

**BIRCHLAND ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL
CODE OF CONDUCT
2011-12**

School Mission:

“Working together with our school community, our mission at Birchland is to ensure a safe, supportive and respectful environment which promotes the development of individual potential and enthusiasm for life-long learning.”

“Birchland Elementary” Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that we maintain a Safe, Caring and Orderly Learning Environment. This Code applies to those in attendance at school, at school-related activities, or during any other circumstances where engagement in an activity will have an impact on our school environment.

1) INTRODUCTION

School boards and schools are entrusted through the School Act with the authority to establish codes of conduct.

Recognizing the autonomy of these bodies and acknowledging the effort they have already undertaken to ensure school climates are as positive as possible, the provincial standards described below are provided to assist them in developing consistent and coherent policies and practices in their communities. Although most schools have codes of conduct in place, it is expected that all British Columbia schools will revisit the existing codes and/or develop new codes of conduct reflecting the provincial standards.

(Safe, Caring and Orderly Guide, page 15)

2) CODE OF CONDUCT : Key Elements

Process – “All British Columbia schools include students, parents and staff in the development and review of codes of conduct.”

September 2008:

Communication: It was agreed upon by the school community that the 2007-08 Code of Conduct needed to be revisited so that it was relevant and meaningful to current students, staff and parents. It was announced to the BPAC at the September meeting that we would be beginning the process of revisiting the existing Code. Family newsletters will be used to update each step of the upcoming process.

Implementation:

Staff participated in a Professional Development session that revisited the Code and began a process of revising it. A key element of the new process would be to align the document with meaningful teaching content and a common language that would permeate our school and community. It was agreed upon that the current system of recognition assemblies was no longer satisfying its original intention.

Two assemblies were set for October 2008 which introduced the first steps of the process. The assemblies were followed by break-out sessions that facilitated the gathering of input from students and parents in attendance. Feedback forms were sent home to gather input from parents who are unable to attend.

The process was a four-step journey that spanned the duration of five months. The feedback generated by each step was used as the foundation for the step that followed. The final stage was a categorized list of statements that described our agreed “way of being” at Birchland School.

Once the process was completed, each class reviewed the final document with their teacher and then were part of a ceremonial signing of the front display board. The board displayed the steps of the process and “Our Agreement”, which was a summary of how we would agree to treat each other at Birchland Elementary School.

Alignment:

As mentioned, we find it imperative to align our Code with common teaching in the classroom regarding the expectations within the code. Our educators are focused on promoting Self-regulatory capacity in our students, which will help them to

make choices that will be mutually beneficial to their personal wellbeing, their learning and to those around them. It is our intent that students are given opportunity to develop understandings and strategies which will serve to assist them in becoming increasingly competent at choosing positive, pro-social behaviours.

In 2011-12, we will continue to focus on teaching strategies that will promote the development of self-regulation and socially responsible behaviour.

Monitoring and Reviewing:

Each year, we review both the Code of Conduct and the teaching strategies that we are using in the classrooms to foster socially responsible behaviour and socio-emotional competencies. Expectations are communicated to students in the first week of September and related policies are integrated into our student handbooks. The document is also reviewed by the SPC and updated on our website.

Standards:

Statement of Purpose:

“Birchland Elementary School promotes the values expressed in the BC Human Rights Code respecting the rights of all individuals in accordance with the law – prohibiting discrimination based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation – in respect of the discriminatory publication and discrimination in accommodation, service and facility in the school environment.

We recognize that optimal learning occurs in an environment that is safe from threat or harm or emotional distress. We also recognize that our Code of Conduct must be designed to promote social learning and positive choice making among all of our students, and that our conversations must centre on exploring all contributing factors.”

Conduct Expectations:

Acceptable Conduct:

This refers to the following behaviours by students:

- Do their best**
- Take responsibility for their choices**
- Play in a safe manner and follow playground rules**
- Show respect for self, others and the environment**
- Respect the personal space of others**
- Use appropriate and safe language**
- Take care of our school and its property**

Unacceptable Conduct:

School personnel will treat seriously any behaviour or communication that discriminates based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex or sexual orientation (prohibited grounds set out in the BC Human Rights Code).

We will treat seriously all behaviour that has a negative impact on self or others. Such behaviour may include, but is not limited to:

- Bullying or harassment (physical, verbal, relational or cyber)**
- Physical threats or intimidation**
- Theft or damage to property**
- Possession or use of weapons**
- Possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances**

Consequences:

When inappropriate behaviours occur, the following guidelines govern the use of consequences:

- Be corrective and restorative, not punitive in nature.
- We will take into consideration the age, maturity and special needs, if any, of the child
- We will take into account the frequency of the behaviour and the nature of the behaviour
- Consequences will be as immediate, relevant and meaningful as possible.
- When appropriate, student helps to identify the natural consequences associated with his/her actions. When appropriate, opportunity is given to restore relationships between the individuals involved.
- Chronic or serious behaviour may involve parents and school-base team members in the development of a behavioural action plan to support student in making more successful choices.
- Expectations will rise as students mature
- Special Consideration may apply to students with special needs if these students are unable to comply with the Code of Conduct due to having a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature
- All reasonable steps will be taken to prevent retaliation by a person against a student who has made a complaint of a breach of the Code of Conduct by another person. The greatest of these steps is the creation of a culture that communicates an expectation of reporting as a responsible act of citizenship ultimately benefitting all involved. This is best accomplished in an environment that teaches the importance of taking responsibility for our own actions and forgiving others for poor choices they may have made. We also teach that “sorry” is a word that only has power if it is followed by a change in behaviour.

Parent Involvement:

Ongoing communication between home and school will be facilitated through the student planners and/or an alternate system as agreed upon by the classroom teachers and parents.

When inappropriate behaviour is of a serious or repetitive nature, parents will be notified and will be expected to be involved in planning interventions to support the modification of the concerning behaviour. Parents of the victim(s) will also be notified. Depending on the situation, intervention in these cases may include the use of school suspension.