

Safe & Caring SCHOOLS 2

What is Progressive Discipline?

Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
is committed to making each and every
one of its schools a caring place that
is safe for learning.



HAMILTON-
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Every student deserves to feel and be safe in a school, on the school grounds, on the school bus and at school events and activities. At Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB), we know safety is essential to good learning. Students learn and teachers teach more successfully when schools are safe. If a student misbehaves, the Principal decides on what steps to take to help the student improve his or her behaviour.

Certain misbehaviours require the school to follow a series of steps called progressive discipline.

What is Progressive Discipline?

With Progressive Discipline, the school Administrator and staff may work in several ways to try and change a student's misbehaviour while the student continues to go to school. However, sometimes, when the behaviour of a student is harmful to himself or herself or harmful to others in the school, steps must be taken to remove the student from school immediately.

What is the Code of Conduct?

The Code of Conduct outlines what is expected behaviour in a school and what happens when someone does not behave acceptably. Copies of the Code of Conduct are in every student's agenda. The Code of Conduct used in a school is also discussed yearly with students at Safe Schools assemblies and reviewed yearly by the School Advisory Council (SAC), whose members include the school's parents, guardians, staff and community.

Students, staff and parents can expect to be treated with respect and fairness; all are expected to follow the Code of Conduct. Progressive Discipline may be applied when behaviours do not meet these standards.

What is considered misbehaviour?

When a student misbehaves, he or she acts in a way that is harmful or hurtful to himself, herself or to others, or acts in a way that harms or hurts the safe and caring environment expected in our schools.



What happens if the Administrator feels a student has misbehaved?

If an Administrator (Principal or Vice Principal) feels that a student's misbehaviour has broken a school code, the school will contact the parents (or guardians). The Administrator will discuss the situation with the parent and determine if Progressive Discipline is needed. The Administrator will speak directly with a student who is age 18 or older (an adult student).

What happens when a student misbehaves at school?

When a student may be involved in unacceptable behaviour at school, it is the responsibility of the school's Administrators to find out what happened. The Administrator will speak with staff and students who were involved in the incident and will keep records of the facts, concerns and issues around what happened.



What do schools do to support students when they misbehave?

The Principal, Vice Principal and school staff use different ways to support students when misbehaviour becomes an issue. These may include:

- Talking to the student about the misbehaviour
- Having the student take time away from activities to think about his or her behaviour
- Having the student write a plan to improve behaviour
- Taking away the student's privileges until behaviour improves
- Meeting with parents or guardians to discuss problems
- Setting up staff support for the student
- Referring the student to social and behavioural support staff from the school Board
- Referring the student to community agencies for support with parental input.

At any time, you can ask to see a record of what the school has been doing to support your child.

What can I do to support my child if he or she misbehaves?

Find time to talk with your child. Get to know your child's friends. Work with your child's teacher, Principal and school staff to support your child. If you are concerned about your child's behaviour, you may ask the school about Board personnel or community agencies that may help support your child.



What information is shared with the families of victims of student misbehaviour?

The parents of a victim of student misbehaviour can be told in general what the school believes happened. Because of laws such as the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the specific information and consequences of the misbehaviour cannot be shared with the victim's family.

What do schools do to support students who have been the victims of misbehaviour?

The school will do its best to provide academic and emotional support to a student who has been the victim of another student's misbehaviour. HWDSB can provide for homework and school transfers, if needed, as well as provide a number of support services such as peer mediation or social work consultation. Contact the Principal for more information.

When do Principals consider suspending students?

If a student misbehaves, and especially if a student continues to misbehave after Progressive Discipline steps have been taken to encourage him or her to change the misbehaviour, a Principal may decide to suspend the student. Before giving a suspension, a Principal will also consider mitigating factors.

What are mitigating factors?

The Principal will consider the reasons (factors) why a student may have behaved as he or she did. Some of these factors may affect (or mitigate) the discipline for the behaviour. More information about suspensions and expulsions can be found at www.hwdsb.on.ca or in pamphlets of the Safe and Caring Schools series available at your school.

Do mitigating factors mean my child will not be suspended?

Mitigating factors mean the Principal may adjust the consequence or sometimes decide on a different form of discipline. Mitigating factors do not mean there will be no consequence.

How do I get more information?

For more information, please read other pamphlets in the Safe and Caring Schools initiative online at www.hwdsb.on.ca. Select "Parents" at the top of the home page and then click on "Safe and Caring Schools" underneath.

Further questions can be directed to your Principal, Vice Principal or Superintendent.

Please note: *This pamphlet is intended for information purposes. It is not a substitute for legal advice and is subject to all applicable laws and Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board policies.*

Safe & Caring SCHOOLS

Safe and Caring Schools Series

What are Codes of Conduct?

What is Progressive Discipline?

What is Bullying?

What to do if your child
is facing suspension

What to do if your child
is facing expulsion

What is the Gateway Program?



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