

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NO. 161

SCENT SENSITIVE SCHOOLS

Background

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools is committed to the safety of students, staff, volunteers and contractors. The Division is respectful of health concerns of students, staff and guests arising from exposure to scents when in Division buildings. The Division recognizes the responsibility it shares with parents to provide a Christ-centered, safe and caring school learning environment for students. In order to maintain a safe learning environment for students and a safe work environment for staff, the Division intends to protect the indoor air quality of its buildings. Strong scents and fragrances can contribute to poor air quality that can be unhealthy to students, staff and guests.

In Alberta, the *Alberta Human Rights Act* protects Albertans from discrimination based on specific grounds. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that all Albertans have an equal opportunity to be in a school or Division building and access services available to the public without discrimination. Administrators/Managers will be able to implement a scent-safe workplace when made aware that a student, staff member or parent is experiencing an adverse reaction to fragrances/scents in the workplace.

Fragrances/scents can be found in personal care products, cleaning products, perfume/cologne, some food and drink products and other random products. Exposure to such fragrances/scents can cause significant health problems in susceptible individuals including asthma attacks, migraine headaches, severe allergic reactions, inability to concentrate, loss of coordination, loss of consciousness or seizures.

Procedures

1. Students, staff, visitors and contractors will avoid strong perfumes, cologne, personal hygiene products, identified food and drink products, scented candles, scented laundry products, and other lingering odors on clothing such as tobacco smoke or chemical products which may affect the sensitivities or allergies of others.
2. Students, staff or visitors affected by persons using products that trigger sensitivities shall take reasonable precautions to self-manage their conditions and will advise the principal or other manager if they are affected by environmental sensitivities.

3. The principal/manager will meet with the individual, and parent where applicable, to clarify the issue and to understand the impact that the fragrance/scent is having and the actions that will be taken to address the problem.
4. In a timely manner, a fragrance/scent-safe workplace plan will be developed. The school administration will communicate with students, staff and parents highlighting the key points of the plan and requesting everyone's cooperation and understanding to create a safe environment for all. Signs or posters will be displayed in the building.
 - 4.1 Teachers, Educational Assistants and other employees will be responsible for reporting to school administration when the procedure is not complied with.
5. The implementation and support of the fragrance/scent-free plan will be monitored in terms of the health of affected persons and in the following of the plan.
6. Scent sensitivity is a safety issue therefore repeated or consistent violation of the procedure by students, an employee or a visitor may result in discipline.

References:

Canadian Human Rights Commission
Alberta Human Rights Commission
Alberta Health Services
Canadian Lung Association
Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety