

Holy Name of Mary

2019 - 2020



## **Preamble**

The ALCDSB is dedicated to creating and promoting positive school climate and well-being in all of our schools. Respecting the dignity of all persons by fostering trusting relationships through policies and practices that promote equity, inclusion and diversity are at the core of our Catholic values, the Board's spiritual theme of *Faith in Action* and our provincial *Catholic Graduate Expectations*. A positive school climate is directly linked to student success and well-being ensuring students are motivated to do well and will realize their full potential. We are committed to sustaining healthy and nurturing communities of belonging that are safe, caring and respectful and built on the principles of restorative practice and progressive discipline.

The ALCDSB and its school communities engage in a whole school approach in putting prevention and intervention strategies in place to facilitate a positive relationship between students, staff, parents and community partners.

## **I. Education, Awareness, and Outreach**

Holy Name of Mary proclaims that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and, as such, have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness. The school further recognizes that a whole-school approach to engaging the school community will help the School's efforts to address inappropriate behaviour.

To these ends, the School will utilise the Ministry of Education definition of bullying (see definition at end of document) in communications with the school community:

In its communication efforts, the School will:

- Make known that a positive school climate is essential for student achievement and well-being
- Identify the factors that contribute to a safe, inclusive caring and accepting school climate.
- Support relationship building and focus on promoting healthy relationships using a variety of strategies
- Educate parents and students regarding the differences between bullying, conflict, aggression and teasing
- Educate parents and students regarding social/emotional well being, specifically anxiety, self advocacy and coping strategies
- Explore and identify the underlying factors that contribute to conflict and/or bullying
- Work in partnership with parents and the broader school community to build awareness about the resources and pathways available.
- Be responsive to parental concerns and continue to build relationships and resiliency.

Holy Name of Mary will communicate and share with the school community, policies and procedures including the Board/school Code of Conduct, equity and inclusive education policy and guidelines for religious accommodations, procedures to address incidents of discrimination, progressive discipline approach, and promoting positive school climate and well-being.”

1. The School will endeavour to increase education, awareness and outreach by using the following best practices:
  - A whole-school approach to creating a safe and caring school;
  - Religious and Family Life Education curriculum focused on building relationships;
  - Using Restorative Justice Practises as a first strategy to repair and strengthen relationships, before using punitive measures.
  - Focus on school-wide theme of Empathy
  - Continue School Council and student clubs in an effort to promote student voice and social engagement
  - Roots of Empathy program
  - Fun Friends program
  - Zones of Regulation Program
  - Minds Up program
  - Kids Have Stress Too program
  - Restorative Circles
  - Develop Learner Profiles
  - Develop a Speak Up Box for Junior Intermediate students
  
2. The School has identified the following strategies to engage parents in conversations about promoting a positive school climate:
  - Parent representation on Caring and Safe Catholic Schools Team - each school has a team;
  - Offer presentations to School Council on bullying prevention and positive school climate
  - The creation of parent engagement activities that promote social and community involvement geared for parents/guardians in our community.
  - Use the school website and Fresh Grade to promote positive success stories in an effort to promote a positive school climate.

- Ongoing communication with families when issues come to light
- Ongoing communication using student agenda

## **II. Evaluation of Evidence**

Holy Name of Mary recognizes that effective prevention strategies must be evidence-based.

The School will base its interventions, strategies, practices and programs on evidence from the school climate surveys and other relevant information. The school will take the following steps to assess prevention initiatives and strategies:

- Evaluate the evidence to determine the main areas of concern, and identify issues in the physical environment, determine current procedures, and assess the strategies in place based on results of the school climate surveys and other relevant information.
- Identify children and youth involved in bullying (including the bully, the person being bullied, and those who may have witnessed or been affected by the bullying). The School will consider using a risk assessment approach in this process.
- Review and update the School's strategies as a result of gathering new information.
- Share the updated strategies with the school community.
- Regular case conference to address changing needs of students
- Meetings with Educational Assistants to address changing needs of students and supports in place
- Gather student feedback on student based solutions and conduct regular check ins with students who have had a conflict with a peer

### **Pre-evaluation strategy**

- The School's main issues of concern raised by students, staff and parents in the school climate surveys and based on other relevant information are the following:
  - Ensuring that students can report incidents of bullying safely and in a way that minimizes the possibility of reprisal;
  - Develop students' confidence to stand up for themselves and others;
  - Develop empathy for one another and honour our differences and uniqueness;
  - Develop respect in peer relationships and with all adults in our school community

- Create a student voice box
- The School's areas of focus with respect to the physical environment are:
  - Ensuring supervision of students inside the school and on school property
  - Ensuring that students feel safe in their classroom
  - Ensuring supervision of known areas of concern
  - Provide coping strategies for students who are having difficulty on the yard
- The School's current processes for reporting on, responding to, supporting, and following up on issues are as follows:
  - Use of the Board's *Caring and Safe Catholic School Administrative Procedures*;
  - Students can report issues to any adult in the building
  - Parents are strongly encouraged to contact their child's teacher, or school Principal/Vice Principal to report issues that may be affecting their child from feeling safe
  - Talk to all individuals involved to collect relevant information
  - Use restorative practices to invite forgiveness and healing
  - Conduct regular check-in with students to ensure that the issue remains resolved
- Based on a review of the school climate survey results and other relevant information, the following areas have shown success/improvement:
  - Students report having good adult relationships
  - Students report having good peer relationships
  - Students report being involved in after school activities

- Based on the school climate survey and other relevant data, the School proposes the following action plan to address areas requiring improvement:

To address empathy for one another and honour each other's differences, students will complete a Student Profile three times throughout the year (Sept. Jan. and June) The profile page will be posted in the halls so that peers can contribute words of encouragement and kindness to individual posters. For primary grades, students can use pictures, stickers or stamps. Staff will encourage students to contribute to all student profile pages. In January, students will do a peer to peer interview when completing the

Student Profile page. Again, students will be invited to write words of encouragement or compliments on each others' pages.

If an unwarranted comment arises, this will be used as a whole group teaching opportunity. Educators will encourage the class to address the comment. Solutions to cross out the word and add further words of encouragement will be explored. Students will be given an opportunity to stand up to and address unwarranted comments. This will serve as a model for addressing unwarranted comments on the yard.

Through Drama, students will be given an opportunity to role play conflict situations. Students will practice assertiveness and confidence in dealing with these conflicts both in a group and individually by using their words and not actions.

### **Post-evaluation Strategy**

The School will reassess the results of subsequent school climate surveys to verify the efficacy of the positive initiatives implemented. The “post-evaluation phase gathers evidence to test the efficacy of the prevention, responses, interventions or supports provided in order for changes to be made, where necessary.”

Upon re-evaluation, the School will update the information in this template to reflect the effectiveness of its bullying prevention initiatives.

The School will assess the number and types of comments written by students on the Student Profile page.

The School will collect and evaluate comments from the Speak Up Box.

## **III. Policies and Procedures**

The School recognizes that a whole school approach and the policies and procedures of ALCDSB are important for promoting positive school climate and well-being.

The School also recognizes that the goals of policy initiatives must address the areas of challenge identified in school/Board climate surveys and other relevant data.

1. The School will actively communicate its policies, procedures and guidelines to the school community (including involving the school community in the review and/or development of policies, procedures and guidelines relating to Caring and Safe Catholic Schools, by taking the following steps:
  - Regularly review Holy Name of Mary Code of Conduct (reviewed November 2019) ;
  - Ministry of Education Provincial Parent Guide;

- School Website.
2. The roles/responsibilities of the school community (students, staff, parents, and community members) are as follows:
    - To follow the standards of behaviour as outlined in the Code of Conduct (found on the website and student agendas).
    - To participate in a whole-school approach to positive school climate in order to ensure that schools are safe, inclusive, and accepting. The Ministry of Education Provincial Parent Guide link: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/code.pdf>.
    - Workplace Violence and Harassment Statement is posted in the main office.

## IV. Prevention

The School recognizes that fostering a positive learning environment will help to reduce possible bullying, harassment, and discrimination incidents. The School is committed to taking steps to strengthen prevention measures.

1. The roles and responsibilities of the Caring and Safe Catholic Schools Team (which will be communicated to the school community) are as follows:
  - Team members are responsible for addressing issues identified in the School Climate Surveys and other related data;
  - To develop intervention plans that seek to create engagements that promote empathy and inclusion;
  - Team members are responsible for updating our school's Code of Conduct to ensure it is relevant and current with our needs;
  - Team members receive and review reports of bullying, meet to discuss how issues can be resolved and identify what steps need to occur to ensure that everyone feels safe and included;
  - Education, role modelling and communication with all people involved.
2. From its evidence-based analysis, the School has identified the following practices and initiatives for promoting positive school climate and well-being:
  - a) Bullying prevention and intervention programs or activities that are evidence-informed and that address the needs identified by the Board or the School:
    - Restorative practices and class circles to resolve issues as they arise and on a regular basis as a way of modeling respectful dialogue when there is tension;
    - Anonymous and safe ways of reporting incidents of bullying through the creation of a Voice Box;

- Regular check-in with students involved in incidents of bullying to ensure that it remains resolved;
  - Implementation of Roots of Empathy program (class by class level).
- b) Relationship-building and community-building resources that are present in the school, classroom and in the larger community:
- Promoting connections to caring adults;
  - Peer assistance and mentoring programs;
  - Pastoral ministry;
  - Youth Workers;
  - Mental Health and Addictions Nurse
- c) Activities that promote a positive school climate:
- School-wide focus on gospel values and Catholic Graduate Expectations;
  - School-wide social justice and charity initiatives;
  - Spirit Weeks;
  - Buddy Program;
  - ECO School;
  - Regular student generated announcements related to maintaining a safe and caring community
- d) Awareness-raising strategies for students, e.g. social-emotional learning, empathy, developing self-regulation skills:
- Roots of Empathy;
  - Zones of Regulation;
  - FRIENDS and Fun FRIENDS;
  - Minds Up;
  - Kids Have Stress Too;
  - Mindful Programs to support students with stress and anxiety
- e) Awareness-raising strategies to engage community partners and parents in early and ongoing dialogue:

- Presentation to Caring and Safe Catholic Schools Team and School Council on results from School Climate Surveys;
  - Updates to Stewardship and Discipleship initiatives found in School Improvement Plan;
  - Case conference and parent meetings to address issues of behaviour early and then ongoing communication to provide feedback to parents on progress their child is making to seek good choices;
  - Kindergarten Open House and Registration Packages/materials to reduce anxiety;
  - Transition visits during the week before school starts in September and for students transitioning to secondary school;
  - Welcome Back BBQ and Open House in September.
- f) Strategies for linking curriculum and daily learning for promoting positive school climate and well-being:
- School-wide focus on restorative practice as a whole-school approach;
  - Zones of Regulation resource;
  - Social Justice initiatives throughout the year that have students and staff reaching out to and supporting various not-for-profit local organizations.
- g) Strategies to support and encourage role modeling by caring adults and student leaders within the School and school community:
- Catholic Student Council;
  - Peer assistance and mentoring programs;
  - Reading Buddies;
  - Student leaders on ECO Team, Intramural Sports, Choir and Safe School Team;
  - ECO Team members to give regular updates and promote responsible social actions on morning announcements
  - Roots of Empathy Program;
  - School based theme on empathy and kindness.
3. The School has identified the following learning and training opportunities for school staff and the school community that are needed:

- Annual training promoting positive school climate and well-being;
- Promoting Positive School Climate and Well-being pamphlet for parents (available at the Board's website [www.alcdsb.on.ca](http://www.alcdsb.on.ca));
- Promote staff engagements such as potlucks, birthday celebrations;
- Provide resources to support staff so that they will be prepared to attend to student wellness – Zones of Regulation, Fun Friends, Roots of Empathy, Kids Have Stress Too, Mind Up and Catholic Meditation.

## V. Interventions and Support Strategies

The School recognizes the importance of using timely interventions and supports with a school-wide approach.

1. To this end, the School will:

- Use teachable moments within a progressive discipline approach to address inappropriate behaviour, and consider mitigating and other factors;
- Have in place processes and strategies to identify and respond to bullying when it happens;
- Restorative Practices are in place to support prevention and intervention practices;
- Communicate the progressive discipline approach to the school community and the procedures in place to support the student.

2. The School supports the use, in a timely manner and using a whole school approach, of the following evidence-informed interventions and support strategies:

- Restorative practices;
- Discussion with Board Social Worker (Mental Health Leader);
- Referral of students to school Youth Worker.

**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.