

GORDON HEAD MIDDLE SCHOOL

GHMS is a respectful learning community committed to educational growth for all.

CODE OF CITIZENSHIP

A respectful, orderly, and safe school is the foundation for a successful learning environment. The students at Gordon Head Middle School are expected to be responsible citizens. Our Code of Citizenship is designed to outline the rights and responsibilities that will assist us in building and sustaining an environment that values and fosters respect.

Our school is committed to creating a learning community that values diversity and is free from all forms of discrimination as set out in the B.C. Human Rights code. The B.C. Human Rights Code, sections 7 and 8, prohibit discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, and age. Everyone is expected to model respectful conduct and no one should tolerate discrimination of any kind. For further information, please refer to Policy and Regulation 4303, which can be found on the Greater Victoria School District website at www.sd61.bc.ca

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RESPECTFUL

A respectful school is one in which members of the school community feel a sense of belonging, and have opportunities to relate to one another in positive, supportive ways. All aspects of school life embrace and reflect diversity. The school is an inviting place for students, staff, parents and visitors.

- **Respect for Self and Others:**

I have the right to learn in a respectful environment and to be treated with courtesy and respect.

I have the responsibility to treat all individuals with courtesy and respect regardless of their differences.

Why?

Every person should feel valued, be treated respectfully and be free of harassment. Therefore, I will not engage in behaviours such as rudeness, intimidation, fighting, threatening, excluding others, or cyber-bullying.

- **Positive, Supportive Learning Environment:**

I have the right to a positive and supportive learning environment.

I have the responsibility to demonstrate a commitment to my learning.

Why?

A positive, supportive learning environment is necessary for success. Therefore, I will attend regularly, actively engage in the learning process, arrive at class on time prepared to learn, and complete all class and homework assignments.

- **Appropriate Language:**

I have the right to be spoken to respectfully.

I have the responsibility to speak politely and use language and tone of voice that is respectful to all members of the school community.

Why?

Being able to use appropriate and tasteful language is a valuable life skill. When language is offensive to others, hurt feelings may lead to further conflict. Therefore, I will not engage in name calling, yelling, swearing, or racist, sexist, crude, rude or obscene language, whether it is spoken, written, implied or gestured.

- **Respect for School, Public and Private Property:**

I have the right to a clean and well-maintained school-learning environment.

I have the responsibility to respect school property, as well as the property of staff, students and the people who live in our neighborhood.

Why?

Taking care of the school and its surroundings demonstrates pride in the school. A clean school offers a healthy and pleasant place to work. Therefore, I will use garbage, recycling and compost bins appropriately. All students and staff should feel that their personal belongings at the school are safe. Therefore, I will respect school property and other people's belongings.

- **School Technology:**

I have the right to use technology for educational purposes.

I have the responsibility to use technology appropriately.

Why?

Technology can be a valuable learning resource but its use can result in access to inappropriate content. Therefore, I will follow the guidelines on the permission/authorization for computer use and not use any form of technology to access material that could be deemed offensive.

ORDERLY

An orderly school is one in which members of the school community are informed about and exercise their rights and responsibilities as school citizens. Expectations about acceptable behaviour, respect and decorum are generally understood. Responses to violations are based consistently on sound principles and are appropriate to the context.

- **Attendance:**

I have the right to attend school without excessive disruptions.

I have the responsibility to attend all my classes and be punctual.

Why?

Success comes through respect, responsibility, honesty, trust and fairness. The most basic level of student responsibility is attending school. Therefore, I will be present and on time to the best of my ability, and I will have my parents/guardian contact the school if I am going to be absent. I will also sign in or out if I am late to school or leaving early.

- **Personal Electronic Devices:**

I have the right to a learning environment free from distractions such as electronic devices that are being misused.

I have the responsibility to use electronic devices in an ethical and school-appropriate manner. During instructional time, I will only use them with the supervising teacher's permission and direction. During the nutrition and lunch breaks, I will not use personal devices to photograph or record, except for school-related purposes with a staff member's permission.

Why?

Inappropriate use of electronic devices can be distracting to student learning. Therefore, unless I have a staff member's permission, I will ensure that my cell phone is turned off during the school day. Due to privacy issues, photography and recording will only occur with staff permission.

- **Personal Appearance:**

I have the right to dress comfortably in a way that reflects my personal style.

I have the responsibility to dress in a manner that meets health and safety regulations.

Why?

Positive personal appearance reflects good judgment, respect for others and respect for self. I will not wear clothing with offensive words or slogans, or clothing that is unsafe for the activities in which I am engaged.

- **Student Movement and Designated Areas:**

I have the right to attend an orderly and safe school.

I have the responsibility to demonstrate orderly and safe conduct.

Why?

Students should be able to enjoy a peaceful and orderly environment. Therefore I will walk in the hallways, be respectful of people's personal space and be in the areas that are designated.

SAFE

A safe school is one in which members of the school community are free of the fear of harm, including potential threats from inside or outside the school. The attitudes and actions of students, staff and parents support an environment that is resistant to disruption and intrusion, and ensures a constant focus on student achievement.

- **Closed Campus:**

I have the right to be safe at school during my school day.

I have the responsibility to abide by school bells and boundaries.

Why?

The safety and security of students is of primary importance. School administration is legally responsible for students' safety and whereabouts during the school day. Therefore, I must follow the "closed campus" guidelines: students are expected to stay on school property from the time they arrive in the morning until they are dismissed in the afternoon. Exceptions will be made for students who have letters of permission on file in the office to go home at lunch or have submitted a note requiring dismissal for an appointment or activity. Students are required to sign out at the office when they leave and in again if they return.

- **Motor vehicles, Bikes, Skateboards, Roller blades, Scooters, etc.:**

I have the right to be in a safe environment that does not pose threats to my physical well being.

I have the responsibility to behave in a safe manner around motor vehicles, and to walk my bike, and carry my scooter, roller blades, and/or skateboard on school property.

Why?

Motor vehicles and the use of the above equipment or other wheeled vehicles on school property can be dangerous. Therefore, I will follow the safety guidelines around the drop off area and parking lot. I will walk my bike or carry my scooter, roller blades, and/or skateboard on school property during the school day.

- **Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco:**

I have the right to be in a learning environment free of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco.

I have the responsibility not to be in possession of, under the influence of, or involved in providing to others alcohol, drugs, or tobacco.

Why?

For our own protection and the protection of others, the law forbids the use or possession of these substances by students. Therefore, I will not be in possession of, under the influence of, or involved in providing to others alcohol, drugs or tobacco. I understand that forbidden items include, but are not limited to: alcohol, illicit drugs as defined under the Criminal Code of Canada; unauthorized prescription drugs, and other chemical substances which impair a person's judgment and ability to participate appropriately in the learning environment established by the school.

- **Weapons, Violence or Intimidation:**

I have the right to be in a learning environment that is free from weapons, violence (acts or threats of), or intimidation.

I have the responsibility to not be in possession of any weapons, fireworks, or any other illegal items nor be involved in violence (acts or threats of), or intimidation. I have a responsibility to report to school staff if I believe there are acts of violence, threats of violence, intimidation, or if there is a weapon in the school.

Why?

Weapons, violence (acts or threats of), and intimidation will not be tolerated at school. Therefore I will refrain from any involvement with weapons, fireworks or any other illegal items, and I will not be involved in any acts of violence, threats or intimidation. I will report violence, weapons, intimidation or threats to individuals' safety immediately to school staff.

INTERVENTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Range of Interventions and Consequences:

Regardless of the nature or location of the misconduct, or the staff member involved, the following is a range of interventions and consequences that will be used at GHMS:

1. On-the-spot conference or redirection.
2. Follow-up meeting between the student(s) and staff member(s).
3. Contact with parent or guardian.
4. Restitution, including a logical remedy for the problem (e.g. paying for damage willfully caused) and supporting anyone who is a victim or who suffers as a result of the student's actions.
5. Supportive intervention and/or service to school.
6. Additional time for the student with the teacher or in the office (detention).
7. Loss of privilege.
8. Completion of learning package.
9. Referral to counseling, administration, and/or community support services.
10. Serious or repeated indiscretions are reported directly to the vice-principal or principal.

Special considerations may apply to students with special needs if these students are unable to comply with a code of conduct due to having a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature.

Principal/Vice-Principal response may include the consequences above, and the response to serious or repeated indiscretions will be consistent with school and district policy.

Where students refuse to cooperate with staff directions and school expectations, as repeat offenders or through single incidents, parents will be involved and a suspension may result. Suspensions will be strongly considered and parents and police may be involved where chargeable offenses occur (fighting, threatening, assault, willful damage, possession or use of weapons, theft, tampering with fire alarms, possession or influence of drugs or alcohol). Retaliation will not be tolerated. All reasonable steps will be taken to prevent retaliation by a person against a student who has made a complaint of a breach of our code of citizenship.

Sequence of Consequences:

The range of responses is not necessarily sequential. The point at which an intervention begins will vary with the severity of the incident, and not all steps are necessary in all situations. For example, a teacher may simply confer with a student or may refer the matter to counseling or administration. In our progressive discipline model some issues may result in sequential elevation up the scale, depending on the student's response to teacher intervention. On the other hand, major infractions such as fighting, involvement with alcohol, etc. may be elevated directly to a more serious consequence.