Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

SECTIONS

1. VISION

Achieving Excellence in Catholic Education – Learn Lead Serve

2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Achieve excellence in instruction and assessment to enable all students to become reflective, self-directed, lifelong learners.
- Foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication to enable all students to realize their God-given potential.
- Inspire engagement and commitment to stewardship for creation to enable all students to become caring and responsible citizens.

3. PLAN PURPOSE

The Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board 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 board further recognizes the importance of ensuring a safe, inclusive and accepting school environment, and that the most effective means to address bullying is through a comprehensive school-wide approach that engages all stakeholders in these efforts. The Catholic Graduate Expectations, the Catholic Social Teachings and the gospel values are the foundational aims which inform this plan.

The purpose of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is to develop, in consultation with students, principals, teachers and other staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, school councils and the public, a long-term school-wide approach regarding bullying prevention and

intervention to be implemented by all schools of the Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board.   The plan will be reviewed at least every two years while seeking input from stakeholders.

The Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board further recognizes that a key factor in the development of a successful bullying prevention and intervention plan is the consistent use of research-approved best practices. The Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board shall also strive to consider local needs (geographical, cultural, and demographics), and the availability of supports when developing and reviewing this plan.

This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is based upon the Ministry of Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (the "Model Plan") released January 29, 2013, and the requirements set out in this Plan have been taken directly from the Model Plan.

When revising its plan, the Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board will:

- review school climate surveys to identify concerns;

- identify best practices of evidence-informed programs currently used at the Board;

- consider what other evidence-based practices may help address concerns; and

- identify key collaborators with the Board in respect of its bullying initiatives, and others who could be included as possible collaborators.

As required under subsection 303.3(3) of the Education Act, each school is required to implement the Board's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, and to comply with the Board's policies and procedures regarding Bullying Prevention and Intervention.

Ultimately, the purpose of this plan is to ensure positively engaged learning behavior and the safety and well-being of the learning community.

4. EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND OUTREACH

The Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board and each school will endeavour to increase education, awareness, and outreach to enhance the well-being of all those in the school community. Through this approach, it will help to engage all members of the school community in supporting school and Board efforts to deal with inappropriate student behaviour, including bullying and cyberbullying. This approach will promote healthy relationships within our communities.

Communications with the school community will include the following Ministry of Education definition of bullying as defined in section 1 of the Education Act:

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.

The Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board
and its schools will strive to:

● identify different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying.

● understand the myths and realities of bullying behaviour.

● identify bullying and differentiate bullying from conflict, aggression and teasing.

● understand power and peer dynamics.

● identify how biases, prejudice and hate can lead to bullying.

● identify different manifestations and underlying factors of bullying, such as body image,
   racism, sexism, homophobia, and disability, etc.

In addition, each school will take the following steps:

- Understand a whole school approach and the essential importance of a positive school climate for student achievement and well-being.

- Develop awareness and understanding of the factors that contribute to a safe, inclusive, caring and accepting school climate.

- Identify ways to make students aware of how they can help prevent and address bullying.

- Identify strategies to engage parents in conversations about bullying prevention and how to promote a positive school climate.

- Reach out to parents and the broader school community. In doing so, the following will be done:

  o Reflect on relationships and interactions and focus on promoting healthy relationships using a variety of strategies.

  o Become knowledgeable about community partners and resources available in the community.

  o Engage in restorative practices which support wholesome relationships, communication, empathy and justice.

  o Ensure that all parties including the victim, by-stander and perpetrator are offered support, encouragement and guidance to continue to promote healthy relationships.

- Communicate and share with the school community policies and procedures including school board/school Code of Conduct, equity and inclusive education policy, procedures to address incidents of discrimination, progressive discipline approach, and bullying prevention and intervention plans and strategies.

5. **EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE**

Pre-evaluation Strategy

Each school will base its bullying interventions, strategies, practices and programs on evidence-based strategies.

The Safe Schools team from each school will take the following steps to assess their anti-bullying initiatives and strategies:

- Every two years, a School Climate survey developed by the Board's Safe Schools Services will be administered to all students, staff and parents with questions seeking feedback related to the specific concerns of bullying and cyberbullying.

- Identify the main issues of concern in the results of the School Climate survey raised by students, school staff, parents, as well as identify issues in the physical environment.

- Conduct a needs assessment, e.g., what are the current processes for reporting, response, support and follow up on issues.

- Develop a pre- and post-evaluation strategy. These should be informed by the results of school climate surveys and other relevant information which may include suspension and expulsion data, the board violent incident report, and reviews of programs and strategies. Steps in an evaluation strategy would include:

  o   Creating a baseline and identifying areas of concern;

  o   Measuring success;

  o   Making changes where necessary; and

  o   Creating an action plan to address areas of concern.

- 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).

- Identify learning and training opportunities that are needed.

- Review and update the plan as a result of gathering new information.

- Share the plan with the school community.

Post-evaluation Strategy

The Safe Schools team of each school will reassess the results of the subsequent school climate surveys to verify the efficacy of the anti-bullying 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.

6. **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Each school will:

- Actively communicate policies, procedures and guidelines to the school community.

- Review policies, procedures and guidelines and include the school community in this process in order to build upon and sustain a positive school climate.

- Review guidelines and procedures or develop new ones to address bullying, cyberbullying, discrimination and harassment as they may apply to students, staff, parents and community members.

- Outline roles/responsibilities of the Safe Schools team and the school community, including students, staff, parents, and community members.

- Ensure goals address areas of challenge, as identified in the school climate surveys and other relevant data including Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form 20 and suspension/expulsion data.

7. **PREVENTION**

Fostering a positive learning environment will help to reduce possible bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, and discrimination incidents. Schools will take the following steps in order to strengthen prevention measures:

● Describe the roles and responsibilities of safe school teams which will be communicated with the school community;

● Identify bullying and cyberbullying prevention and intervention programs or activities that are evidence- based and that address the needs identified by the board or a school. These should be addressed at the following levels:

    o Individual student level

    o Classroom level

    o School level

    o Board level

    o Parent/Community level

● Identify relationship-building and community-building programs that are present in the school, classroom and in the larger community.

● Each classroom will establish success criteria that support healthy relationships and engaged learning behaviours.

● Identify and support:

    o Activities that promote a positive school climate.

    o Bullying prevention programs

    o Student leadership and student voice

    o Parent engagement

    o Parish community life witness and mentorship

    o Cyber-bullying prevention programs such as Samaritans on the Digital Road

    o Activities that promote Restorative Practice such as circles; restorative questions, etc.

    o Training strategies for school staff.

    o Awareness raising strategies for students, e.g., social-emotional learning, empathy, developing self-regulation skills.

    o Awareness raising strategies to engage community partners and parents in early and ongoing dialogue.

    o Ways to make linkages to curriculum resources and day to day learning.

    o Caring adults and student leaders within the school and school community.

- Provide opportunities for regular check-ins with students at risk of engaging in bullying, and those who have witnessed or been affected by bullying.

- Provide opportunities for teachers to develop effective classroom management strategies, incorporating progressive discipline.

- Establish and maintain respectful and caring classrooms, e.g., model equitable and inclusive behaviour and language.

- Align supervision plans to address where and when bullying happens.

8. INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES

Interventions and supports should be evidence-based, timely and take a whole school approach.

When implementing interventions and supports, schools should endeavour to:

- Use "teachable moments" within a progressive discipline approach to address inappropriate behavior and promote positive behaviors.

- Consider mitigating factors like the student's age, the circumstances of the behavior, and the student's history before determining the most appropriate way to respond to each situation. Consider a range of options to address the behavior and help the student learn from his or her choices.

- Have in place processes and strategies to identify, and respond to bullying when it happens.

- Follow up after bullying incident(s) with students, parents, teachers and other school staff as per Policy and Program Memorandum 144/145.

- Identify strategies for supporting students who engage in bullying, who have been bullied, and others who may have witnessed or been affected by bullying while respecting privacy. These strategies could include school based resources and/or referrals to community agencies, e.g., mental health services or public health.

- Communicate to the school community the progressive discipline approach to address inappropriate behaviour and the procedures that are in place to support students who have been harmed or who have engaged in serious behaviour incidents.

9. RESOURCES

- [Police/School Board Protocol, 2016](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 144 - Bullying Prevention and Intervention](#)
- [Ministry of Education – Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan](#)
- [Bullying: We Can All Help Stop It. A Guide for Parents, 2013](#)
- [Bill 13, Accepting Schools Act, 2012](#)
- [Bill 212, Progressive Discipline, 2007](#)

- [Policy/Program Memorandum 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct, 2012](#)
- [Keeping Our Kids Safe At School Act, 2010](#)
- [Policy/Program Memorandum 119: Equity and Inclusive Education Policies, 2013](#)
- [Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009](#)
- http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/safeschools.html
- [Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network](#)
- [Stop a Bully](#)
- [The Canadian Safe Schools Network](#)
- [bullying.org](#)
- [cyberbullying.ca](#)
- [Cyberbullying Research Centre](#)