

**Waterford Public School Handbook for  
Students, Parents, Guardians and Staff  
2018 – 2019**



*A Community Where Everyone:*

**Can Learn  
Is Safe  
Is Respected**

**It Takes A Community To Make Our School  
The Best Place To Be**

**Welcome to Waterford Public School**

We are pleased to present every family in our school with this school handbook. Please keep it for future reference. Questions or comments should be directed to the principal or the secretary. You can reach us at (519) 443-8942. You can e-mail the principal at: [deborah.opersko@granderie.ca](mailto:deborah.opersko@granderie.ca)

## **Principal's Welcome**

My name is Mrs. D. Opersko and it is a pleasure to welcome each student and family to Waterford Public School! Providing a safe, caring, engaging, and inclusive learning environment is of utmost importance to all who belong to our Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8 school community.

This agenda will serve both as a means of communication and as an organizational tool. Students are reminded to bring it to class and take it home each day so that parents can learn about school events and homework. Parents are requested to sign any notes from the teacher to acknowledge that they have been read. Parents may also write any of their own notes to the teacher in the agenda. This routine will help to keep parents informed and students organized.

Let's work together to have an outstanding year!

## **Balanced School Day, Nutritional Breaks & Dismissal Times**

At 8:30 a.m. daily, teachers meet the school buses and begin supervising the playground. *Students are unsupervised prior to that time and should not be on the playground. Please note: With the exception of our staff members, no adults are permitted on the schoolyard. Parents are also not permitted to walk their child to class, inside the school building. All visitors are required to report to the school office, where they will be welcomed and assisted, after pressing the buzzer at the front door of the school.*

Entry Bell	8:50 a.m.
Instructional Block #1	100 minutes
Nutrition Break and Recess	10:30 a.m. - 11:10 a.m.
Instructional Block #2	120 minutes
Nutrition Break and Recess	1:10 p.m. - 1:50 p.m.
Instructional Block #3	80 minutes
Recess, walkers are dismissed	3:10 p.m.
Buses leave the yard	3:25 - 3:30 p.m.

Our balanced school day timetable divides the school day into three blocks of instructional time. Two nutrition breaks are provided, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Each of the breaks is 40 minutes long, consisting of 20 minutes to eat first and then 20 minutes for recess. Our school is a bus transfer point for Waterford District High School, Holy Trinity Catholic High School, Simcoe Composite School and St. Bernard's Catholic School. We have an additional recess for bus riders at the end of the day, to allow time for buses to arrive from these different locations.

## **Before and After School Care**

Today's Family offers a before and after school program at Waterford Public School. It is quality care for school age children up to twelve years of age, and is available Monday to Friday from 7:00 a.m. to the start of school and from the end of school until 6:00 p.m. Programs are also offered on Professional Activity Days from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at another location.

The program provides a safe place where children can enjoy arts and crafts, physical activities, chat with friends, or work on homework. Subsidized spaces may be available, and registrations for flexible schedules are accepted.

For more information about the program, please feel free to drop by or contact Elysha Wiseman, Supervisor at 519-410-2735 or email: [ewiseman@todaysfamily.ca](mailto:ewiseman@todaysfamily.ca). For more information about Today's Family, please contact: 1-844-574-9344 or [visit their website at todaysfamily.ca](http://visittheirwebsite.at.todaysfamily.ca).

### Healthy Eating at the School

Our school has a nutrition program. Healthy food is offered to staff and students as we begin our school day at 8:50 a.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Hot lunches are offered every Friday (or on Thursday, if Friday is a holiday or a PA Day). White milk, chocolate milk and apple juice are also offered as either “daily” or “Fridays only” options. Food and drink orders are posted online on our Cashless Banking System at [www.schoolcashonline.com](http://www.schoolcashonline.com), just after the middle of each month. Each month of hot lunch orders are posted online for one full week. Please call the office if you have questions or require assistance on how to order online. We are happy to help!

### Peanut / Nut Allergy

Students and staff members with severe peanut or nut allergies are in danger of a life threatening reaction if exposed to peanuts, other types of nuts, or nut products. In some cases just the peanut/nut oil left on a chair or desk could trigger a reaction. **WATERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOL IS A PEANUT/NUT AWARE BUILDING.**

We appreciate the co-operation of all families in keeping peanut / nut products out of the school as listed below:

- Peanuts or nuts in any form,
- Peanut/nut butter,
- Peanut/nut oil,
- Baked items containing peanut products or nut products,
- Foods cooked in peanut or nut oils such as home-style potato chips

### Punctuality

Accepting responsibility for being punctual is an important life skill. Students are expected to arrive promptly for school. Late students interrupt classes, distract others and often miss routines, announcements and classroom learning.

If your child will be late for school, please call our secretary, Mrs. Hofland, at (519) 443-8942 in advance. Students, who arrive late at school for any reason, should enter through the front door and report to the office to receive a late stamp, before going to class.

### Attendance

If your child will be absent, please phone the school at (519) 443-8942 prior to the absence. You do not have to wait until office hours to inform us, as we have voicemail. When you leave a message please clearly state your child’s name, your child’s teacher’s name and the reason for the absence (i.e. ill or a medical appointment). If a student is absent and the office has not received a call from the parent, our school secretary will call to determine the whereabouts of the child. A phone call will let us know your child is safe.

If a child does not have a legitimate reason for being absent, he/she will be considered “truant”. If the principal considers the pupil’s pattern of absence or late arrival at school to be a concern, the school’s attendance counsellor will be contacted.

Regular attendance is necessary if a student is to achieve satisfactory progress in school. Plenty of rest, good nutrition and physical activity are key ingredients for a healthy lifestyle, along with good attendance. Illnesses or family emergencies occasionally can prevent a child from attending school. To ensure a full recovery and to avoid spreading germs to others, we respectfully request that parents keep children at home until they are feeling well enough to participate fully in all school activities. Under normal circumstances, children who are well enough to attend school are expected to participate in outdoor play.

If a student will be absent for longer than fifteen days for reasons other than illness, parents are asked to fill out our School Board's *Request for Temporary Absence* form which can be obtained from the school office.

### **Vacations:**

Parents wishing to take their children out of school during the regular school schedule should be aware that they must fill out a *Request for Temporary Absence* form for the Grand Erie District School Board. This form is available from the office. Parents must take responsibility for any lack of school progress or failure that may result from the absence and acknowledge that absence from school may be detrimental to the educational progress and achievement of the student. Missed schoolwork, assignments or tests may restrict the school's ability to fully evaluate a student's performance. Upon return from a vacation students are responsible for completing work assigned by the teacher during their absence.

Teachers will not prepare assignments beforehand to accommodate students planning to be absent from school to accompany parents on holiday. Work will be saved as it is assigned to the class and given to students upon their return from vacation. Students will be responsible for "catching up" on lessons missed during their absence. Completion of unfinished work is the responsibility of the parents and the student.

### **Emergencies**

An illness or an injury can happen at any time and our first concern is to give immediate attention to the student. If the injury is minor, the student receives first aid from a trained staff member and when ready, returns to class. Parents will be contacted to pick up a student who is not feeling well enough to participate in the classroom program.

For serious injuries, emergency personnel will be called and parents will be notified immediately. If a child is in distress, an ambulance will be called. Parents will be responsible for the cost of the ambulance. **This emphasizes the importance of accurate and current information being kept on file at the office.** Notify the office as soon as possible if there are any changes in your family such as telephone numbers, employment, emergency contacts or guardianship.

Six fire drills and two lock-down drills are held yearly and emergency procedures are reviewed regularly. Students also practise an evacuation drill in preparation should there be a real emergency situation. A variety of reasons may necessitate the immediate evacuation of a school at any time. It is imperative that students wear shoes while at school. Leaving an extra pair of shoes at school is required. During an emergency dismissal, there may not be sufficient time for students to put on boots and coats.

### **Inclement Weather**

Students benefit from active play outdoors and should come dressed appropriately for a variety of weather conditions. In case of rain, freezing rain or extreme cold, students will have their break indoors.

- Information on Student Transportation Services can be found here: <http://www.stsbhn.ca/>
- For transportation delays, cancellations or school closures, visit: [www.transinfobhn.ca/Cancellations](http://www.transinfobhn.ca/Cancellations)
- Find the Board's Inclement Weather Policy here: [bit.ly/2HoC1YX](http://bit.ly/2HoC1YX)
- Learn how Student Transportation Services makes its decision about inclement weather here: [bit.ly/2JIVSk9](http://bit.ly/2JIVSk9)
- If there are school or board facility closures, Grand Erie will post a notification by 6:30 a.m. on the Board's website: [www.granderie.ca](http://www.granderie.ca)
- Information will also be posted on Grand Erie's Twitter (@GEDSB) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/GEDSB](http://www.facebook.com/GEDSB)) accounts

Information about inclement weather will refer to specific school zones. We are in Zone 1. Please note that if the buses are cancelled then the school will be closed to all staff and students. Please do not send

your child to school if the buses for Zone 1 have been cancelled. If at any time parents feel that the weather conditions are too dangerous to send a child to school, parents always have the option of keeping the child at home.

Sometimes the buses are delayed due to fog or other poor weather conditions. This means the start of school will be delayed as well.

In the event that weather conditions deteriorate after school has started, the bus schedule may commence earlier than normal. Should the School Board decide to dismiss students early, a phone fan-out system is used to notify parents. If a parent cannot be notified that the child is coming home early, the child will be kept at school until a parent or guardian comes to pick the child up.

### **Nutrition Breaks**

During both nutrition breaks, students eat in supervised classrooms. There is no microwave available to cook/warm up student lunches. All students are expected to remain at school during nutrition breaks. Students will not be permitted to sign out and go downtown during the school day. Any student out for lunch with a parent or guardian during the second nutrition break must be signed out and back in by his/her parent or guardian.

Students should be aware of our positive expectations with regard to behaviour during nutrition breaks, as well as our recycling and clean up rules. Eating lunch at school is a privilege that can be revoked by the principal for a period of time if expectations are not followed.

### **Lunch Time Expectations**

1. Students will remain seated in their assigned seats throughout the nutrition break and until they are dismissed.
2. Students with no food or not enough food should ask for permission to come to the office where food can be provided.
3. Students must ask permission to use the restroom and to leave the lunch room for any reason.
4. Students are not permitted to eat someone else's food or trade food or drink with another student.
5. Students who make a mess and/or do not tidy up will not be dismissed until clean-up is finished.
6. Students who eat food or drink beverages on the playground will be reported to the office for a consequence.
7. Students must provide their own eating utensils.
8. Students are expected to co-operate with the staff member providing supervision.

### **Bus Transportation**

The Grand Erie District School Board has set clear expectations for students who ride the bus. The principal of the school is responsible for every student from the time he/she boards the bus until he/she is let off at the designated location. This can include disciplinary action, if necessary. The following bus routines and expectations are determined by the Board and are for all students:

- Be at the bus pick up location prior to the arrival of the bus.
- Be picked up and dropped off only at designated stops.
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion. Arms, legs and head must not protrude into the aisle or out the windows.
- Keep the centre aisle of the bus clear at all times.
- Do not bring the following on the bus: food, drink, gum, cigarettes, drugs, firecrackers, lighters, matches, knives or any other dangerous or annoying objects
- Any object deemed dangerous, e.g. skates, must be transported in a protective bag.

- Profane, abusive, threatening or disrespectful language and/or behaviour towards anyone on the bus, on the street, while waiting in bus areas, while riding the bus or when boarding or disembarking will not be tolerated.
- Respect the bus property. Repair of damage is the responsibility of the student or his/her family.
- Board or disembark from the bus at transfer points when directed by a supervising staff member or the driver.
- Talk quietly; the driver needs to concentrate on traffic and safety.
- Do not adjust the windows without permission from the driver.
- Never throw items on the bus or out of the bus.
- Respect and respond appropriately to the directions of any and all supervising staff or the bus driver at all times.
- Ride only on the designated bus / bus route.
- Sit in designated seats when requested by staff or drivers.
- Respect each other on the bus at all times. Bullying behaviour will not be tolerated

When students do not follow these expectations, the following consequences will be applied:

1. A bus report will be submitted to the school and parents will be notified.
2. Repeated bus reports will result in a suspension from the bus.
3. Continuing bus reports may result in permanent removal from the bus.

### **Volunteers and Mandatory Police Checks**

Volunteers contribute greatly to our school. They offer a variety of talents and skills to our students and are a most valued resource for our staff. We appreciate the many parents and members of our community who help in the classroom, accompany students on class trips, prepare learning materials, organize special events, shelve student books in the library, help with lice checks, listen to children read, help with our school's nutrition program... the list is endless!

If you are available to help in any way, please express your interest to your child's teacher or the principal. No experience is necessary! Time commitments and volunteer assignments can be negotiated. All volunteers are required to have a police check, which includes a vulnerable sector screening, prior to working in the school or accompanying students on trips. Volunteers must have a Vulnerable Sector Police Check every three years. This is free of charge, if a letter from the school is presented to the OPP with the request. If you are interested in helping, contact the office for a police check request letter or if you wish to check your renewal date, if you already have submitted a copy of your police check to the school.

### **Volunteer Code of Conduct**

School volunteers are asked to read and abide by the following rules while in our school:

1. Upon arrival, please report to the office to sign in and to obtain an identification lanyard to wear,
2. Refrain from public criticism of the school, staff, students and other volunteers,
3. Speak, dress and act in a professional manner while in the school,
4. Keep the interest of the students in mind while performing your volunteer duties,
5. Respect the confidentiality and privacy of students, staff and other volunteers,
6. Disciplining students is not part of a volunteer's responsibility. If a situation occurs, please inform the staff member you are assisting.
7. Be aware of the procedures for accidents, illness or emergencies,
8. Volunteers who assist in a classroom will be asked to sign our confidentiality agreement, which will be kept on file at the office,

9. All volunteers are required to fill in and return the Grand Erie District School Board's *Volunteer Supervisor's Release and Indemnification Form*, when accompanying students on a class trip.

#### Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (A.O.D.A.) Training

Volunteers are required to complete Accessibility training.

After viewing the video, please complete the Accessibility Customer Service Standards Declaration. Completing this declaration informs the Board that you have complied with the accessibility standards in the AODA.

To view the accessibility video, go to: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/working-together-code-and-aoda>  
Go here to complete the Accessibility Customer Service Standards Declaration:  
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfWrsKgHUF5E6nCJZrPxvh-fEoFpaqTOPY5JEaxVsbki3xPQg/viewform?c=0&w=1>

All volunteers are required to complete an online AODA training module. Once a volunteer completes the training, they will receive a certificate acknowledging completion which can be printed and taken to the school, or emailed directly to the school.

A photocopy of the certificate of completion may be used if the volunteer offers his/her services at more than one location. Training will include:

- The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- Which disabilities are covered by the Act.
- How to interact and communicate with people who have disabilities.
- Which assistive devices and service animals are used by people with disabilities.
- How to use equipment and assistive devices available on our School Board's premises.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the Board's services.
- Policies, practices and procedures required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

If a volunteer has documentation of AODA training completed in another context this can be accepted by the Principal.

At Waterford Public School we value the support and contributions of many enthusiastic volunteers. Your family is invited and encouraged to participate.

#### **Transportation by Volunteers**

We appreciate the many parent volunteers who provide transportation for our students who are on sports teams. It is the requirement of the Grand Erie District School Board that volunteer drivers have a minimum of \$2,000,000 public liability and property damage insurance and hold a valid Ontario driver's licence. The Board has prepared a declaration form that must be completed and filed in the school office before a volunteer is permitted to transport students. This form needs to be completed only once during the school year. Please notify us of any subsequent change to your coverage. All volunteers working at the school, including volunteer drivers require an up to date police check, as required by Board Policy. All students will be transported by school bus while on class trips.

#### **Picking Up Your Child During Class Time**

If your family's pick up routine has changed or if you wish your child to be excused from school early, you must send a message to the classroom teacher. It is preferable that parents do not call the school office to make this request as instructions can easily be confused or we may not be able to get your message communicated to your child in a timely fashion.

When picking up your child from school for an appointment, you must report to the office and have the secretary arrange for your child to be brought to you. This helps ensure proper safety and tracking for all our students in the school.

Children leaving in the middle of the day must be signed out at the office and signed back in at the office when they return. Children leaving and returning in the middle of the day must leave and return via the front doors of the school, as our school doors are locked. A note must be sent if you wish someone other than those listed on your "Emergency Contact Form" to pick up your child from school. A phone call will not suffice, as it is impossible to identify the caller. For safety's sake, a staff member will ensure that the child has permission to go with the pick-up person.

Please, under no circumstances, should you remove your child from the playground without notifying the person on duty and signing your child out at the office. Parents who pick up their child at the end of the school day are asked to wait outside the building.

### **Toys and/or Personal Items**

Students are asked not to bring toys, trading cards, stuffed animals, electronic games, I-pods, MP3 players, digital cameras or any other personal items to school. It is best to leave sentimental and valuable items at home to avoid loss, theft or damage. The school and/or teaching staff are not responsible for any student's personal items.

### **Treats from Home**

We are happy to accept snacks and treats for special occasions (birthdays, Valentine's Day, etc.) at school. However, the Ontario Public Health Association no longer supports home baked or prepared food for students; therefore, food sent to school has to be purchased from a recognized facility that has been given approval by public health inspectors. This means that we can no longer have bake sales at school, nor can we give students cupcakes, cookies etc. that have been made in private kitchens. We can only accept pre-packaged, purchased treats from the grocery store on special days. At all times, we remind parents to follow our peanut/nut aware school policy.

### **Administration of Medication**

The Grand Erie District School Board procedures require that the doctor authorizing the administration of medication at school sign a *Request For School Assistance In Health Care* form. The form must include the name of the drug, the student's name, the dosage, the time it should be administered and the reason for the medication. Please request this form from the school office if your child will be receiving medication during school hours.

Medication is kept in a safe area and administered by an authorized staff member. All medication must be brought to school in a pharmacist's container and clearly labelled with the name of the patient and the name of the drug. It is a parent's responsibility to ensure that medications, such as inhalers or epi-pens have not expired and that we have sufficient medication at the school.

School personnel cannot administer non-prescription medication i.e. allergy medicine, Tylenol or cough syrup. With the exception of inhalers, students must not keep any medication in their desks or knapsacks.

### **Bicycles, Roller Blades, Scooters, and Skateboards**

Parents who give permission for their child to ride a bike to school are encouraged to review traffic safety rules with their child. Bicycles can be locked up in the bike racks provided by the school. The school cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to a bicycle. Bicycles and scooters will not be stored inside the school. It is strongly recommended that students lock up their bicycles with a combination lock as keys can be lost. Remember that the law requires children to wear a CSA approved helmet.

If students ride their bicycles to school they must dismount and walk their bike on and off school property. For obvious safety reasons and in keeping with our “no wheels” playground policy, roller blades, skateboards, and scooters are not permitted on school property or on school buses.

### **Telephones and Other Electronic Devices**

Use of the school office telephone by a student is limited to important circumstances and a staff member must give approval. The school phone cannot be used to make social arrangements. We encourage families to make arrangements for after school activities, babysitting or transportation in advance, so that the school does not need to be contacted to relay such plans.

Although we do not encourage students to bring cell phones to school, we do appreciate their use for safety reasons when students are traveling to and from school. While on school property, however, cell phones must be out of sight. Electronic devices are not allowed in the washrooms or gym change rooms. The school will not take responsibility for lost or stolen devices. Students using electronic equipment on school property during school hours will receive one warning and the equipment will be kept at the school office until the end of the school day, when it will be returned. If students continue to use their electronic equipment at school, the equipment will be stored at the office and a parent/guardian will need to come to the school to pick it up. We request that parents do not text their children at school during school hours, nor should students be texting home. We are happy to pass on messages through the school office or permit a child to use a school phone when needed.

### **Library**

At Waterford Public School we believe that children should have as many opportunities to read as possible. For this reason, students will be regular visitors at our school library.

- We do not charge late fees on overdue books but we do encourage students to bring their books back on time so that others may enjoy them as well.
- If a book becomes lost, please do everything you can to find it. If it is not found, it is expected that the book is paid for.
- If a book becomes damaged, please return it. You might be surprised by what can be repaired.
- If you have any types of materials that you are uncomfortable with your child borrowing from the library (e.g. ghost stories, books about war, etc.) please let your child's teacher know.

Wondering if we have a certain title? Visit [destiny.granderie.ca](http://destiny.granderie.ca) and click on Waterford Public School to view our online catalogue.

### **Dress Code**

Students, staff and volunteers are required to wear proper attire that displays good taste and demonstrates respect for themselves and others.

- Hats (or headwear, including hoods) must be removed when inside the building, unless for a specified activity i.e. spirit day. Hair bands are permitted.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times, both inside and outside. Inside shoes, with no scuff soles for the gym floor, are required. Shoes with wheels are not allowed at school.
- Clothing must be appropriate to a school setting:
  1. Shirts must be at least waist length and overlap pants at all times
  2. Shoulder straps on tops must be at least two fingers wide (no “spaghetti” straps)
  3. Necklines, shorts and skirts should fit appropriately and reflect modesty.
  4. Pyjama tops, bottoms and nightshirts are not acceptable clothing at school.
  5. Appropriate undergarments are necessary and must not be visible.

6. Clothing with inappropriate language/graphics or messages (promoting/ depicting drugs, tobacco, alcohol, racist content, sexual content or violence) is unacceptable at all times.

If a student is dressed inappropriately, he/she will discuss with the teacher or principal the reason why the clothing is inappropriate. The student will be asked to change or cover up until appropriate attire is available. The student may need to call home for a change of clothing or the school may provide something temporarily from the lost and found box.

Please take the time to clearly label all of your child's clothing, gym outfits and personal belongings. The school does not accept responsibility for items lost at school.

### **Head Lice**

Even though it is very common, many parents have never dealt with head lice and are not sure what to look for. You may be frustrated and confused by the myths and not know how to treat it.

Head lice are tiny, greyish insects that live and breed on human hair. Nits or eggs appear as tiny white specks attached to the individual hair shafts. Head lice prefer to live on clean, healthy hair. They are most likely spread by head to head contact and cannot jump, fly or be spread by pets or animals.

Please check your child for head lice and/or nits (eggs) regularly. If you discover head lice, information about the best treatment can be obtained by contacting your doctor or pharmacist.

Please notify the school office if you find that your child has head lice. We understand parents' and students' need for confidentiality but we are obliged to inform parents of other students in the same class of the presence of head lice. Once head lice have been found, students may not return to school until they have received proper treatment and all the nits have been removed from the hair. **Parents must bring their child to the office to be checked by a school staff member prior to returning to class.**

### **Playground Behaviour and Safety**

We are fortunate to have a beautiful playground. While on yard duty, staff members wear a bright coloured vest, in order to be spotted quickly. Students must ask permission to re-enter the building for a drink from the water fountain or to use the washroom, as we need to know where all students are at all times. Students are not permitted to be in classrooms during any break unless supervised by an adult. No balls, of any kind, are permitted to be used on the yard prior to school starting each day. This is the only time during the school day that there are over 300 students present and someone could be injured.

#### **General playground expectations include:**

- Play safely: **NO body contact**,
- Keep the snow, sticks and stones on the ground,
- Include all who wish to play,
- Use the benches for sitting,
- Proper footwear on the playground equipment is required, no flip flops,
- Sitting on top of the monkey bars is not permitted,
- Scarves or clothing with strings are not permitted on the playground equipment,
- Tag games are not permitted on the playground equipment,
- On a slide: one person at a time, seated, feet first only. No standing on a slide or walking up a slide,
- Line up promptly when the entry bell rings,
- Use only polite and appropriate language,
- Listen to and obey supervisors,
- Be respectful of the trees, fencing, benches, swings and playground equipment,
- Students are not permitted to enter a neighbour's property

- Students are not permitted on the playground equipment in the winter, when the ground is frozen or when the equipment is wet.

### **School Council**

This parent group is an advisory body of elected volunteers who work together to maintain good communication among the school, parents and community. By sharing ideas and information, we strive to provide the best possible learning environment for all our students. The Council works with and supports the efforts of the principal and staff in making decisions about how to make improvements to the facility, enhance curriculum, improve school safety, communicate to parents and act as a liaison for the local community within the school system. The Council reviews standards and expectations specific to our school (dress code and nutrition breaks for example). The group also raises money to purchase resources for classrooms. All interested parents are most welcome to attend school council meetings. Meeting times will be posted in our school newsletters and on our school Facebook page. Elections for Council positions are held in September.

### **Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

Computer technology is a powerful tool for teaching and learning when employed in an appropriate manner. Computers will be used to enhance educational programs and as tools to assist students in achieving the expectations of the Ontario Curriculum. Students will be given access to the Internet for research purposes and will be supervised by a staff member at all times. The Grand Erie District School Board has a Code of Digital Citizenship, which is shared with all students. In order to make the best use of the Internet, students need to be aware of proper etiquette and potential risks.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Obtain permission to use the computer or to access the Internet,
- Use only their own log in and password,
- Keep their personal log in and password confidential,
- Use computer hardware and software without causing damage,
- Work on the computer without disturbing others,
- Use only polite, appropriate language,
- Respect copyright and refrain from software piracy,
- Refrain from illegal access to computer systems,
- Use the computer and Internet for educational purposes only,
- Keep personal information (name, address, phone number) confidential,
- Refrain from using the network or Internet for commercial gain,
- Refrain from subscribing to mailing lists or services through the internet,
- Refrain from downloading information or pictures without teacher permission
- Refrain from printing excessively large documents,
- Only surf the web within teacher approved parameters.

Should students encounter inappropriate materials on the computer monitor they should:

- Refrain from responding to pictures or messages that are cruel, abusive, or profane or in any way make them feel uncomfortable.
- Immediately turn off the monitor,
- Inform the adult in charge that a situation has occurred.

### **Code of Co-operation at Waterford Public School**

The Waterford Public School Code of Co-operation is based upon the Grand Erie District School Board's Code of Conduct.

Waterford Public School is committed to promoting and supporting appropriate student behaviours which contribute to and sustain a safe learning and teaching environment. It is our goal to provide a positive

school climate in which each student can reach his or her full potential. We provide programs that promote respect, civility, responsible citizenship and safety. We endeavour to create a student-centred educational community whose members support one another with mutual respect, understanding, and acceptance.

#### Standards of Behaviour in Grand Erie Schools

The standards of behaviour for the school community, as outlined in Board policy, are divided into two main categories:

##### A) Respect, Civility, & Responsible Citizenship

- All members of the school community must:
- Respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity
- Respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions
- Treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is a disagreement
- Respect and treat others fairly regardless of, for example, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability
- Respect the rights of others
- Show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others
- Take appropriate measures to help those in need
- Seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully
- Respect all members of the school community, especially persons in positions of authority
- Respect the needs of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching
- Not swear at or make rude gestures to a teacher or at another person in a position of authority

##### B) Safety

All members of the school community must not:

- Engage in bullying behaviours
- Commit sexual assault
- Traffic weapons or drugs
- Provide alcohol or illicit drugs to a minor
- Commit robbery
- Be in possession of any weapon
- Use any object to threaten or intimidate another person
- Cause injury to any person with an object intentionally or recklessly
- Be in possession of, or be under the influence of, or provide others with, alcohol, prescription or illegal drugs
- Inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person
- Engage in hate propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias
- Commit an act of vandalism that causes damage to school or Board property
- Create a disturbance in a school, on school property, or at a school sanctioned event which disrupts or disquiets the proceedings of the school or class or otherwise disrupts the operation of a school or the learning environment
- Compromise the safety and dignity of persons with the potential for invasion of personal privacy made possible by the inappropriate use of personal electronic devices or the internet

#### Roles and Responsibilities

##### The Role of the Students:

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. The role of students is:

- To refrain from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others
- To follow the established rules and take responsibility for their own actions, at school, on the bus and when representing the school in the community
- To attend class punctually and regularly

- To be diligent in attempting to master the learning expectations for their program
- To accept responsibility for misbehaviour; accept discipline and consequences
- To understand the nature of bullying and harassment, and refrain from engaging in conduct of this nature

#### The Role of Parents/Guardians:

Parents/guardians play an important role in the education of their children, and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. The role of parents and guardians is:

- To show an active interest in their child's school work and progress
- To communicate regularly with the school
- To check backpacks and agendas daily, and respond to notes and forms
- To provide appropriate and sufficient school lunches
- To help their child be neat, appropriately dressed and prepared for school
- To ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- To promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival
- To show that they are familiar with the Code of Co-operation and school rules; encourage and assist their child in following these rules of behaviour
- To assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child

#### Safe School Policy

A safe and caring school is a school community that is free from violence, bullying, harassment, abuse, threats, discrimination and vandalism. Any act of aggression or unacceptable behaviour will result in a consequence. Each incident will be dealt with on an individual basis. Since each case is different, staff will determine which consequence is appropriate and when to move from one to another. In some situations suspension and/or police involvement will be immediate.

#### Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Intervention

Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

Harassment is defined as behaviour, such as conduct or comments, which is unwelcome and inappropriate or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals, thus creating an uncomfortable learning environment.

Bullying and harassment can adversely affect:

1. students' ability to learn
2. the maintenance and establishment of healthy relationships and
3. the school climate.

Therefore bullying and harassment will not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses or in any other circumstance (e.g., online) where these behaviours will have a negative impact on school climate.

All Grand Erie District School Board employees take seriously all allegations of bullying, harassment, racism, gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, and any other negative behaviour which would impact on the school climate.

Waterford Public School recognizes that any students who are targeted by any form of bullying or harassment may experience negative effects. As such, part of our Progressive Discipline approach includes support for those students and families who are experiencing victimization. Support may include:

- ensuring reporting of incidents
- a reporting procedure and support plan for students

- responding effectively to incidents
- informing parents and including them in problem-solving
- referral to board student support services
- referral to the Safe Schools Team
- referral to community agencies for support
- collaboration with Police services where appropriate

### Progressive Discipline

Grand Erie District School Board endorses early and ongoing prevention and intervention to promote positive behaviour. Opportunity for students to learn from their choices is a critical element. We use a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. Interventions include opportunities for reinforcing positive behaviour while helping students make good choices.

### Prevention and Intervention

Prevention and early intervention are essential in maintaining a positive school environment in which students can learn. Opportunities for students to learn from the choices they make are ongoing, i.e., to address inappropriate behaviours/attitudes and work with the team members at the school, who are dedicated to their support. This process also informs parents, bringing to their attention awareness of the situation and asking for their supportive involvement.

Prevention and intervention strategies include:

1. Each student receives a copy of the school handbook, which includes the school's expectations for conduct. This handbook is reviewed with the students during the first week of school. Parents are asked to read the handbook and sign its cover to indicate they are familiar with school rules and procedures.
2. Bullying prevention is taught to students in class and at school assemblies.
3. Students review rules throughout the year to ensure they understand and follow them.

The continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences developed must be developmentally appropriate, and include opportunities for students to focus on improving behaviour. When addressing inappropriate student behaviours or attitudes, consideration is given to the particular student and the circumstances of the behaviour or attitude, the nature and severity of the behaviour or attitude and the impact of the inappropriate behaviour or attitude on the school climate. Disciplinary interventions, supports and consequences for students with special education needs are considered in conjunction with the student's strengths, needs, goals and expectations as outlined in the Individualized Education Plan. Consequences for inappropriate behaviour may include, but are not limited to: meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s), student, and principal; referral to a community agency for counseling support and intervention; detentions or loss of privileges; and suspension and/or expulsion.

Progressive discipline addresses four levels of intervention. The level of intervention or discipline is based on the consideration of the nature, frequency, severity and impact of the misconduct and of the mitigating and other factors in each individual case, with the goal of changing the student's behaviour. Each progressive stage represents more serious behaviour and corresponding circumstances.

Level 1 discipline is employed for minor acts of misconduct which interfere with orderly school procedures, functions, extracurricular programs, or a student's own learning. These minor acts are most often addressed by the teacher in the classroom, or the educational assistant.

Level 2 discipline offences are acts of misconduct that require increased intervention. These acts may include, but are not limited to, repeated unrelated acts of minor inappropriate behaviour directed against persons or property, but which do not seriously endanger health, safety or well-being of others. Involvement of student support staff, parents/guardians and administration will support the student and assist the classroom teacher in correcting the behaviour.

Level 3 offences requiring disciplinary intervention are serious acts of misconduct that have significant impact on the school climate, threats to health, safety, or property. Suspension may be considered by the principal as a necessary intervention. Student, parents/guardians, school and support staff communication is necessary to resolve the issue and ensure that supports are in place to meet student needs.

Level 4 offences represent the most serious acts of misconduct and as such may require intrusive intervention such as suspension pending expulsion. These acts may require involvement of Police Services.

#### Progressive Discipline Strategies

- Progressive Discipline is viewed as part of the problem solving process and with the goals of improving behaviour, and learning to make positive choices
- Ensure that the student understands why the behaviour is not acceptable
- Counseling sessions to encourage improvement
- In-class activities to encourage inclusion, anti-bullying
- Direct intervention with school administration to correct bus, yard and/or class behaviour
- Withdrawal of privileges for numerous and/or serious infractions
- In-school withdrawal of student from regular programs for a time
- Working with parents to assist in changing the behaviour of the students without official suspensions
- Suspensions can occur with/without police involvement
- Expulsions

#### Possible Consequences for Inappropriate Behaviour

- Warning
- Dialogue and counseling with teacher, principal or other Board personnel
- Time out in a quiet space
- Apology
- Loss of privileges, e.g., withdrawal from special events, extra-curricular events or school teams
- Referral to principal
- Communication with parents/guardians
- Detention
- Behavioural and or safety plan
- Withdrawal from classroom or school yard, walk with staff member on the yard at recess
- Restitution for damage or loss
- Student-based team meeting to develop action plan
- Referral to in-school resource team
- Development of an IEP for behaviour
- Case Conference
- Police involvement
- Involvement of Community Services
- Involvement of the Children's Aid Society
- Threat or risk assessment
- Restorative justice
- Suspension ~ in-school, out-of-school
- Alternate or shortened day

