



# **Vedder Middle School CODE OF CONDUCT**

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*We respectfully acknowledge that we learn and grow on the unceded traditional territory of the Pilalt, Sema:th, and Ts'elxwéyeqw Peoples.*

### **Purpose**

At Vedder Middle School, we are guided by the spirit of Tómiyeqw, a Coast Salish philosophy that encourages deep reflection on every action and inaction. Rooted in the wisdom of the Stó:lō people, Tómiyeqw reminds us of our responsibility to the seven generations past and future, fostering a profound sense of connection, care, and accountability.

In this spirit, our school is committed to creating a learning environment that is safe, respectful, inclusive, and supportive. This Code of Conduct outlines clear behavioural expectations and reflects our shared responsibility to uphold a positive school culture. Grounded in the principles of inclusion, equity, student well-being, and restorative practice, it aligns with the BC K–12 Education Plan's vision of creating welcoming, caring, and nurturing learning environments for all members of our school community - students, staff, and families.

This Code of Conduct is developed in accordance with School District 33's [AP 321: Student Code of Conduct](#) and informed by the following policies and frameworks:

- [SD33 Policy 310](#): Student Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities
- [SD33 Policy 313](#): Safe Schools
- [Administrative Procedure 302](#): Student Behaviour Support
- [BC Human Rights Code](#)
- [Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools](#)
- Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

These policies affirm the rights of all students to learn free from harm, discrimination, or disruption, and guide our approach to behaviour, relationships, and student support.

This Code of Conduct will be taught, modelled and reinforced through school-wide instruction, assemblies, and classroom activities. It will be reviewed annually with input from students, staff, and families (PAC).

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

As outlined in [SD33 Policy 310](#), students have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Learn in an environment that is inclusive and free from discrimination or harassment
- Receive guidance and support when facing challenges
- Express themselves safely and with respect

And the responsibility to:

- Attend school regularly
- Respect the rights of others
- Follow school and classroom expectations
- Contribute positively to the school community
- Learn from mistakes and work to make things right

### **Respect for Others – Language, Identity, and Dignity**

Every person deserves to feel safe and accepted at school in accordance with [BC Human Rights Code](#), [SD33 Policy 310](#), and [SD33 Policy 313](#).

- Racist, homophobic, sexist, ableist, or otherwise discriminatory language is not acceptable.
- This includes slurs, jokes, or insults targeting someone's identity, background, or culture.
- Students will be supported in learning why it's harmful and how to repair trust.
- Repeated or serious violations will result in formal consequences and a restorative process.

## Protection from Retaliation

All members of our school community have the right to report unsafe or harmful behaviour without fear of retaliation. The school will take all reasonable steps to prevent retaliation against anyone who brings forward a concern or participates in resolving a conflict. Any allegations of retaliation will be taken seriously and addressed following district and provincial guidelines.

The VMS Code of Conduct applies to all students:

- While at school or on school property
- During travel to and from school
- At school-organized or district events, including field trips, sporting events, and dances
- During online interactions that affect the school environment

## Important Guidelines and Clarifications

**Staff Directions:** All students must respectfully follow directions given by all school staff, including teachers, EAs, office staff, administrators, and lunch supervisors.

Respecting adult guidance supports a safe and caring environment.

**Respectful Language** Students must use respectful language. Swearing, shouting, and disrespectful or violent language is not acceptable.

**Hands-Off/Feet-Off** Physical contact is not allowed at school—even between friends. This includes rough play, play fighting, pushing, grabbing, kicking, or public displays of affection (PDA). Fighting, physical aggression, or threatening behaviour will result in consequences and depending on the severity may involve other district-level processes.

**Bullying and Unkind Behaviour** Everyone has the right to feel safe, accepted, and respected at school. Bullying, whether it happens in person, online, or through rumours is not acceptable. This includes name-calling, threats, exclusion, or repeated unkind behaviour. We expect all students to treat one another with kindness and to support each other. If you see bullying or unkind behaviour, tell a trusted adult, support the person being targeted, or speak up if it feels safe. Our school uses restorative practices to help repair harm and build a respectful, caring community. Serious or ongoing bullying will lead to further support or consequences as necessary.

**Student Dress Guidelines** In alignment with [SD33 Policy 311](#), students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate, respectful, and safe for a school learning environment.

- Clothing should allow full and safe participation in classroom and physical activities.

- Clothes must not display offensive language, promote drugs, alcohol, or violence, or include discriminatory or demeaning messages.
- Hats are allowed but must be removed when requested for safety or learning purposes.
- Hoods are allowed but must be removed when inside or requested for safety or learning purposes.

**Substances** Smoking, vaping, drugs, and alcohol are not allowed at school or in the surrounding area at any time. Items will be confiscated; parents will be contacted and appropriate consequences will be applied. ([SD33 Policy 314 – Student Substance Use](#))

**Searches and Student Safety** In line with [AP 308 – Student Search and Seizure](#):

- Staff may search student belongings or lockers if there is reason to believe that school rules have been broken or someone's safety may be at risk.
- Lockers are school property and may be opened by staff when needed.
- All searches are done respectfully, with at least two adults present, and students will be included in the process whenever possible.
- In serious situations, the school may contact district officials or the RCMP to ensure student safety.

**Dangerous Items and Weapons** The following are **not allowed** at school, on the bus, or at school events:

- Firearms (real, toys or replicas)
- Knives
- Pepper/Bear spray or other chemical substances
- Lighters or matches
- Any object intended to cause harm, intimidate, or threaten

If a student brings a dangerous item or weapon, the school will respond seriously. This may include disciplinary action, suspension, or contact with the RCMP. ([AP 315 – Weapons](#))

### **Mobile Devices** ([SD33 AP 318 - Student Cell Phone And Digital Device Use](#))

- Phones and personal devices must be placed in student lockers at the beginning of the day and can be retrieved at dismissal.
- Devices may only be used during class when permitted by a teacher.
- Photos, videos, or recordings at school are not allowed unless with teacher permission for assignments. ([AP 481 – Audio/Video Recording, Photography and Live Streaming](#))
- Students are not permitted to use social media during the school day.

### **Computer & Internet Use**

- Use school devices for learning only
- Do not access or share inappropriate content
- Cyberbullying and misuse of devices will be taken seriously and may result in the loss of technology use for a period of time
- Follow the [Acceptable Use Agreement](#) at all times

### **Backpacks**

- Keep backpacks in your locker during the school day.
- Do not carry backpacks between classes.
- This helps keep hallways safe, clear, and calm.
- It also protects personal belongings from being lost or stolen.

### **Pop, Slurpees, and Energy Drinks**

- Not permitted at school
- Will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day
- VMS is a closed campus - students may not leave school to buy drinks/snacks

### **Bicycles, Skateboards, Scooters, and Rollerblades**

- ([Provincial Bicycle Safety Helmet Exemption Regulation.](#)) requires helmets to be used to and from school
- Student are asked to follow bike road safety. (see provincial guidelines: [Bike Safety](#) )
- Walk your wheels on school grounds
- Store in designated areas (bikes/boards/scooters in appropriate rack and locked)
- E-bikes and e-scooters are not allowed for students under age 16 (see provincial guidelines: [e-bikes](#) and [e-scooters](#) )

### **Respecting Property**

- Take care of school property and the belongings of others
- Report accidental damage immediately
- Deliberate damage or vandalism will result in consequences and restitution

### **Selling Goods at School**

- Students are not permitted to sell or trade items (snacks, clothing, tech, etc.)
- Only school-organized, staff-led fundraisers are allowed

### **Plagiarism and Academic Honesty**

- Do your own thinking and learning
- Plagiarism and cheating may result in the assignment having to be redone with support as needed – taking accountability for learning is part of the process

### **Celebrating Positive Behaviour**

We recognize students who demonstrate leadership through kindness, safety, and responsibility.

- Classroom and school-wide shout-outs/HISS
- Leadership opportunities
- Recognition in assemblies
- Positive notes or calls home
- Student of the Month recognition

### **Our School-Wide Expectations**

At VMS, we show leadership and good character by choosing to respect self, others and this space by:

#### **Be Kind**

- Use respectful words and actions
- Help others and include classmates
- Think about how your actions affect others

#### **Be Safe**

- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Report unsafe behaviour or concerns to an adult
- Follow safety rules in all areas, including online

#### **Be Responsible**

- Do your best in learning and behaviour
- Take care of your belongings and school property
- Follow through on commitments and own your actions

## Our Expectations in Practice

Setting	Be Kind	Be Safe	Be Responsible
Classrooms	Listen, share, include others	Stay seated, follow directions Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself	Come prepared, stay on task, do your own work
Hallways	Smile, greet politely	Walk calmly, give space to others	Go directly where you need to go bring your hall pass
Gym/Playground	Share equipment, play fair	Use safely, stay in supervised areas, hands off/feet off	Return equipment, clean up
Washrooms	Respect privacy and space	Wash hands, report issues	Return quickly to class
Online	Communicate kindly	Use safe, approved websites	Use tech for learning, follow AUA

**Restorative and Supportive Practices** When behaviour does not meet expectations, we focus on teaching and repairing relationships. We use strategies such as:

- One-on-one conversations
- Restorative meetings or guided conflict resolution
- Reflection activities or behaviour support plans
- Collaboration with counsellors and other school and district supports

When school expectations are not met, staff may need to communicate with others to ensure safety, support, and understanding. This may include:

- Parents, guardians, or caregivers of the students involved.
- School district staff, as outlined by district policies.
- RCMP or other community agencies, when needed.
- The broader school community, when it is important to provide reassurance and maintain a safe, caring environment

### Disciplinary Responses consider:

- The severity and frequency of the behaviour
- The student's age and needs
- Opportunities for learning and making things right
- Protection of others' safety and rights

### Levels of Progressive Intervention

Level	Type of Behaviour	Examples	Progressive Response
Level 1	Minor missteps (teachable moments)	Off-task, unkind comment, lateness, forgetfulness	Redirection, reteaching, reminder of expectations
Level 2	Repeated/moderate behaviour	Repeated disruption, refusal to follow directions, tech misuse	Restorative chat, behaviour reflection, contact home, minor consequence
Level 3	Ongoing/serious issues	Defiance, unsafe hands, property damage, inappropriate language	Referral to admin, collaborative plan, problem-solving conference, in-school or out of school suspension as appropriate
Level 4	Significant/unsafe behaviour	Bullying, hate speech, threats, physical aggression, discriminatory remarks	Admin involvement, safety plan, family meeting, restorative plan, in-school or out of school suspension as appropriate
Level 5	Extreme/repeated high-risk issues	Repeated serious incidents, harm to others, weapons, harassment	Suspension, re-entry plan, counselling, District notification when appropriate

Common programs and integrated services shall provide information to those who receive or are affected by their services. This is referred to as **Fair Notice** that such a multi-agency program/initiative exists. The Chilliwack School District is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all staff, clients, students and community members, and as such, is a member of the Chilliwack Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA or ARTO) Protocol.

### WHAT IS A VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT (VTRA) PROTOCOL?

The protocol is designed to enhance communication between all partners. It is incumbent upon the partners to share necessary and appropriate information that may initiate or facilitate the Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO) process. It is a trauma-informed and equity-inclusion guided practice that utilizes and Assessment of Risk to Others (ARTO) process to:

- To ensure the safety of all individuals,
- Begin to understand the factors that contribute to the Individual of Concern's (IOC's) threatening or high-risk behaviour,
- View the Individual of Concern (IOC) as in need of intervention and support rather than discipline.
- Be proactive in developing an intervention plan that addresses the emotional and physical safety of the Individual of Concern (IOC). It may include disciplinary action but will include appropriate supports to aid in the Individual of Concern (IOC) in developing and using more appropriate strategies,
- Promotes the emotional and physical safety of all.

**It is NOT a Disciplinary tool or response.**

### WHAT IS A THREAT?

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be verbal, written down, posted on the Internet, or made by gesture. Threats must be taken seriously, investigated, and responded to appropriately.

### DUTY TO REPORT?

Often when we hear in the media about a violent incident, we learn that the Individual of Concern had made threats in advance of acting violently. To keep our communities safe, staff, community members, students, and parents all need to act responsibly and report all threat-related behaviours and high-risk activities. This report can be made to any community partner of the Chilliwack VTRA/ARTO Protocol.

When a report of a threat is received by any member of this protocol, and upon screening it is determined the threshold for the "Categories of Action" is met, the Chilliwack VTRA/ARTO Protocol will be activated.

### "Categories of Action" may include, but are not limited to:

- Serious violence or violence with intent to kill,
- Violence with intent to do serious bodily harm,
- Verbal/written threats to kill others ("clear, direct and plausible"),
- Verbal/written threats to do serious bodily harm ("clear, direct and plausible"),
- Social Media/Technology generated threats to harm/kill others,
- Possession of weapons (including replicas),
- Bomb threats (making and/or detonating explosive devices),
- Fire setting,
- Sexual intimidation or assault,
- Ongoing pervasive and targeted bullying and/or harassment,
- Gang related intimidation and violence,
- Hate incidents motivated by factors including, but not limited to, race, culture, religion, and/or sexual and gender diversity,
- Suicidal ideation or attempts as related to "Fluidity" or "Conspiracy to Two or More".

### CAN I REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE?

It is important for all parties to engage in the process. If for some reason there is a reluctance to participate in the process, by either the Individual of Concern or parent/guardian, the threat assessment will continue in order to ensure and restore a safe and inclusive environment for all.



**VEDDER**  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

