

Draft Guide for Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours

Purpose:

- to achieve greater consistency of response
- Support school administrators in their decision-making process
- These documents are intended to guide, while continuing to allow for professional judgement.

Questions: *Do these guides strike a balance between clear guidance and a range of responses that can be applied with professional judgement for any category?*

Are the categories of unacceptable behaviour clearly defined?

Are there any responses that you expected to see that you don't see?

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Incident Decision-Making Matrix: Grades Primary to 6

Impact on student, staff, or facility safety and well-being; consideration of frequency of incident recurrence	Response to incidents of unacceptable behaviour				
Severe: whole school disrupted or cancelled; serious injuries or trauma to student(s) or staff; outside intervention required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 3 to 5 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 3 to 5 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 3 to 5 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – 10 or more days reintegration plan
Significant: school operations disrupted; serious injury or trauma; involves more than a few students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 3 to 5 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan
Moderate: moderate harm with possible need for first aid; may involve more than one student or staff member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 3 to 5 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 3 to 5 days reintegration plan
Minor: minor injury, damage, and/or interruption; may involve one student or staff member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferencing loss of privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferencing loss of privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 3 to 5 days reintegration plan
No impact: incident had no impact on health, safety, or well-being of student(s) or staff, and did not interrupt school operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferencing loss of privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 3 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 3 to 5 days reintegration plan
Incident Severity Rating consideration of intentionality, evidence of neurotypical processing, age/stage of development and frequency	1 student lacks capacity to understand the consequences of their actions	2 minimal understanding or capacity to comprehend potential for harm	3 understands harm; acted on emotional trigger without reflection; need for further coaching	4 clear intent to harm or attract attention through actions; repeated offenses	5 premeditated actions without regard for harm to persons or school facilities; repeated offenses

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Incident Decision-Making Matrix: Grades 7 to 12

Impact on student, staff, or facility safety and well-being; consideration of frequency of incident recurrence	Response to incidents of unacceptable behaviour				
Severe: whole school disrupted or cancelled; serious injuries or trauma to student(s) or staff; outside intervention required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – 10 or more days reintegration plan
Significant: school operations disrupted; serious injury or trauma; involves more than a few students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan
Moderate: moderate harm with possible need for first aid; may involve more than one student or staff member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan
Minor: minor injury, damage, and/or interruption; may involve one student or staff member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferencing loss of privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferencing loss of privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan
No impact: incident had no impact on health, safety, or well-being of student(s) or staff, and did not interrupt school operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conferencing loss of privileges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> loss of privileges suspension – in-school – less than 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension – in-school – 5 to 10 days reintegration plan
Incident Severity Rating consideration of intentionality, evidence of neurotypical processing, age/stage of development and frequency	1 student lacks capacity to understand the consequences of their actions	2 minimal understanding or capacity to comprehend potential for harm	3 understands harm; acted on emotional trigger without reflection; need for further coaching	4 clear intent to harm or attract attention through actions; repeated offenses	5 premeditated actions without regard for harm to persons or school facilities; repeated offenses

Categories of Unacceptable Behaviours and Responses: Primary to Grade 6

Category	Definition	Range of Responses	Consequences (P to 6)
Bullying	<p>Bullying means unwanted aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. This behaviour is typically repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. Bullying can take various forms, which may include other Unacceptable Behaviours included in this chart.</p> <p>The key elements of bullying are the intent to harm, the imbalance of power, and the repetition of the behaviour.</p> <p>Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that occurs through digital devices like computers, smartphones, and tablets. It involves the use of online platforms, social media, text messages, chat, and websites to harass, threaten, or humiliate someone. Cyberbullying can be particularly harmful as it can happen at any time, reach a wide audience, and often allows the bully to remain anonymous.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conferencing with student or parent • restorative approaches • creating a plan for restitution • coaching to develop new behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Discriminatory behaviour	<p>Discriminatory behaviour is inequitable, unfair, or differential treatment of one person from another based on a person belonging to a particular group.</p> <p>Discriminatory behaviour includes any discrimination based on race, culture, ethnicity, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability or mental disability, mental illness, age, nationality or Mi'kmaq/indigenous ancestry, socio-economic status, or appearance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conferencing with student or parent • restorative approaches • creating a plan for restitution • coaching to develop new behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Illegal activity	<p>Committing any act, or inciting others to commit any act, involving a serious civil wrong or crime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days

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Category	Definition	Range of Responses	Consequences (P to 6)
Inappropriate language	Using, or inciting others to use, language that is offensive, demeaning, and has an impact on the school environment.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ detention ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days
Interruption of the learning environment	Behaviour that significantly distracts or interrupts the learning environment.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Misuse of networks or online resources	Unauthorized access or misuse of networks, online resources, and or e-communications in accordance with the <i>Nova Scotia Public School Programs Internet Access and Use Policy</i> .	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Not following directions/ expectations	Behaviour that disregards directives or established expectations in class or school environment or disregards direct instructions provided by staff.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days
Physical aggression	Rough-housing, rough play. Physical altercations that include behaviours such as shoving, pushing, scuffling, but not violently hitting or striking others.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ detention ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days
Physical violence	Using force, gesturing, or inciting others to use force to injure a member(s) of the school community.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days

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Category	Definition	Range of Responses	Consequences (P to 6)
Smoking, vaping, or other nicotine products	Smoking of tobacco, e-cigarettes, or other forms of tobacco use, inside any school building, facility, or vehicle, or on any school property, including school related activities.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ detention ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days
Threatening behaviour	Refers to actions, gestures, words, or other expressions that are intended to intimidate, scare, or coerce another person.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Unapproved mobile device use	Unauthorized use of a mobile device during school hours or school activity.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ detention ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days
Use or possession of alcohol, non-prescribed drugs, or drug paraphernalia	Use or possession of drugs or alcohol, or being under the influence, inside any school building, facility, or vehicle, on any school property, including school-related activities.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Vandalism	Damaging, attempting to damage, or inciting others to damage the personal property of a member of the school community, property owned or operated by the RCE/CSAP or any other property while attending a school-related activity.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days
Verbal abuse	Refers to the use of words to harm, demean, manipulate, or control another person.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days

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Category	Definition	Range of Responses	Consequences (P to 6)
Weapons possession or use	While on school property or while attending a school-related activity. possessing or inciting others to possess or use a weapon—anything used, designed to be used, or intended for use in causing death or injury to a person, or for the purpose of threatening or intimidating a person—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days

Categories of Unacceptable Behaviours and Responses: Grades 7 to 12

Category	Definition	Range of Responses	Consequences (7 to 12)
Bullying	<p>Bullying means unwanted aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. This behaviour is typically repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. Bullying can take various forms, which may include other Unacceptable Behaviours included in this chart.</p> <p>The key elements of bullying are the intent to harm, the imbalance of power, and the repetition of the behaviour.</p> <p>Cyberbullying is a form of bullying that occurs through digital devices like computers, smartphones, and tablets. It involves the use of online platforms, social media, text messages, chat, and websites to harass, threaten, or humiliate someone. Cyberbullying can be particularly harmful as it can happen at any time, reach a wide audience, and often allows the bully to remain anonymous.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conferencing with student or parent • restorative approaches • creating a plan for restitution • coaching to develop new behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Discriminatory behaviour	<p>Discriminatory behaviour is inequitable, unfair, or differential treatment of one person from another based on a person belonging to a particular group.</p> <p>Discriminatory behaviour includes any discrimination based on race, culture, ethnicity, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability or mental disability, mental illness, age, nationality or Mi'kmaq/indigenous ancestry, socio-economic status, or appearance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conferencing with student or parent • restorative approaches • creating a plan for restitution • coaching to develop new behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Illegal activity	<p>Committing any act, or inciting others to commit any act, involving a serious civil wrong or crime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days

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Category	Definition	Range of Responses	Consequences (7 to 12)
Inappropriate language	Using, or inciting others to use, language that is offensive, demeaning, and has an impact on the school environment.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ detention ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days
Interruption of the learning environment	Behaviour that significantly distracts or interrupts the learning environment.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Misuse of networks or online resources	Unauthorized access or misuse of networks, online resources, and or e-communications in accordance with the <i>Nova Scotia Public School Programs Internet Access and Use Policy</i> .	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Noncompliance	Behaviour that disregards directives or established expectations in class or school environment or disregards direct instructions provided by staff.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days
Physical aggression	Rough-housing, rough play. Physical altercations that include behaviours such as shoving, pushing, scuffling, but not violently hitting or striking others.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ detention ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days
Physical violence	Using force, gesturing, or inciting others to use force to injure a member(s) of the school community.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days

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Category	Definition	Range of Responses	Consequences (7 to 12)
Sexual misconduct	Sexual misconduct includes any behaviour of a sexual nature or connotation that is deemed inappropriate or unacceptable at school or during any school-related activity.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Smoking, vaping, or other nicotine products	Smoking of tobacco, e-cigarettes, or other forms of tobacco use, inside any school building, facility, or vehicle, or on any school property, including school related activities.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ detention ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days
Threatening behaviour	Refers to actions, gestures, words, or other expressions that are intended to intimidate, scare, or coerce another person.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Unapproved mobile device use	Unauthorized use of a mobile device during school hours or school activity.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ detention ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days
Use or possession of alcohol, non-prescribed drugs, or drug paraphernalia	Use or possession of drugs or alcohol, or being under the influence, inside any school building, facility, or vehicle, on any school property, including school-related activities.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Vandalism	Damaging, attempting to damage, or inciting others to damage the personal property of a member of the school community, property owned or operated by the RCE/CSAP or any other property while attending a school-related activity.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days

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Category	Definition	Range of Responses	Consequences (7 to 12)
Verbal abuse	Refers to the use of words to harm, demean, manipulate, or control another person.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days
Weapons possession or use	Possessing or inciting others to possess or use a weapon—anything used, designed to be used, or intended for use in causing death or injury to a person, or for the purpose of threatening or intimidating a person—while on school property or while attending a school-related activity.	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ loss of privileges ■ suspension: in-school ■ suspension: less than 3 days ■ suspension: 3 to 5 days ■ suspension: 5 to 10 days ■ suspension: 10 or more days