay up to date with school developments;
- help their child be properly dressed and well prepared for school;
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- assist school employees in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child;
- make appointments to have discussions about their child which requires more than a 5 minute check-in;
- respect instructional time and if arriving late, approach the group respectfully and quietly with a minimal amount of disruption.

The Role of Educators

Educators have a key role in assessing and responding to student interactions, needs, and behaviours, and then relaying important or pertinent information to parents and/or caregivers in a timely and sensitive manner.

Educators fulfill their role when they:

- contact parents directly, and as soon as possible should any serious or unusual incidents occur with a student throughout the school day;
- out of ear range of students or other community members, take parents aside to check-in when relaying information about sensitive, serious, or unusual incidents;
- postpone check-ins with parents when their student is dysregulated;
- are available to relay information as necessary in quick check-ins. (Note: educators will not be expected nor available to have on-going conversations while teaching).

Standards of Behaviour and Conduct

The partnership formed between parents and the school at the time of enrollment and for the duration of a child's education at Saplings is covenantal. This means it is a moral engagement to work with the school in the shared goal of developing to the fullest extent possible the cognitive, social-emotional, physical and ethical development of the child. In keeping with this spirit of partnership, it is important that parents:

- demonstrate respect and courtesy in all communications both to - and about - the school and its employees;
- support the efforts of school employees to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment;
- respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- treat others with dignity and respect at all times, especially when there is disagreement;
- respect the rights of others, and treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnicity, citizenship, culture, religion, creed, colour, ancestry, sex, gender, real or perceived gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, financial status, receipt of public assistance, or marital status;
- show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others;
- take appropriate measures to help those in need; and
- resolve conflict peacefully.

Examples of Inappropriate Behaviour and Misconduct:

Examples of inappropriate parent behaviour and misconduct may include, but are not limited to:

- exhibiting disrespect towards members of the school community, especially school employees, such as yelling at teachers, admin staff or facilities personnel;
- exhibiting conduct injurious to the moral tone of the school or to the physical or mental well-being of others, including yelling and swearing;
- engaging in and spreading discourteous communications, rumours and/or gossip about members of the school community;
- bullying, intimidating or threatening a member of the school community;
- uttering insults of a personal nature;
- uttering a threat to a member of the school community;
- writing threatening emails, or making veiled threats in writing;
- violating the privacy of teachers or school personnel;
- vaping/smoking tobacco or cannabis, or using cannabis or cannabis products on school grounds;
- harassment of any kind.

Consequences for Inappropriate Behaviour and Misconduct:

If a parent acts inappropriately and contravenes the bounds of good conduct, they will be subject to consequences. At the discretion of the Head of School, Program Director, SAP Board or other school authority, these consequences may include:

- loss of privilege to attend school events, on or off-campus, including student conferences;
- loss of privilege to enter the school building or step foot on campus whatsoever;
- loss of privilege to communicate in person or in writing through any medium with employees of the school;
- withdrawal of invitation to re-register; and
- immediate de-registration of the parent's child.

A parent who commits one of the aforementioned inappropriate behaviours must agree to a meeting with Senior Administrator(s) within one week of the incident. The purpose of the meeting will be to resolve the situation and restore the relationships affected.

Providing Feedback, Expressing Worries and Making Suggestions

Saplings Nature School has high social and ethical standards. Staff, faculty, students and parents are expected to be respectful and responsible citizens who support a safe, positive and caring learning environment.

In addition, we strive to maintain open-mindedness and a desire for continual improvement. With this in mind, we understand that parent perspectives and feedback are critical in our role as educators who seek to inspire the children and young adults we are working with. If parents do have suggestions, feedback or questions about a specific approach that a teacher, coach or instructor is using, we expect parents to do so in a courteous and considerate manner and to follow the process outlined below:

- Speak first directly with the staff member to discuss your feedback. This should be done through a pre-arranged meeting.
- If you feel that your feedback was not acknowledged and/or responded to appropriately, then request to meet with the Head of School.
- If you still feel that your concern was not acknowledged and/or responded to appropriately, then request to meet with either the Program Director.
- If you still feel that your concern was not acknowledged and/or responded to appropriately, then request to meet with the SAP Board.

It is critical to follow this process to ensure colleagues have been given an opportunity to first collaborate and resolve any concerns. Additionally, it is important for parents to speak to teachers and/or coaches immediately when a problem arises rather than to seek support from other parents in the community. This approach can potentially undermine our sense of community and collaboration.

Parent Appeals Process

Where, following appropriate discussion and representation, a parent feels that they have been dealt with unfairly or inappropriately by a school authority, the parent may follow the Saplings Nature School Complaints and Appeals Policy, which will apply in principle and be modified to the context of a parent/ guardian.

Smoking, Vaping and Cannabis

Saplings is a smoke, vape and cannabis-free environment. Smoking, cannabis and/or vapour products are not permitted on our premises or on school property. This applies to faculty, students, parents and all visitors to the school.

Off site Social Parties held under Saplings' name

It is our expectation that social parties held under Saplings' name will involve the moderate consumption of alcohol and will not involve the consumption of cannabis, cannabis related or other mood and behaviour altering drugs. Should this occur Saplings staff will withdraw from the event indicating to the hosts and organisers why they are doing so.

References:

[*Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools - Province of British Columbia*](#)

[*Branksome Hall Parent Code of Conduct*](#)

[*Safe Schools - Code of Conduct, Ministry of Education, Ontario*](#)