

École Jeannine Manuel Cares: Strengthening our Culture of Trust

This statement is addressed to each and every member of our school community, including students, parents, teachers, surveillants, administrative members of staff, nursing staff, *directeurs* and *directrices*, *directeurs* and *directrice adjoints*, board members, and members of the school's senior management team. As such, it is important that everyone take the time to read this statement in full.

Living our mission

We aim to live our mission of promoting international understanding by fostering a school culture of mutual respect, empathy, and open dialogue. As a multicultural community, our differences are our strengths.

Let us be clear:

Putting people down for being different (or for any reason) is not acceptable at École Jeannine Manuel.

Harassment and discriminatory behavior of any kind – including verbal harassment, unwanted physical contact, or demeaning comments – are not acceptable at École Jeannine Manuel.

Defaming or humiliating another person – anonymously or not, privately or publicly, whether through a note passed in class or a post on the internet – is not acceptable at École Jeannine Manuel.

The school recognizes the important work already done by all members of its community to make our school an inclusive and welcoming place. Each year, *directeurs* and *directrices*, teachers, other staff members, and students themselves work hard to combat bullying and harassment, and to promote a culture of caring and inclusivity through our policies and existing programs.

However, there is always more work to be done. Together, we can do better.

Care.

We believe that in our school's motto of "Think, Dare, Share & Care", the "Care" should come first.

The ability to see and care about people's different perspectives is essential. Especially during this particularly challenging time, we need to be there for each other and to build

relationships that are based on mutual respect, empathy, and trust. We need to lift each other up, not shut each other down.

Students, we care. We care about supporting you. We want you to know that you are seen, heard, and respected. We want to continue to work with you to establish a school culture that will help us reach our mission's ideals.

Teachers and all members of staff, we care. We care about supporting each other and developing trusting and mutually respectful relationships with students and with one another. We care about supporting your efforts to implement concrete changes that will help improve our school culture.

Families, we care. We care about supporting your children as they navigate the challenges of growing up. We care about maintaining an open dialogue as we work together to build the most inclusive and trusting school community possible.

Think.

Each of us needs to take the time to think about the impact of our words and actions on others, regardless of their initial intent.

As a school, we also need to think carefully about how to achieve real and lasting progress.

Here is how we plan to start:

We will improve and increase channels of communication between students, teachers, and staff so that all parties can engage in trusting, respectful, and constructive dialogue.

We will continue to revise and update existing school policies – including, and in particular, our school's Anti-Bullying and Anti-Discrimination policies – to better take into account everyday incidents that can have a significant impact on mental and physical health. We will create a Relationship & Sex Education Policy to provide guidelines for safe, respectful, and caring relationships among students, staff, and parents for all of our schools.

We will help provide resources for students and staff to better inform themselves on issues of mental health, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We will continue to work with teachers, surveillants, staff, and student representatives to implement new educational and training programs that inspire positive behavior and improve everyone's school experience.

Dare.

We all need to dare to speak up. If you experience or witness behavior that is incompatible with our school's culture of caring, you must say something.

Students: Saying something is not 'ratting anyone out'. It means getting help for everyone involved.

You already know that the first thing you should do is speak to an adult, whether this is your *directeur* or *directrice*, *directrice adjointe*, the nurse, a trusted teacher, staff member, or parent. We know this is easier said than done, but you should feel confident that you will receive the school's unwavering support. Our response will be prompt, thorough, and fair.

We know that some of you feel that you have reached out in the past and still not been heard. A specific email address, we.care@ejm.net, has been set up. Anything you send to this address will be taken seriously and addressed without judgment.

Staff members: If you witness an incident involving a student, talk to the appropriate *directeur* or *directrice*. If it involves another member of staff, talk to your Head of HR.

Share.

We have over 80 different nationalities at our schools. We are home to students, staff, and families of diverse sexual orientations, ethnicities, and socio-economic backgrounds. We are not all the same; our differences are our strengths.

It is a privilege to be able to learn from such a wealth of different experiences. We must all commit to being open to and respectful of a multitude of perspectives and experiences that are different to our own. This is the key to building and maintaining trusting relationships with each other.

To build a culture of caring and trust, to make our community a safe and welcoming space, we also need your help:

Share your stories and experiences with us.

Share our values with those who doubt our convictions.

Finally, share your ideas with us for how to make our school a better place.

By trusting each other, we can grow together.

Email we.care@ejm.net with your experiences (positive and negative), your ideas, and your solutions.