

Code of Ethics

Applicable to staff members and to any person required to work with
minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them

Adopted pursuant to section 54.0.1 of the Act respecting private education (CQLR, c. E-9.1)

Effective date: April 15, 2025

Last updated: _____

MONTRÉAL'S *multifaceted* EDUCATION FOR *multifaceted* STUDENTS

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Preamble

Pursuant to section 54.0.1 of the Act respecting private education (CQLR, c. E-9.1), the School must adopt, in the form prescribed by the Minister of Education, a code of ethics applicable to its staff members and to any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them.

This Code sets out, in particular, the practices and conduct expected of persons required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them. It also sets out the obligation to report to the School without delay any failure to comply with its provisions that could reasonably pose a threat to the physical or psychological safety of students. The Code is published on the School's website and made otherwise accessible to any person who requests it.

All staff members of the School and all persons required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must refer and adhere to this Code, which states the ethical principles that guide their actions and certain practices and conduct expected of them.

The expected practices and conduct set out in this Code are not exhaustive, do not limit the School's management rights, and are to be interpreted in a broad and liberal manner. The fact that an expected or prohibited practice or conduct is not specifically mentioned does not exonerate a staff member or any other person subject to this Code from responsibility for inappropriate or improper behaviour.

This Code does not replace and shall not limit the scope of any obligation relating to conduct provided for in any law, regulation, collective agreement, policy, agreement, contract or other framework, or in the School's rules of conduct. Nor does it replace any rules of professional conduct that apply to a person by virtue of their membership in a professional order or association.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

This Code applies in compliance with the legal and regulatory framework in force, in particular:

- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Constitution Act, 1982, Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (UK), 1982, c. 11;
- Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (CQLR, c. C-12);
- Civil Code of Québec (CQLR, c. CCQ-1991);
- Act to foster adherence to State religious neutrality and, in particular, to provide a framework for requests for accommodations on religious grounds in certain bodies (CQLR, c. R-26.2.01);
- Act respecting private education (CQLR, c. E-9.1);
- Education Act (CQLR, c. I-13.3);



- Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information (CQLR, c. A-2.1);
- Act respecting contracting by public bodies (CQLR, c. C-65.1);
- Act respecting labour standards (CQLR, c. N-1.1);
- Act respecting occupational health and safety (CQLR, c. S-2.1);
- Youth Protection Act (CQLR, c. P-34.1);
- Anti-Corruption Act (CQLR, c. L-6.1);
- Act to facilitate the disclosure of wrongdoings relating to public bodies (CQLR, c. D-11.1);
- applicable collective agreements, where applicable;
- applicable rules of professional conduct.

Objectives

The objectives of this Code are to:

- provide a reference guide on the practices and conduct expected of all staff members of the School and of any person required to work with its minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them;
- serve as a tool for reflection and accountability that encourages critical judgment in decision-making and fosters the development of moral values and professional ethics;
- establish and cultivate the trust of students, parents, the educational community and the general public in the School, its campuses and the education system.

Scope of Application

This Code applies to all staff members of the School and to any person required to work with its minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them, on both the elementary and secondary campuses and during any activity organized by the School, whether on or off its premises.

Definitions

Staff member

Any member of the School's support, management, professional or teaching staff, and any other person employed by the School, including senior executives.

Person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them

Any person who is not a staff member of the School but who is required to work with its minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them, including, without limitation, a trainee,



practicum supervisor, volunteer (including a parent acting in that capacity), coach, person in charge of extracurricular or after-school activities, or any other person providing services under an agreement or contract.

Minor student

Any student under the age of 18 enrolled in an educational institution, or any child of the same age receiving appropriate instruction at home who receives services provided by the School.

Handicapped student

Any student recognized as handicapped within the meaning of the Act to secure handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights with a view to achieving social, school and workplace integration (CQLR, c. E-20.1) enrolled in an educational institution, or any child so recognized receiving appropriate instruction at home who receives services provided by the School.

Rules of conduct

The School's code of conduct, operating rules or any other framework of this nature proposed by school leadership and approved by the School's Board of Directors.

Principles

This Code is based on the following principles, which must guide the actions and decisions of every person subject to it:

- Every student, staff member and person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them has the right to personal security, integrity and freedom, to the safeguard of their dignity, honour and reputation, and to respect for their privacy.
- The school environment must protect and promote the fundamental rights and freedoms of the persons within it, as guaranteed by the charters of rights and freedoms, and ensure that these are exercised with due regard to the democratic values of Québec society and equality between women and men.
- In keeping with equal opportunity, every student is entitled to quality educational services that foster their overall development, success, and social and professional integration.
- Every person must be able to thrive in a healthy, safe and stimulating environment conducive to learning, achievement and the realization of their full potential.
- No form of violence, bullying or harassment shall be tolerated in the school context and must be strongly condemned.
- Adults in the school environment are inspiring and meaningful role models for students and figures of authority whose conduct must reflect positive values and meet standards of exemplary behaviour.



- The school environment must promote a vision of educational success tailored to the potential, needs, differences and aspirations of students, grounded in the values of equality, equity and social justice.



Expected Practices and Conduct

1. Respect, Civility and Kindness

- 1.1** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must conduct themselves with respect, civility, politeness and courtesy in all circumstances with students, parents, staff members and any person with whom they interact in the performance of their duties, in particular in their verbal and written communications, so as to ensure a quality and fulfilling learning and work environment.

This duty applies in particular when expressing reservations or disagreement with a staff member's opinion or with an orientation or decision of the School.

- 1.2** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must show consideration, empathy and kindness by fostering positive relationships with others, supporting them and favouring an approach based on mutual understanding and dialogue in resolving conflicts.
- 1.3** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must comply with and promote the School's rules of conduct and the standards of civility they contain.

2. Justice, Equity and Neutrality

- 2.1** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must act in a just and equitable manner, taking into account each person's needs and differences.
- 2.2** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must provide services without distinction, exclusion or preference based, in particular, on race, colour, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, civil status, age except as provided by law, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, a handicap or the use of any means to palliate a handicap.
- 2.3** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must avoid promoting their political beliefs and their personal or religious convictions, and must exercise prudence and objectivity when addressing such matters with students.

3. Professional Conduct

- 3.1** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must maintain a professional demeanour and exercise restraint and judgment.
- 3.2** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must refrain from holding positions or engaging in activities that are incompatible with the duties they perform on behalf of the School.

Professional distance

- 3.3** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must, by reason of their position of authority, maintain a professional distance from every student, even outside class hours, and in particular avoid:
- establishing relationships other than professional ones with a student (friendship, intimate or romantic relationships);
 - any situation likely to create ambiguity in their relationship with a student (declining any invitation to, or participation in, an activity or event outside the school context);
 - any communication with a student through social media outside the school context.

Dress, appearance and online presence

- 3.4** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must adopt attire appropriate to the educational setting, in keeping with the applicable provisions of the School's rules of conduct, and exercise critical judgment in their choice of clothing and the messages it may convey. This duty applies on School premises, in remote learning settings and during external activities.
- 3.5** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must ensure that their use of social media is consistent with the image and role-model responsibilities incumbent on them, in particular by questioning the appropriateness of sharing certain content (photos, videos, etc.) or by limiting access to it.

Drugs and alcohol

- 3.6** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must refrain from consuming, providing or serving, at the workplace or while performing their duties outside the workplace, any alcoholic beverage, legal or illegal drug, or any other substance likely to impair judgment or interfere with the safe performance of work.



The foregoing does not apply to the consumption of an alcoholic beverage exceptionally permitted by the School, such as at a reception.

- 3.7** A staff member or a person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must not be present at the workplace, perform their duties or be in the presence of students while their faculties are impaired by alcohol, a legal or illegal drug, or any substance likely to alter their judgment or interfere with the safe performance of their work.

4. Safety, Health and Well-Being

- 4.1** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must exercise prudence and take the necessary measures to ensure their own health and safety and that of others, particularly students.
- 4.2** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must display attitudes and behaviours free of any form of verbal or physical violence. The following in particular are prohibited:
- aggressive words, behaviour or gestures;
 - verbal, written or physical threats;
 - the use of an aggressive tone of voice (shouting, yelling, etc.);
 - degrading, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate language;
 - words, gestures or behaviour of a sexual nature;
 - any form of bullying or harassment;
 - ignoring such behaviour or failing to intervene when a situation requires it.
- 4.3** A physical intervention with a student must be used only as a last resort, when the risk assessment indicates an emergency requiring immediate action for the sole purpose of ensuring the safety of the student or of others.

When a restrictive measure must be used with a student and can be planned, it must be governed by a protocol consistent with the Ministère's Cadre de référence sur les mesures de contrôle en milieu scolaire and reported without delay to the campus Principal.

- 4.4** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must, when a student or staff member confides in them, remain attentive to signs of distress and refer the person, where necessary, to the appropriate resource, including the Director of Youth Protection (DYP).
- 4.5** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must contribute to the implementation of the School's anti-bullying and anti-violence plan and ensure that no student at the campus to which they are assigned is a victim of bullying or violence.



- 4.6** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them who, in the performance of their duties, have reasonable grounds to believe that a teacher has committed a serious fault in the exercise of their functions, or an act derogatory to the honour or dignity of the teaching profession, involving behaviour that could reasonably pose a threat to the physical or psychological safety of students, must report the situation to the Minister of Education without delay.¹

5. Discretion, Confidentiality and Protection of Personal Information

- 5.1** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must act with discretion, caution and discernment, respecting the privacy of students and other staff members, with regard to confidential information that comes to their knowledge in the performance of their duties, including confidences made to them.
- 5.2** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must access and use only the personal information necessary for the performance of their duties, and communicate personal information only in accordance with the applicable provisions. Any such communication must be made in an appropriate, secure and respectful manner and so as to avoid causing undue harm to the person concerned.
- 5.3** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must respect image rights, in particular by obtaining the consent of the parent or guardian of a minor student, or of the student if of full age, before taking or distributing photographs, video recordings, screenshots, etc. They must also ensure that such material falls within the scope of the School's mission.

6. Integrity, Probity and Transparency

- 6.1** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must act with integrity, good faith and transparency so as to preserve the trust of parents and the public in the School and the education system.

Use and management of assets and resources

- 6.2** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must contribute, in the performance of their duties, to the sound management of public funds.

¹For the criteria used to determine whether behaviour could reasonably pose a threat to the physical or psychological safety of students, see the Ministère de l'Éducation's guide for school service centres, school boards and private educational institutions, *La vérification des antécédents judiciaires et des comportements pouvant raisonnablement faire craindre pour la sécurité physique ou psychologique des élèves* (in French only).

- 6.3** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must make responsible, safe and careful use of the educational, material and technological assets and resources made available to them by the School, and avoid using them for personal purposes or for the benefit of a third party unless authorized to do so. This duty includes acting as an ethical citizen in the digital age and adopting a critical and informed approach to the use of digital tools.
- 6.4** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must act with prudence, care and probity and avoid participating, directly or indirectly, in any theft, fraud, corruption, collusion, falsification of documents, breach of trust or any other negligence, misconduct or reprehensible act of a similar nature, particularly in contractual matters.

Conflicts of interest and gifts

- 6.5** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must avoid placing themselves in a situation where there is, or could be, a conflict between their personal interest and the duties of their position, including any situation giving the appearance of a conflict of interest.
- Should such a situation arise, they must disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor any potential, actual or apparent conflict of interest, or any other circumstance known to them that could reasonably influence, or reasonably appear to influence, their decisions, judgment or professional conduct.
- 6.6** A staff member or a person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must perform their duties in such a way as not to unduly influence a decision or obtain, directly or indirectly, a benefit for themselves or a third party.
- 6.7** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must refuse any gratuity (gift, donation, benefit, compensation, favour, etc.), unless it is a token of appreciation of symbolic or modest value that cannot influence, or be perceived as influencing, their decisions, judgment or professional conduct.

7. Professionalism, Competence and Commitment

- 7.1** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must provide the expected work performance, fully assume the role assigned to them and demonstrate diligence in the performance of their duties.
- 7.2** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must demonstrate professionalism and act responsibly, with rigour, objectivity, diligence and vigilance.



- 7.3** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must perform their duties competently and provide quality services by contributing actively to the educational success and development of students. This duty entails developing and keeping their knowledge up to date, in particular through continuing education.
- 7.4** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must perform their duties with commitment by fostering collaboration, in particular with their peers, as well as co-operation, support and the sharing of best practices. This duty of collaboration is essential for persons providing services to a handicapped student or a student with social maladjustments or learning difficulties for whom an individualized education plan has been established.
- 7.5** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must participate actively and positively in school life by contributing to the development of their community.
- 7.6** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must know and understand the ethical standards and the expected practices and conduct, and commit to complying with them and promoting compliance with them.

8. Loyalty and Duty of Reserve

- 8.1** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must act with loyalty toward the School by respecting and adhering to its mission, values and educational project, both during and after their employment or mandate.
- 8.2** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must exercise reserve and moderation in the public expression of their opinions by refraining from making statements concerning the School, its partners, employees, students or their parents that could harm their image or reputation.
- 8.3** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must also avoid participating, directly or indirectly, in activities that harm the image or reputation of the School.
- 8.4** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must make prudent, judicious and professional use of the Internet, traditional media and social media, even outside the workplace and working hours, in keeping with the School's mission and values.
- 8.5** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must avoid speaking on behalf of the School, in particular in



traditional or social media, or giving the impression of doing so, unless expressly authorized.

- 8.6** All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them must obtain the authorization of their immediate supervisor before publishing a text whose content appears to emanate from the School or was produced in the performance of their duties.



Reporting

Breach of the Code of Ethics

All staff members and any person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them who witness or are informed of a breach of a provision of this Code must report it to the School without delay when the breach could reasonably pose a threat to the physical or psychological safety of students.

Procedure for reporting a breach of the Code of Ethics

Any breach of this Code that could reasonably pose a threat to the physical or psychological safety of students must be reported without delay to the campus Principal or to Human Resources, either verbally or in writing (hr@stgeorges.qc.ca). Where the breach involves the Principal or a member of senior leadership, the report is made directly to the Head of School.

The School acknowledges receipt of every report, ensures that appropriate follow-up is carried out and applies the reporting and disclosure obligations set out in the Act respecting private education, including notification to the Minister where required. Reports are handled with discretion, and the identity of the reporting person is protected to the fullest extent permitted by law. No reprisal may be taken against a person who reports a breach in good faith.

This procedure does not replace the legal obligation to report directly to the Director of Youth Protection (DYP) any situation covered by the Youth Protection Act.

Dissemination and Application

- The Head of School, the campus Principals and department heads are responsible for disseminating and promoting this Code among staff members and all persons required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them within their campus or administrative unit, in order to ensure its application.
- Every staff member and every person required to work with minor or handicapped students or be in contact with them receives a copy of this Code. Any agreement or contract with a person required to work with such students must be accompanied by this Code and provide that the person undertakes to comply with it.
- The Head of School, supported by the campus Principals and department heads, is responsible for the application of this Code.
- The School publishes this Code on its website and makes it otherwise accessible to any person who requests it.



Sanctions

A breach of this Code may result, by decision of the competent hierarchical authority and in accordance with any applicable collective agreement, employment contract, employee handbook, or service agreement or contract, in the application of any sanction appropriate to the nature and seriousness of the breach.

Evaluation and Update

The School evaluates this Code at the end of each school year with a view to updating it when required.

Effective Date

This Code came into force on April 15, 2025.

This revised version comes into force on April 15, 2025 and replaces any previous version.

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to the Head of School, St. George's School of Montreal.

Head of School, St. George's School of Montreal

Date: April 15, 2025