



Handbook
for
Students and Parents
2023 - 2024
“A Caring Culture of Learning for ALL”

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Safe Arrival Program/Attendance Procedures:

If your child is absent, please contact the school prior to 9:30 a.m. (This includes walkers on snow days). Phone 613-347-3461 or Input electronically in My Family Room, visit www.myfamilyroom.ca.

The Safe Arrival program mandates that we contact a student's parent/guardian each day a student is absent. Please let the school know the reason for your child's absence. You can call the school, leave a message on the answering machine or use MyFamilyRoom (www.myfamilyroom.ca) to let the school know of any absences. If your child is being picked up at school as a planned absence, please call the school to arrange in advance, identify the person picking up the student and the time the student will be picked up. Please notify the school before 2 pm. Students are not permitted to leave school grounds at lunch or recess to walk into town or visit the local convenience store.

As per Policy 107 -Unexplained Non-Attendance Program (formerly Safe Arrival) parents are required to:

- 1) Report your child's absence in advance by calling the school;
- 2) Provide current and suitable contact telephone numbers and update them promptly if they change;
- 3) Stress the importance of daily and prompt attendance with their children.

All unaccounted student absences will be followed up with a phone call to a parent. Calls will continue to be made until a verbal confirmation regarding the child's absence is obtained. Attempts will be made to contact the emergency contact(s). Follow-up on unsuccessful contacts will include contacting: the police, the Special Services Counsellor, the Superintendent, as appropriate. Other subsequent steps might include contact with a neighbour or a visit to the home.

If dismissal plans for a student change during the day, please contact the school as soon as possible to advise of the change, preferably no later than 2:00 pm. This allows us to notify students and teaching staff without interruption to classroom instructional time. **Do not leave a message after 3:00 pm**, the school telephone is typically very busy after this time of day and there is a risk that your dismissal plan changes would not be received before the end of the school day. In the event that your child must be picked up unexpectedly, please contact the school to advise of this need, indicating the time of pick up and who will be picking up the student.

There are occasions throughout the year when students believe they will be picked up at dismissal rather than ride the bus home. In order to avoid unnecessary worry for parents and caregivers, our policy is that students will be sent home on their regular bus if a parent phone call has not been received.

A student arriving late for school must enter through the main entrance and report to the office for attendance and safety reasons. The student will be given a late slip; they will not be admitted to class without this slip.

As a bus safety measure, vehicles are restricted from entering and parking in the bus loading zone during morning drop-off and afternoon dismissal. Vehicles are not permitted to enter or exit the parking lot while buses are in the bus-loading zone. If your child walks or you are driving your child to school, please note that supervision on the yard starts at 9:20 am. No child is allowed on the yard without proper supervision. In the case of an emergency, it may be possible to make special arrangements by contacting the office.

Transportation: The Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario provides detailed guidelines for parents and guardians regarding the transportation of students. An information booklet is given to every student at the beginning of the school year and is also posted on the STEO website at www.steo.ca. Parents/guardians should be aware that school bus drivers can only pick up and drop off riders at one authorized regular daily

stop. Drivers cannot make changes to stops without authorization from STEO. Transportation for all non-school related functions is the responsibility of parents/guardians. Transportation cannot be provided for sleepovers, a homework project, etc. These requests cannot be permitted for safety reasons.

Dress Code

Williamstown Public School does not have a school uniform. However, we have a dress code. Your appearance reflects your commitment to promoting a positive and inclusive environment. Students are expected to be dressed in an appropriate manner. Teachers will consult with the school Principal if they have concerns about student dress. Hats/Caps: not to be worn indoors.

Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom and School

During the school day the use of cell phones and electronic devices is restricted. All cell phones and electronic devices must be powered off and secured out of sight, except where advance approval has been sought from the principal or classroom teacher. Unless otherwise stated in an IEP, Ipods, I pads and lap tops may be used in class only with teacher permission. At WPS we are committed to ensuring an environment conducive to learning and to the protection of privacy, dignity and safety.

Photographs and Recording Audio/Video

On school property, no one is allowed to record audio/video or take pictures of staff or students at any time or anywhere unless they have the permission of the Principal/Vice-Principal and all of the people in the photograph, video or sound recording. Taking a picture or recording someone without their permission could be an invasion of privacy and might lead to suspension, expulsion, criminal charges, or a civil lawsuit. NOTE: If a student violates any policy stated above the device could be confiscated and the possible consequences listed above will be followed.

Smoking, Tobacco, Cannabis, e-Cigarettes and Vaporizers

In our pursuit to encourage and promote healthy lifestyles, students will not be allowed to be in possession of tobacco products, cannabis products, e-cigarettes and vaporizers at school at any time. If a student is found with tobacco, cannabis, e-cigarettes or vaporizers in their possession on school property it will be confiscated by the school staff, parents/guardians will be contacted, and consequences may be imposed. If students are caught using, selling or distributing tobacco or cannabis products (e.g. smoking, chewing tobacco, using cannabis or other), e-cigarettes or vaporizers on school property it will be confiscated, and the Tobacco Enforcement officer may be contacted, and consequences will be enforced.

NOTE: The Smoke Free Ontario Act provides an exemption for the use of tobacco products for "...the traditional use of tobacco that forms part of Aboriginal culture and spirituality." An Indigenous person has the right to use tobacco for traditional Indigenous cultural or spiritual purposes. In such cases, the principal or appropriate superintendent must be informed in advance to confirm whether any special measures may be needed to be introduced to support the ceremony or practice within the school setting or, on board property.

Weapons, Firecrackers, Matches, Lighters and Laser Pointers

The possession and/or display of weapons and firecrackers on school property are strictly forbidden. Such possession may result in immediate suspension. The public display or use of lighters or matches on school

property is prohibited. In the interest of student and staff safety, water pistols, toy guns and laser pointers are not permitted on school property.

Skateboards/In-Lines Skates and Shoes with Wheels

Students are not permitted to use skateboards, in-line skates or shoes with wheels on school property. Students with wheels built into the bottom of their shoes are to remove the wheels before entering school property.

Bikes on School Property

Students who live within biking distance of the school are welcome to bring their bike to school. As a safety precaution, students are reminded that wearing a certified bike helmet is a great piece of safety equipment to minimize the risk of head injury. Students are required to wear a bike helmet if they are riding their bike on school property or taking part in a school related cycling activity. The school and UCDSB are not responsible for stolen or damaged personal property.

Damage to School Property

Students should report all damage of school property to the main office as soon as possible. Students who are responsible for damages to school property or for the loss of school property may be expected to pay for the repair or the replacement of the property and may receive further applicable consequences.

Nut Allergies

As many of you are aware, some students at our schools have been diagnosed with severe allergies to peanuts, peanut butter and nut products. In some cases, even trace amounts of peanut butter and/or nut products could jeopardize the life of a child/person with this allergy. Please do not send peanut butter or products containing nuts of any kind to school. Imitation Peanut Butter or any soy butter are not permitted in the school as it is hard to differentiate these products from peanut butter or nut spreads. Your cooperation in this regard could save a life and is greatly appreciated!

Progressive Discipline

It is the policy of the Upper Canada District School Board, with respect to progressive discipline, to support a safe learning and teaching environment in which every pupil can reach his or her full potential. Appropriate action must consistently be taken by schools to address behaviours that are contrary to provincial and Board Codes of Conduct. Progressive discipline is an approach that makes use of a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences, building upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. The range of interventions, supports, and consequences used by the Board and all schools must be clear and developmentally appropriate, and must include learning opportunities for pupils in order to reinforce positive behaviours and help pupils make good choices. For pupils with special education and/or disability related needs, interventions, supports and consequences must be consistent with the expectations in the student's IEP and/or his/her demonstrated abilities. The Board, and school administrators, must consider all mitigating and other factors, as required by the Education Act and as set out in Ontario Regulation 472/07. The continuum of interventions in our progressive discipline model begins at the classroom level between the teacher and the student and then includes the student's parent/guardian.

Interventions may include but are not limited to:

Teacher-student meeting, meeting with parent/student/admin., community service, contact with parents, conflict mediation, verbal reminders, peer mentoring, written reflective assignments, referral to counselling/community agency, problem-solving activity, time-out, quiet area to work, removal from class,

withdrawal of classroom privileges, restitution for damages, office referral/detentions, restorative practices, home consequences.

Some possible next steps that involve the Administration/Student/Teacher/Parent:

Update call to parent, meeting to parent. Suspension/expulsion, withdrawal from class/school privileges, meeting with student and teacher, conflict mediation, alternative to suspension, referral to community agency/support staff, community service, restitution for damages, restorative practices, reflection activities.

When addressing inappropriate behaviour, school staff should consider the particular pupil and circumstances, including any mitigating and other factors as set out in the Student Discipline Procedures, the nature and severity of the behaviour, and the impact on the school climate.

Suspensions and Expulsions

When a principal determines that a pupil has committed one or more infractions on school property, during school related activities or events, and/or in circumstances off of school property, where the infraction has an impact on the school climate, a principal will consider whether that pupil should be suspended or be recommended to the Board Expulsion Committee.

Note: If a pupil is suspended, he/she is suspended from his or her school and from engaging in all school-related activities. The student cannot be on any school property within the UCDSB without the permission from the school principal.

Activities for which suspension must be considered under section 306(1) of the Education Act

☐ Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person ☐ Possessing alcohol, illegal and/or restricted drugs ☐ Being under the influence of alcohol, illegal or restricted drugs ☐ Swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority ☐ Committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school ☐ Bullying ☐ Any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the moral tone of the school ☐ Any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the physical or mental well-being of members of the school community ☐ Any act considered by the principal to be contrary to the Board or school Code of Conduct ☐ Opposition to authority ☐ Habitual neglect of duty ☐ Committing physical assault on another person that does not require treatment by a medical practitioner. ☐ Use of profanity/swearing ☐ Possessing cannabis, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user ☐ Being under the influence of cannabis, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user

Activities for which expulsion must be considered under section 310(1) of the Education Act

☐ Possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm or knife ☐ Using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person ☐ Committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner ☐ Committing sexual assault ☐ Trafficking in weapons, illegal or restricted drugs ☐ Committing robbery ☐ Giving alcohol to a minor ☐ Bullying if: i) The pupil has previously been suspended for engaging in bullying, and ii) the pupil's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person ☐ Any activity for which a suspension may be imposed that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor ☐ An act considered by the principal to be significantly injurious to the moral tone of the school and/or to the physical or mental well-being of others ☐ A pattern of behaviour that is so inappropriate that the pupil's continued presence is injurious to the effective learning and/or

working environment of others □ Activities engaged in by the pupil on or off school property that cause the pupil's continuing presence in the school to create an unacceptable risk to the physical or mental well-being of other person(s) in the school or Board □ Activities engaged in by the pupil on or off school property that have caused extensive damage to the property of the board or to goods that are/were on Board property □ The pupil has demonstrated through a pattern of behaviour that s/he has not prospered by the instruction available to him or her and that s/he is persistently resistant to making changes in behaviour which would enable him or her to prosper □ An act considered by the principal to be a serious violation of the Board or school Code of Conduct □ Where the student has no history of discipline or behaviour intervention, or no relevant history, a single act, incident or infraction considered by the principal to be a serious breach of the Board or school Code of Conduct □ Giving cannabis to a minor □ Any act considered by the principal to be a serious violation of the requirements for pupil behaviour and/or a serious breach of the Board or school Code of Conduct □ Where a pupil has no history of discipline or behaviour intervention, or no relevant history, a single act, incident or infraction considered by the principal to be a serious violation of the expectations of pupil behaviour and/or a serious breach of the Board or school Code of Conduct

Note: If a pupil is suspended, he/she is suspended from his or her school and from engaging in all school-related activities. The student cannot be on any school property within the UCDSB without the permission from the school principal.

Violent Threat Risk Assessment Protocol

The Upper Canada District School Board is committed to providing safe learning environments for all students, staff, school visitors and community members. When students behave inappropriately, principals use progressive discipline to help them take responsibility for their actions, change their behaviour, and learn from their mistakes.

When student behaviour poses a potential threat to safety or causes serious harm, the Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol (VTRA) helps principals take further steps to protect the wellbeing of our students. The protocol helps schools respond quickly to threatening incidents such as: possession of a weapon or replica weapon, bomb threat or plan, verbal, written or electronic (Internet, text) threats to kill or injure oneself or others, or other threats of violence, fire setting.

The Community VTRA outlines how a school responds immediately to threatening behaviour. Principals may first bring together a School Threat Assessment Team, which includes the principal/vice-principal, the designated regional lead, and police. If the situation is serious, the principal may also consult with the Superintendent responsible for the school and call in the Community Threat Assessment Team. This community team also includes representatives of community agencies who work with us to keep our schools safe, such as local police and children's mental health organizations. Parents and guardians will be notified if their child will be discussed through the Community Threat Assessment Protocol. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, or if they choose not to provide consent, but a concern for safety still exists due to threatening behaviour, the threat assessment may still proceed. Personal information shared throughout this process will respect and balance each individual's right to privacy with the need to ensure the safety of all.

As always, student safety is our first priority. If you have any questions regarding the Upper Canada District School Board Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol, please contact **Superintendent of Safe Schools** at 613-342-0371, ext. 1183 or toll free at 1-800-267-7131.

Fire Drills

When an alarm is sounded, the building is evacuated. Each classroom has a fire exit instruction sign posted near the door which directs students to the appropriate exit. When the alarm sounds, students must file out in a calm and orderly manner while moving with their class. Once outside they must move away from the building with their class. Attendance will be taken outside once the class is a safe distance from the school. You must cooperate fully with school officials and fire fighters. A similar procedure is to be followed in all emergency evacuations.

EMERGENCY CODES

“Lockdown”

- There is an imminent threat to staff and students inside the school or in relation to the school.
- All Staff and students should go to the nearest classroom/room.
- Classroom doors and windows are to be locked
- Staff and students are to remain away from doors and windows and out of the line of sight from the windows and doors
- If staff and students are outside the school: they should run for cover behind the nearest solid structure or seek safety and security in a spot off of school grounds – they should NOT re-enter the building unless absolutely necessary for protection
- REMAIN QUIET!!! - Make the classroom look, feel and sound empty.
- No contact with office **unless information about suspect/incident/bomb/fire.**
- No cell phone usage within the classroom.
- **Ignore the fire alarm unless there is clear evidence of a fire and an immediate threat to student safety**
- **Washroom:** If a student is in a washroom and can't go to another room immediately and safely during a lockdown they should enter a stall, lock the stall door and climb up on the toilet so their feet cannot be seen while remaining quiet.
- **ALL staff and students should remain in their safe location until they are removed by the police.**

“Hold and Secure”

- The potential threat is outside the school.
- All exterior doors to the school must be locked.
- All students and staff must return and enter the school if they are outside.
- Once all students and staff have returned inside the school, no one is allowed in or out of the school until the code cancelled.
- Staff and students can continue what they were doing inside the school.

“Shelter in Place”

- A non-violent threat in the community or a weather situation that could place students and staff at risk.
- All staff and students must return and enter the school if they are outside.
- All students and staff must remain in the school until the code is removed or permission is granted by the principal to leave the school.
- Staff and students can continue what they were doing inside the school.

Taking Medication at School – Authorization for Administration of Medication

The Upper Canada District School Board will not administer prescribed medication for students without the authorization of a licensed physician and the medication must be received within a properly labelled pharmacy bottle. The administration of prescription and / or non-prescription medication to a student is

the responsibility of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). Treatment regimens should, where possible, be adjusted to avoid administration of medication (prescription/non-prescription) during school hours.

The Board recognizes that there may be exceptional cases where a student must have medication administered during regular school hours. Students are not permitted to self-administer without the appropriate supervision and authorization on file. In order for students to take medication or have medication administered at school the following steps must be followed:

- The Authorization for the Administration of Medication form must be completed and signed by a licensed physician and/or the parent(s)/guardian(s). This form will need to be completed for every new school year and/or for each medication which requires administration by the school. Should there be a dosage change for any medication a new form must be submitted.
 - All prescribed medication must be received within a pharmacy bottle and the label on the bottle must provide instruction on how to administer such medication. The pharmacist medication information sheet must also be provided with the Authorization for Administration of Medication form. Non-prescribed medication must be in its original packaging.
 - Medications stored at school, for self/school administration, must be appropriately labeled (in original container) with the student's name, medication name, amount required, frequency, proper storage of medication, expiration date, and include any special instructions regarding side effects or emergency procedures. Medication must be stored in a secure and designated location to avoid loss or tampering.
 - The Authorization for the Administration of Medication Form can be picked up from the main office.
- NOTE: Students are not permitted to transport or keep medication with them for safety reasons. The exception here is an epi-pen or asthma inhaler if students have a signed permission form to carry their epi-pen or asthma inhaler in school. For more information in regard to medication please contact the main office.

Supporting Students with Medical Needs; Parents/Guardians of Children with Medical Needs

As the primary caregiver for your child, parents/guardians are expected to be active participants in supporting the management of your child's medical needs (e.g. Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes, Epilepsy, or other medical requirements) while they are in school. At a minimum, parents/guardians should:

- Inform the school of your child's medical needs and co-create the Plan of Care for their child with the principal or the principal's designate;
- Educate your child about their medical condition(s) with support from their child's health care professional, as needed;
- Guide and encourage your child to reach their full potential for self-management and self-advocacy;
- Communicate changes to the Plan of Care, such as changes to the status of your child's medical condition(s) or changes to your child's ability to manage the medical condition(s), to the principal or the principal's designate;
- Confirm annually to the principal or principal's designate that your child's medical status is unchanged;
- Initiate and participate in annual meetings to review your child's Plan of Care;
- Supply your child and/or the school with sufficient quantities of medication and supplies in their original, clearly labelled containers, as directed by a health care professional and as outlined in the Plan of Care, and track the expiration dates if they are supplied;
- Seek medical advice from a medical doctor, nurse practitioner, or pharmacist, where appropriate.

Students with Medical Needs

Depending on their cognitive, emotional, social, and physical stage of development, and their capacity for self-management, students are expected to actively support the development and implementation of their

Plan of Care. Students should:

- Take responsibility for advocating for their personal safety and well-being that is consistent with their cognitive, emotional, social, and physical stage of development and their capacity for self-management;
 - Participate in the development or review of their Plan of Care;
 - Carry out daily or routine self-management of their medical condition to their full potential, as described in their Plan of Care (e.g., carry their medication and medical supplies; follow school board policies on disposal of medication and medical supplies);
 - Set goals on an ongoing basis for self-management of their medical condition, in conjunction with their parent(s) and health care professional(s);
 - Communicate with their parent(s)/guardian(s) and school staff if they are facing challenges related to their medical condition(s) at school;
 - Wear medical alert identification that they and/or their parent(s)/guardian(s) deem appropriate;
 - If possible, inform school staff and/or their peers if a medical incident or a medical emergency occurs.
- School staff should follow their school board's policies and the provisions in their collective agreements related to supporting students with medical needs in schools.

Concussions

The Upper Canada District School Board (Board) recognizes concussions as a serious injury which requires appropriate follow-up measures to reduce risk of potential additional injury. Concussion awareness, prevention, identification and management are a priority for the Board.

The Board recognizes that children and adolescents are among those at greatest risk for concussions and that while there is potential for a concussion any time there is body trauma, the risk is greatest during activities where collisions can occur, such as during physical education classes, playground time, or school-based sports activities.

It is critical that a student with a suspected concussion be examined by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner as soon as possible on the same day.

If a student has a suspected concussion whether it is school related or not it is imperative that the school be made aware so that a Return to Learn/Return to Physical Activity Plan can be developed in collaboration with the school, home and medical practitioner. Please view the UCDSB concussion procedure and appendices at the following links [UCDSB Concussion Procedure 4001.1](#) & [Concussion Procedure 4001.1 Appendices](#) to view important information and all of the steps that must be followed and the forms that must be used if a student has a suspected concussion or concussion.