



ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION (Policy Statement: Caring and Safe Catholic Schools)

Purpose

To provide a framework to support and maintain a positive school climate that is consistent with Church Teaching. A positive school climate exists when all members of the community feel safe, comfortable, included and accepted. To help achieve a positive environment in schools, the Board and schools will actively promote and support positive behaviours that reflect the Catholic virtues of faith, hope, love, justice, fortitude, temperance and prudence.

References

Policy/Program Memorandum 144, Bullying Prevention and Intervention (as amended)
Education Act, as amended Ontario Regulation 472/07, "Behaviour, Discipline and Safety of Students"

Procedures

1. Bullying Negatively Impacts School Climate

Bullying within a school

- adversely affects a student's ability to learn;
- adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate;
- adversely affects a school's ability to educate its students;
- will not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstances (e.g. online) where engaging in bullying will have a negative impact on the school climate.

2. Definition of Bullying

As set out in section 1 of the *Education Act*, as amended, "bullying" is defined as:

Bullying - means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where,

(a) the behaviour is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of,

(i) causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or

(ii) creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and

(b) the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education ("intimidation").

For the purposes of the definition of "bullying" above, behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

Cyber-bullying

For the purposes of the definition of "bullying" above, bullying includes bullying by electronic means (commonly known as cyber-bullying), including,

(a) creating a web page or a blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;

(b) impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet; and

(c) communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals.

3. Prevention Strategies

3.1 Supporting Positive Student Behaviour

- Schools will establish programs, such as bullying prevention and citizenship development, as well as positive activities designed to promote the building of healthy relationships and appropriate behaviour, and building on existing curricula, particularly the Religious Education and Family Life program, and the faith life of the school community (e.g. liturgies, retreats, sacramental celebrations, restorative justice practices).
- Schools will encourage and support students to develop leadership in such programs (e.g. peer mentoring, restorative practice, conflict mediation).
- Schools will focus on prevention and early intervention as a key to maintaining a positive school environment in which students can learn.
- Schools will develop prevention measures and initiatives that include the whole school and all aspects of school life.
- All students will have the opportunity to participate in bullying prevention training and leadership initiatives within their own school.

3.2 Teaching Strategies

- Teaching strategies will focus on developing healthy relationships by including bullying prevention throughout the curriculum in daily classroom teaching (e.g. inclusion of books on reading lists that deal with bullying).

- In every grade, curriculum expectations will include bullying prevention strategies such as conflict resolution and peer mediation. Teachers must be aware of these links and use them to promote tolerance, respect and empathy, all of which are important components of bullying prevention.

4. Intervention Strategies

Intervention to stop bullying is a community responsibility including school administrators, teachers, staff members, parents/guardians, students, Board professional staff, the local Church and community agencies.

- 4.1 The goal of intervention measures is to stop incidences of bullying and to foster a positive learning and teaching environment that supports academic achievement for all students. Cessation of bullying incidents would help students reach their full potential and affirms their inherent dignity rooted in their creation in the image and likeness of God.
- 4.2 Intervention will be consistent with a progressive discipline approach that utilizes a continuum of supports and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and builds upon strategies that promote positive behaviour.
- 4.3 Intervention strategies range from early interventions to more intensive interventions in cases of persistent bullying, with possible referral to community or social service agencies or police agencies where appropriate. In recognition of the importance of addressing bullying, which can have a significant impact on student safety, and the school climate, bullying is included in the list of infractions for which student suspension must be considered.
- 4.4 Ongoing intervention may be necessary to sustain and promote positive student behaviour.
- 4.5 Develop procedure to allow students to report incidences of bullying safely and in a way that will minimize the possibility of reprisal.
- 4.6 Supports will be provided to all parties involved in bullying, including the person involved in the bullying, the student harmed, and the witnesses. Further, steps will be taken to protect the safety of the student harmed in the bullying incident.
- 4.7 The school will follow the requirements set out in the *Education Act* as amended, and PPM 144, including requirements regarding the reporting of incidents, notification to parents, and supports and steps taken in response to the bullying incident.

5. Opportunities for Bullying Prevention Training

- 5.1 The Board will provide annual professional development programs to teachers, and other school staff on bullying prevention and intervention, and strategies for promoting a positive school climate, including training on cultural sensitivity and respect for diversity and special education needs.
- 5.2 The Board will make available training to other adults who have significant contact with students (e.g. pastoral care coordinators, priest chaplains, guidance counsellors, social worker, child and youth workers, school bus drivers/operators, volunteers) to support students and contribute to a positive learning and teaching environment.

- 5.3 The Board also recognizes the ongoing need to support training for new teachers and support staff.

6. Communication and Outreach Strategies

- 6.1 The Board will actively communicate its policies and procedures on bullying prevention and intervention, as well as the definition of bullying to principals, teachers, and other school staff, students, parents/guardians, their Special Education Advisory Committee school councils, volunteers, and school bus operators/drivers.
- 6.2 The Board will make every effort to share this information with parents whose first language is a language other than English.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Board will establish a monitoring and review process to determine the effectiveness of their bullying prevention and intervention policies and procedures. This process will include:

- an analysis of the school climate through anonymous surveys of students, staff members, and parents provided by their schools. School climate survey will be completed every two years.
- establishment of performance indicators for monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating the effectiveness of the board's bullying prevention and intervention policies (the indicators will be established in consultation with teachers, other school staff, students, parents, school councils, their Special Education Advisory Committee, and community-based service providers.)

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 Principal

In addressing bullying prevention and intervention, the principal will take a leadership role in the school. The principal will provide leadership by:

- linking all bullying prevention initiatives to the religious dimension of education in a Catholic school;
- demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to academic excellence in a safe teaching and learning environment;
- holding everyone under their authority accountable for his or her behaviour and actions;
- empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community;
- ensuring the communication of local bullying prevention policies includes a communication plan that outlines how these provisions will be made clear to the entire school community, including school communities who have a significant number of parents whose first language is not English;
- addressing bullying incidents immediately;
- providing an example of respect and civility for all members of the school community;
- ensuring classrooms have appropriate educational resource materials to support bullying prevention initiatives;
- maintaining procedures that allow students to report bullying incidents safely and in a way that will minimize the possibility of reprisal.;
- communicating these procedures to staff members, students, parents/guardians;
- tracking and monitoring incidents of bullying at the school.

8.2 Teachers and Other School Staff Members

- 8.2.1 Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff members maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, teachers and school staff uphold these high standards when they:
- help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth and inherent dignity as a child of God;
 - empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community, accepting their obligations to act in solidarity with the oppressed and in support of the common good;
 - communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
 - address bullying incidents immediately;
 - educate students on how to report bullying incidents safely and in a way that will minimize the possibility of reprisal;
 - communicate these procedures to staff members, students, parents/guardians;
 - maintain consistent standards of behaviours for all students;
 - demonstrate respect for all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the members of the school community;
 - prepare students for the full responsibility of citizenship.
- 8.2.2 Teachers and other school staff members shall also assist principals in maintaining close co-operation with the school community and in establishing and maintaining consistent disciplinary practices in the school. When a staff member or transportation provider becomes aware of a bullying infraction for which a suspension may be imposed by the Principal, s/he must report the infraction and any details to the Principal/Vice-Principal/teacher in charge at the earliest, safest opportunity and no later than the end of the school day, or end of a transportation run, if reported by a transportation provider. Where two or more board staff and/or transportation providers become aware of the same incident, each staff member and transportation provider shall make a report to the Principal/vice-Principal or teacher in charge during the absence of administration. The purpose of reporting incidents is to ensure that the Principal/Vice-Principal is aware of the behaviour.
- 8.2.3 Wherever possible, it is expected that the employee or transportation provider will provide an oral report to the Principal/Vice-Principal or teacher in charge during the absence of administration at the earliest, safe opportunity.
- 8.2.4 A written report, the ALCDSB Caring and Safe Catholic Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part I and Part II (Form A) must be submitted to the Principal/Vice-principal or teacher in charge during the absence of administration, when it is safe to do so and no later than the end of the school day or the end of the transportation run, if reported by a transportation provider. In the case of psychologists and social workers having a clinical relationship with a student, reporting should take place when it is reasonably possible to do so without having a negative impact on the clinical relationship. A teacher in charge who receives the report shall provide it to an administrator at the earliest convenience.
- 8.2.5 The process and tracking of the ALCDSB Caring and Safe Catholic Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part I and Part II (Form A) can be found in *Suspension of a Student Administrative Procedures*, under the Caring Safe Catholic Schools Policy.

8.2.6 Board employees who work directly with students will respond to student behavior likely to have a negative impact on the school climate as set out in PPM 145.

8.3 Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play an important role in the education of their children and have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents/Guardians fulfill their role when they:

- embrace their responsibilities as the primary educator of their child, including their faith development;
- show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- communicate regularly with the school;
- show that they are familiar with the Board's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and school rules by providing an example of respect and civility for all members of the school community;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- educate their children on how to report bullying incidents safely and in a way that will minimize the possibility of reprisal; and
- assist school staff members in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

8.4 Students

8.4.1 Students must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when a student:

- understands how their faith informs their attitudes and behaviours;
- comes to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- shows respect for himself or herself, for others, and for those in authority;
- refrains from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others; and
- follows the established rules and take responsibility for his or her own actions.

8.4.2 Students are also expected to:

- exercise self-discipline and accept discipline as would be exercised by a kind, firm and judicious parent;
- report incidents of bullying;
- be courteous to fellow pupils and obedient and courteous of teachers and other members of the school community;
- show respect for school property; and
- understand and comply with their school's code of conduct.

9. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

9.1 As required by the *Education Act*, as amended, and PPM 144, the Board has developed a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. All schools are required to implement the Board's bullying prevention and intervention plan as part of their School Improvement Plan for Student Achievement.

10. Caring and Safe Schools Team

Each school must have in place a Caring and Safe Schools Team, responsible for fostering a caring, safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate that is composed of at least one student (where appropriate), one parent, one teacher, one support staff member, one community partner, and the principal. The principal or staff designate will chair the team.

Appendices

Forms

Form A: ALCDSB Caring and Safe Catholic Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part I and Part II

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