



SCHOOL OF CHOICE

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

The majority of interactions that take place in the school will be guided by the guidelines outlined in the Lakecrest School Wide Essential Agreement and will follow a Restorative Action approach which emphasizes a relationship-based approach to misbehavior. Lakecrest operates on the principle that everyone in the school is entitled to be treated with respect under all circumstances.

It is understood to be a foundational principle of Lakecrest that inappropriate behavior will not be allowed to interfere with the learning of students. Every person is entitled to work and take recreation in the school without fear of mistreatment. Teasing, harassment or bullying in any form is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Violence of any form will not be tolerated.

Incidents of misbehavior or misconduct will be addressed in a timely manner by the teacher responsible for the supervision of the class, activity or recess during which the incident takes place. At the teacher's discretion, the administration may be requested to become involved in the disciplinary process if the seriousness or frequency of the misconduct on the student's part warrants. Students will be given due process in a manner appropriate to the circumstances of the school and the behavior in question.

Students are encouraged to work with their teachers and/or the school administration to find solutions to incidents of inappropriate behavior. Decisions about disciplinary action will rest with the school administration and faculty. For incidents of a relatively minor nature, a conversation will usually suffice and students will be provided with the opportunity to reflect on their actions and receive support in determining what they can do to help remediate the situation so that all involved can be part of a healthier community. Where the incident is deemed by the school to be sufficiently serious and /or repetitive in nature, the parent will be notified. Depending on the gravity and/or frequency of the occurrence, the student's parents/guardians may be requested to

attend a meeting with the school administration and/or the teacher(s) involved. This will be at the discretion of the teacher or administration.

Disciplinary measures may include discussion with the student, detention, community service to be done by the student, student-written apologies or behavior contracts, written notification to parents, in-school suspension, and suspension served out of school and, ultimately, expulsion. Parents will be informed of patterns of repeated student misconduct or isolated incidents of a serious nature. Parents will be contacted when a “warning of suspension” is imposed. In the event of an incident that is sufficiently serious, parents may receive notice of suspension or expulsion without prior warning. The decision of the school in cases of suspension shall be final. Decisions in the case of expulsion may be appealed to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

A student who damages/vandalizes/defaces school property will be held responsible for their actions. The student may be subject to disciplinary consequences including possibility of restitution, suspension, expulsion, or exclusion from school activities.

The actions outlined in this policy are understood to apply also to what the school considers a sincere effort on the part of the student to complete work in a timely manner and to the standard expected by the teacher.

Failure to do schoolwork and/or homework to what the school considers a reasonable standard may be cause for applying the disciplinary measures outlined above, even when no misbehavior, harassment or overtly disrespectful behavior has occurred.

RESTORATIVE ACTION

Restorative Action emphasises a relationship-based approach to misbehaviour. The main differences between Restorative Action and Traditional Discipline models can be illustrated by the basic questions that are asked:

Traditional Approach

What rule has been broken?
Who did it?
What sanctions do they deserve?

Restorative Action

Who has been harmed?
What are the obligations and whose are these?
What can be done to make things right?

Principles of Restorative Action Invite full participation and conversation.

Provide an opportunity to dialogue between all those who have been harmed or who have caused harm. Outcomes decided upon must feel fair and reasonable to all participants. All those who feel they have a stake in a situation of harm or conflict at school can be invited to participate in dialogue around the issues and have a voice in

the outcomes of decisions made. Students are particularly invited to be involved and have input, instead of decisions being made for them unilaterally.

Seek full and direct accountability.

In cases where certain individuals are responsible for creating harm, those people will be held accountable for their actions and appropriate reparation will be expected. Our everyday interactions and situations at school can result in hurtful words and actions, which damage relationships. As much as possible, restorative action seeks to bring those hurts to light and create space for healing and reparation, thereby fostering a healthier, more transparent school atmosphere.

Heal what has been broken.

A restorative response seeks to address the harm resulting from a conflict and do what is possible to help heal any and all those affected. When harm occurs at school, we can nurture an environment where we, both students and adults, are encouraged to take ownership for our role in hurtful behaviour. We respectfully expect ourselves and others to be accountable for our/their actions in ways that are fair and reasonable.

Reinstate where there has been division.

Conflict can create outcasts, alienation, and distrust in the school community. Where possible, restorative action will help with the reintegration and repairing of relationships. Hurtful or damaging behaviour in our places of interaction at school can create feelings of isolation and of being an outcast. It can result in individuals taking sides and developing an “us/them” mentality. As much as possible, restorative action aims to take stock of where divisions have occurred in our school community and work towards balance, understanding, and reconciliation.

Strengthen the community to prevent further harm.

Restorative action is future-focused and asks the question “What needs to happen to reduce the chance of people being harmed again? In this way, the focus is not on punishment but how to create a healthier and safer community. Most school communities can ultimately use situations of harm to learn, grow, and change where necessary. When a school aims to implement restorative principles, we advocate for positive changes in order to make the school community a healthier, safer, and more just place for all.