



September, 2025

Kells Academy Code of Ethics

Objectives

The code of ethics aims to provide a reference guide on the expected practices and conduct for all staff members and any person working with or in contact with our students. This code outlines the principles that should guide ethical behaviour, serve as a tool for reflection and accountability, and foster critical judgement for ethical decision-making. Kells Academy is dedicated to the mission of our school and our core values of respect, responsibility, and community, adhering to the highest standards of behavior, and reflecting the reputation that has been consistently upheld.

Principles

The code of ethics is based on the following principles, which must guide the actions and decisions of all concerned individuals:

- Every student, staff member, or individual working with or in contact with students has the right to security, integrity, personal freedom, dignity, honor, reputation, and respect for their privacy.
- The school environment must protect and promote fundamental rights and freedoms, ensuring they are exercised in accordance with the democratic values of Québec society, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, gender equality, state secularism, and the promotion of the French language.
- Teachers are responsible for fulfilling the obligations specified in the Kells Collective Agreement and the Kells Academy Teacher Handbook.
- Every student has the right to equal opportunities for high-quality educational services that support their full development, success, and social integration.
- Every person must be able to evolve in a safe, healthy, and stimulating environment conducive to learning, achievement, and reaching their full potential.
- Staff members are responsible for supporting the comprehensive development of all students. This includes nurturing their intellectual curiosity, physical well-being, emotional intelligence, cultural understanding, moral reasoning, social skills, and civic engagement.
- Violence, bullying, or harassment in the school context is strictly prohibited and must be actively reported to the school Principal or Head of School.
- All adults in the school setting must serve as role models for students, and their conduct must reflect positive values and high standards of behavior which include but are not limited to: honesty and a concern for truth, open-mindedness, sound judgment, a sense of fairness and justice, respect for others, trustworthiness, discretion, concern for the interest of others, cooperativeness, and dedication to the mission, goals, and core values of the school.
- The school environment must foster a vision of educational success that considers students' potential, needs, differences, and aspirations, promoting values of equality, equity, and social justice.

Expected Practices and Conduct

1. Respect, Civility, and Kindness

1.1 General Conduct

All staff members and individuals working with or in contact with students must consistently demonstrate respect and courtesy when interacting with students, parents, colleagues, and others in their professional environment. This includes verbal and written communication, ensuring a positive learning and working atmosphere. This requirement also applies when expressing reservations or disagreements with colleagues, school decisions, or policies.

1.2 Empathy and Consideration

All staff members and individuals working with or in contact with students are expected to foster positive relationships by demonstrating consideration, empathy, trust, respect, and kindness. They should encourage mutual understanding and use dialogue-based approaches to conflict resolution.

1.3 Compliance with Conduct Rules and Civility Standards

Any staff member or any person working with students or in contact with them must promote and ensure compliance with the school's rules of conduct and the associated standards of expected behaviour.

2. Justice, Fairness, and Neutrality

2.1 Fair and Equitable Treatment

Any staff member or any person working or in contact with students must act fairly and equitably, taking into account each individual's needs and differences.

2.2 Non-Discrimination

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must provide services without distinction, exclusion, or preference based on race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age (except as provided by law), religion, political beliefs, language, social status, ethnic or national origin, disability, or the use of an aid to mitigate a disability.

2.3 Political and Religious Neutrality

A staff member or a person working with or in contact with students must exercise caution and objectivity when discussing religion and politics with students.

3. Professional Conduct

3.1 Professionalism and Judgment

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must maintain a professional demeanor and judgment.

3.2 Conflicts of Interest

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must refrain from engaging in activities that conflict with their responsibilities within the school organization.

3.3 Professional Distance

Due to their position of authority, any staff member or any person working or in contact with students must maintain professional distance from students, even outside school hours, and should particularly avoid:

- Establishing relationships with students beyond professional boundaries (e.g., friendships, intimate, or romantic relationships).
- **Any situation that may compromise unprofessional boundaries, appear unprofessional, or be reasonably misconstrued as inappropriate**
- Communicating with students via social media outside the school setting.

3.4 Use of Language

Any staff member or any person called to work with or be in contact with students must prioritize the use of French, the common and instructional language, in accordance with the Charter of the French Language when applicable.

3.5 Promotion of the French Language

Any staff member or any person called to work with or be in contact with students must take necessary steps, when applicable, to promote spoken and written French in their interactions with students, parents, colleagues, and others within their professional duties.

3.6 Dress Code and Appearance

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must wear appropriate attire suitable for the educational environment, in accordance with applicable conduct rules, and exercise critical judgment regarding their clothing choices and the messages they convey.

This requirement applies at the workplace and at off-campus school activities.

3.7 Social Media Use

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must exercise caution with respect to their public social media activity, ensuring that it aligns with their professional image. This includes evaluating the appropriateness of sharing certain content (photos, videos, etc.) or limiting access to it.

3.8 Drugs and Alcohol

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must refrain from consuming, providing, or serving alcohol, illegal drugs, or any other substance that could impair judgment or hinder safe job performance at work or while performing their duties outside the workplace. This provision does not apply to alcohol consumption exceptionally permitted by the school organization, such as during official receptions. In these circumstances, professional behavior and self-restraint are expected at all times.

3.9 Impairment at Work

A staff member or a person working with or in contact with students must not be at their workplace, perform their duties, or be in the presence of students while impaired by alcohol, legal or illegal drugs, or any substance that could alter judgment or impair safe job performance.

4. Safety, Health, and Well-being

4.1 Ensuring Safety and Health

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must take necessary measures to ensure their own physical, psychological, and cultural safety and health, as well as that of others, especially students.

4.2 Prohibited Behaviors

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must exhibit attitudes and behaviors free from verbal or physical violence. The following are strictly prohibited:

- Violent words, behaviors, or gestures.
- Verbal, written, or physical threats.
- Degrading, racist, sexist, or inappropriate language.
- Sexual words, gestures, or behaviors.
- Any form of bullying or harassment.
- Ignoring such behaviors or failing to intervene when necessary.

4.3 Physical Intervention

Physical intervention with a student should only be used as a last resort in emergency situations where immediate action is required solely to ensure the safety of the student or others. If a restraining measure must be planned, it must follow a protocol aligned with the Reference Framework on Control Measures in Schools and be reported immediately to school administration.

4.4 Recognizing Distress and Seeking Help

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must be attentive to signs of distress in students or colleagues and, if necessary, refer them to appropriate resources, such as Child Protective Services (DPJ).

4.5 Combating Bullying and Violence

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must contribute to the implementation of the school's anti-bullying and anti-violence plan.

4.6 Reporting Serious Misconduct

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students who has evidence to believe that a teacher has committed misconduct, or engaged in dishonorable or unprofessional conduct that could endanger students' physical or psychological safety, must report the situation immediately to the Principal or Head of School.

5. Discretion, Confidentiality, and Privacy Protection

5.1 Confidentiality

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must act with discretion and caution regarding confidential information obtained in their duties, including private disclosures from students or colleagues.

5.2 Responsible Use of Personal Information

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must access and use only the personal information necessary for their duties and disclose such information only in accordance with applicable laws, ensuring it is done securely and respectfully.

5.3 Right to One's Image

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must follow school guidelines regarding capturing or sharing photographs, videos, or screenshots. These must align with the school organization's mission.

6. Integrity, Honesty, and Transparency

6.1 Ethical Conduct

Any staff member or any person working with or in contact with students must act with integrity, good faith, and transparency to maintain public trust in the school organization and the education system.

6.2 Proper Use of Resources

Any staff member must use educational, material, and technological resources responsibly and avoid using them for personal or third-party purposes without authorization.

6.3 Duty to Act as an Ethical Citizen in the Digital Age

Any staff member must act as an ethical citizen in the digital age and adopt a critical and informed stance regarding the use of digital technologies.

6.4 Prudence, Integrity, and Ethical Conduct

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students must act with prudence, care, and integrity. They must avoid participating, directly or indirectly, in theft, fraud, acts of corruption or collusion, document falsification, breaches of trust, or any other negligence, misconduct, or reprehensible acts of this nature, particularly in contractual matters.

Conflict of Interest and Gratifications

6.5 Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students must avoid situations where there is or could be a conflict between their personal interests and their professional duties. If such a situation arises, they must disclose in writing to their immediate superior any potential, real, or apparent conflict of interest, or any other circumstance they are aware of that could

reasonably be perceived as influencing their decisions, judgment, or professional conduct. They must carry out their duties with integrity in decision making, without unduly influencing a decision or obtaining direct or indirect benefits for themselves or a third party.

7. Professionalism, Competence, and Commitment

7.1 Commitment to Work Performance

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must deliver the expected work performance, fully assume their role, and demonstrate diligence in carrying out their duties.

7.2 Professionalism and Responsibility

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must act professionally and responsibly, demonstrating rigor, objectivity, diligence, punctuality, and vigilance.

7.3 Competence and Educational Support

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must perform their duties competently, providing high-quality services that actively contribute to students' educational success and development, and promotes optimal learning opportunities for each student. This duty requires continuous learning and keeping their knowledge up to date through ongoing professional development.

7.4 Collaboration and Support

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must carry out their duties with commitment, fostering collaboration, cooperation, support, and the sharing of best practices, particularly among colleagues. This duty of collaboration is essential for those providing services to students who have an established educational plan.

7.5 Contribution to School Life

Any staff member or person working with students or being in contact with them, is encouraged to actively and positively participate in school life by contributing to the development of their school community.

7.6 Ethical Standards and Compliance

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must be familiar with and understand ethical standards, as well as expected practices and behaviors. They must commit to respecting and promoting these standards.

8. Loyalty and Duty of Discretion

8.1 Loyalty to the Educational Institution

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must act with loyalty towards the educational organization and its institutions by respecting and adhering to their mission, values, commitment to success, and educational project.

8.2 Moderation in Public Expression

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must exercise discretion, refraining from making statements that could harm the image or reputation of the organization, its institutions, partners, employees, students, or their parents.

8.3 Avoiding Harmful Activities

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must also avoid participating in activities that damage the image or reputation of the organization or any of its institutions.

8.4 Responsible Use of Digital and Social Media

Any staff member or person working with students with disabilities, or being in contact with them, must use the internet, traditional media prudently, wisely, and professionally while respecting the mission and values of the organization and its institutions.

8.5 Authority to Speak on Behalf of the Institution

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must avoid speaking on behalf of the organization or any of its institutions, including in traditional or social media, or giving the impression that they are doing so unless expressly authorized by the administration.

8.6 Approval for Public Statements

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, must obtain approval from their immediate superior before publishing any text that appears to come from the organization or one of its institutions or was created as part of their duties.

9. Reporting Violations of the Code of Ethics

Obligation to Report Ethical Violations

Any staff member or person working with or in contact with students, who witnesses or becomes aware of a violation of this code of ethics is encouraged to report it to the administration if the violation could raise concerns for students' physical or psychological safety.

Reporting Procedures

The Administration is committed to the values and principles of ethical conduct set forth in the Code of Ethics. If you believe that any practice or conduct does not comply with an applicable law, rule or regulation, or any other principle of conduct set forth in the Code of Ethics, or if you have been requested to act in such a manner, please report the matter to the Principal or Head of School.

10. Dissemination and Enforcement

- The administration is responsible for disseminating and promoting this code of ethics to staff members and any individuals working with students.
 - Every staff member or person working with or in contact with students, receives a copy of this code of ethics. The organization's administration is responsible for enforcing this code.
 - The organization publishes this code on its website and makes it available to anyone upon request.
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11. Sanctions

A violation of this code of ethics may result in appropriate disciplinary action based on the nature and severity of the breach, as decided by the relevant authority. Such action will be taken in accordance with collective agreements, employment contracts, and service agreements.

12. Evaluation and Updates

An evaluation of this code of ethics is conducted by the educational organization at the end of each school year to determine whether an update is necessary.

Effective Date

This code of ethics comes into effect in November 2025.