



School Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan



St. Gabriel CES 2021

Date: November 22, 2021

Evidence Analysis, Assessment and Evaluation

NOTE: Due to COVID-19, our available data is currently based upon previous school year data, and staff anecdotal observations of student behaviour and interactions

Our most recent school climate survey was conducted in the Fall of 2017 and was completed by our students in grades 4-8.

Data from our most recent climate survey indicated that:

- 31% of our Junior Division students reported that they have been the victim of moderate to severe bullying. The Canadian norm is 26%.
- 20% of the girls and 45% of the boys were victim. The Canadian norm for both boys and girls is 26%.
- 16% of the Intermediated Division students reported that they have been the victim of moderate to severe bullying. The Canadian norm is 26%.
- 10% of the girls and 22% of the boys in this school were victims. The Canadian norm for girls is 25% and for boys is 28%.
- The most common types of bullying reported are verbal and social with it occurring most commonly during recess or outside of our school.
- 87% of Junior Division students have friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices. The Canadian norm is 80%.
- 85% of Intermediate Division students have friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices. The Canadian norm is 74%.

Education, Awareness and Outreach

What is Bullying?

Bullying is defined as a form of (typically) **repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour** directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there **is a real or perceived power imbalance**.

Bullying is when one person continually uses mean, negative, harmful and aggressive words or actions towards or about another person on purpose, while fully understanding that what they are doing is wrong and hurtful but do it anyways to make themselves feel bigger and more powerful while making the other person feel small and powerless.

A power imbalance may occur between a pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or receipt of special education. Bullying usually happens when one or more students tease, threaten, spread rumours about, exclude, hit, shove, or hurt another person

Bullying can take different forms. These include:



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- Physical: unwanted sexual touching, hitting, shoving, stealing, or damaging property
- Verbal: inappropriate epithets, remarks, jokes or innuendos, name calling, mocking, making sexist, sexualized, racist, homophobic, transphobic, and/or derogatory or profane comments
- Social: excluding others from a group or spreading gossip or rumours about them
- Electronic (commonly known as cyberbullying): spreading rumours, innuendos, hurtful comments, inappropriate images, cartoons or jokes, using cellphones, e-mail, text messaging, gaming platforms and/or through social media

A Positive Learning Environment is the sum total of all relationships found within the school and is a critical component of bullying prevention. A positive learning environment is accepting, equitable, and inclusive of all persons regardless of race, colour, culture, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, religion, family status, or disability. A positive learning environment engages the school community, including parents/guardians, as well as the broader community. A positive learning environment exists when all members of the school community feel safe, respected, and actively promote positive language, behaviours and interactions.

Bullying has a profoundly negative impact on individual student's life and overall learning environment.

Our school is a place where each student comes to with different lived experiences. As such, we commit to work with all students to ensure a common understanding of what bullying is, and how each student can make a positive contribution to our school community.

We also recognize the importance of acknowledging that bullying can occur between adults. Therefore, we must assume that our students may, at some point in their lives, have observed or directly experienced any adult abusing power over another. As such, it is the expectation of our school that all interactions between adults; staff member to staff member, staff member to parent/guardian, parent/guardian to staff member, are always rooted in mutual respect and dignity and model the behaviours we expect of our students. If we don't include these expectations, we risk creating the belief in our students that adults don't manage our own behaviour or hold ourselves accountable in a way that we expect from them.

St. Gabriel CES recognizes the importance of teaching our students the difference between bullying, rude or mean behaviour, and conflict, while respecting all as actions that can be upsetting to any student. **People sometimes confuse conflict with bullying, but they are different.** Conflict between students does not always mean it's bullying. Conflict occurs between people who have a disagreement, a difference of opinion or different views. When there is conflict, each person feels comfortable expressing their views. Children learn at a young age to understand that others can have different perspectives than their own. Developing the ability to gain perspective takes time and continues into early adulthood. Source: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/bullying-we-can-all-help-stop-it>



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	CONFLICT	RUDE	MEAN	BULLYING
Frequency	Typically, infrequent. Can sometimes be occasional			Repeated
Intent	Typically, not planned or intentional. Most often is spontaneous	Can be intentional or non-intentional, but most often spontaneous	Usually intentional, but most often is not planned	Planned and intentional
Who is hurt?	All parties are upset	Can cause hurt feelings for one or all parties	Can deeply hurt one or all parties	The target of the bullying is upset and hurt
Cause	Most often a disagreement, argument or difference of opinion	Thoughtlessness, poor manners, narcissism, etc.	Anger, impulsive cruelty	Planned and intentional actions to gain control by the bully over the victim
Taking responsibility	All parties take responsibility for their own actions	Rude or mean person accepts responsibility and typically exhibits remorse for their behaviour and actions		The bully blames the victim
Who wants a resolution	Typically, an effort is made by all parties to find a resolution			The victim wishes the behaviour to stop, the bully does not
Resolution	Can be resolved through mediation	Most often is resolved through mediation. Progressive Discipline measures may be used by school administration.		Difficult to resolve through mediation. Often requires the use of significant intervention and support strategies for all parties along with Progressive Discipline measures.

Source: Jennifer Astles, DASA Newsletter, January 2014, TST BOCES

Behaviours that are not bullying can still be hurtful and mean. Harmful language or behaviours may be direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional. The Ontario Human Rights Code focuses on impact.

Even if a person does not explicitly object to the comment or behaviour it will still be appropriately addressed, through the lens of education, rooted in the teachings our of Catholic faith.

The school website, School Messenger communication system, and school Twitter & Instagram accounts are used as to deliver information to the school community. All information related to equity, inclusion and positive school culture is posted on our school website.

At school, we guide our students on how to conduct themselves in the classroom, during outside play time and online. We teach them expectations for interactions that keep themselves and other safe, happy and learning.

The expectations of St. Gabriel CES may be different than those outside of the school setting, including the home, sporting events, or other community activities. Once students leave the classroom, our hope is that that the lessons they experience at school, combined with continued dialogue at home, **help them to learn how to independently navigate different settings and interactions within the wider community.**

Conversations at home that can support in-school interactions of students:

1. Do you know what bullying is? How is it different than mean/rude behaviour or conflict?
2. Is someone engaging in bullying just because they are mean to you?
3. Who are the safe people that you can go to at school for support if you are hurt/feel hurt?



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4. Have you ever experienced mean behaviour? What about bullying?
5. Have you ever been mean to someone else? Do you think you have bullied someone before?
6. What do students do when they see bullying take place in school? What do you do?
7. How we interact at sports, in the community and other places may not be the same way that we interact at school. What are some of the differences for how we act at sports/community/etc. and how we act at school?
8. If someone has hurt you, intentionally or not, how do you react and get them to stop? How would you react if this situation was at school? How would you react if this happened at sport/in the community?

Bullying behaviours will be addressed using the Progressive Discipline model. Progressive discipline is a whole-school approach that makes use of a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences, building upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. The range of interventions, supports and consequences used by the Board and all schools must be clear and developmentally appropriate and must include learning opportunities for pupils in order to reinforce positive behaviours and help pupils make good choices. For pupils with special education and/or disability related needs, interventions, supports and consequences must be consistent with the expectations in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or his/her demonstrated abilities.

The Board, and school administrators, must consider all mitigating and other factors, as required by the *Education Act* and as set out in *Ontario Regulation 472/07*.

Policies and Procedures

The HCDSB Policies and Procedures the relate to bullying prevention and intervention:

- Policy No: II-27 Student Behaviour
 - [Policy No: II-39 Progressive Discipline and Safety in Schools;](#)
 - [Policy No: II-40 Bullying Prevention Intervention](#)

St. Gabriel CES will communicate HCDSB Policies and Procedures by:

- Including board policies and school expectations on our school website;
 - Sharing information during school assemblies and announcements;
 - Sharing information through bulletin board postings within the school;
 - Sharing information at staff, divisional, and team lead meetings;
 - Integrating Bullying Prevention and Intervention, along with Equity & Inclusion into classroom instruction, always guided by Gospel values;
 - Informing students, parents, staff members and school volunteers of our procedures for reporting incidents of bullying and safe school incidents;
 - Sharing information with parents to assist them to build awareness and knowledge about bullying;
 - School board policies will be linked to the school website and made available for community reference;



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- The policies have also been shared on the school Teams site and reviewed with all staff members;
- All staff members have been in-serviced on all guidelines, procedures and policies
- The Code of Conduct is reviewed with students in September and January during Safe & Caring Schools Assemblies;
- Staff members are reminded consistently by administration that we are to model positive interactions for our students daily and that the safety well-being of each student is our collective responsibility;
- Staff are aware that it is their professional responsibility to respond and report all incidents of inappropriate student behaviour and are aware that supports within the school (CYC, administration, parish clergy) are available to encourage a positive resolution to any incident;

Prevention

Equity & Inclusive Responsibilities

Staff:

- Principal and Vice-Principal are committed to being visible both inside and outside during all lunch periods and recesses. Administration believes strongly that their physical presence mitigates and minimizes small behaviour issues from becoming larger.
- Staff are dedicated to supervising students at all times by collecting lines at the end of each recess, leading lines through the school, supervising students on stairwells and while at their lockers, and by FDK and Primary teachers ensuring parent handoff of students from K-3 at dismissal each day
- Organized supervision of students within the school building and on the school grounds always
- Watch for signs of bullying and step in to address it immediately, reporting to administration when concerns are repeated or ongoing
- Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports (Affirm, Ask, Assess, Act)
- Take seriously parents' concerns about bullying incidents
- Provide specific supports for any student who has been the victim of bullying, intervention for the student who has bullied, and strategies for responding to students who were directly observing the bullying incident (safety plan)
- Ensure students know procedures for reporting incidents of bullying
- Provide a safe environment for students who report bullying (protection from retaliation)
- Treat others with respect, dignity and kindness at all times
- Ensure that all staff (including support staff) know they have a duty to report any incidents of exclusion, inequity, or bullying
- Model positive ways of getting along with others
- Exhibit compassion and empathy, and teach students about compassion and empathy
- Regular reminders via daily announcements
- Regular school visits from our Halton Regional Police Liaison Officer – Cst. Dawn Freeland

Students:

- Treat one another with dignity, kindness and respect and to make everyone feel safe, welcome, and included.
- Refuse to participate in behaviour that could be construed as hurtful to others including but not limited to bullying



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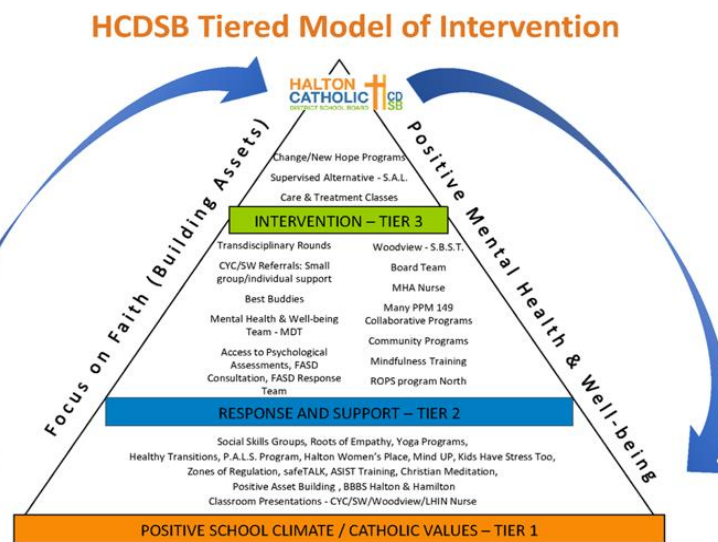
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- Use of manners throughout the school (please, thank you, good morning...)
- If they witness a bullying incident, speak up if they can, if not, report it to an adult immediately or as soon as possible
- Refuse to watch, laugh or join in when someone is being bullied
- Include everyone in play, especially those who are often left out
- Always remember the Golden Rule and treat others the way you want to be treated
- Constant reminders of “Our House” and how we treat each other as family

Parents and Guardians:

- Model positive ways of getting along with others
- Do not make excuses for behaviour that is unkind or hurtful to others – it is NEVER okay!
- Help their son/daughter find ways to express anger that do not involve hurting others physically or emotionally
- Teach problem solving skills
- Inform school staff if their child tells them about a bullying incident
- Help their son/daughter understand the value of accepting and celebrating individual differences and model this behaviour at home
- Be alert to signs their child is being bullied or may be bullying others

School staff welcome the opportunity to support students through additional clubs, teams, etc. Our school’s commitment to bullying prevention and intervention is rooted in the Halton Catholic District School Board’s Tiered Model of Intervention, which focuses on building assets along with positive mental health and well-being.



Intervention and Support Strategies

All Schools recognize the importance of using timely evidence-based interventions and supports with a school-wide approach. To this end, St. Gabriel CES will



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- 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.
- identify strategies for supporting all students involved in bullying.
- communicate the progressive discipline approach to the school community and the procedures in place to support students.

Our staff will use the following process when bullying is reported:

1. Acknowledge the Incident / Affirm

“You were right to report/get help from an adult.”

“I’m glad you asked for help with this.”

2. Gather Information / Ask Questions

“Tell me more about what happened.”

“Has this happened before?”

“Did anyone try to help you?”

“Are you telling me this is to get someone in trouble or to keep someone safe?”

3. Assess Safety / Make a Plan

- Determine what the student needs to feel safe now?
- What can the student do if the bullying continues?
- What steps need to be taken to limit the possibility of retaliation for the person reporting the bullying?
- Who will the student tell if there is another incident?
- Alert parents to the situation and share your plan

4. Act / Follow-up

- Determine “next step” or refer the student to an administrator
- Tell the student what will happen next
- Check with the student to determine the success of the intervention

Reporting Incidents of Bullying

Students, parents, school staff and volunteers may use the following methods to report incidents of bullying as appropriate:

- Tell an adult in the building (phone, in person, email etc.)
- Parent / Teacher interviews
- Make an appointment to meet with appropriate school staff
- Students who do not feel safe to report incidents of bullying during the school day are encouraged to tell their parents/guardians who can act as their advocates by contacting the classroom teacher or school administrator

When responding to a bullying incident, our school staff uses a progressive discipline approach. Use of Progressive Discipline supports a safe, inclusive and equitable learning and teaching environment



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in which every student can reach his or her full potential. It is a non-punitive, whole-school approach that uses a continuum of corrective and supportive interventions, supports and consequences to address inappropriate behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. Strategies may range from early intervention to more intensive intervention in cases of persistent bullying, with possible referral to board support personnel, community or social service agencies.

These may include but are not limited to:

- Peer mentoring programs
- Well-being strategies and programs;
- providing students with the opportunity to learn life skills such as conflict resolution, anger management and communication skills;
- collaborative problem solving;
- conflict mediation and resolution
- documenting incidents requiring disciplinary measures;
- consideration of mitigating factors;
- withdrawal of privileges
- restitution for damages
- restorative practices (verbal or written apologies, community service, etc.)
- suspension
- ensuring that contact is made with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of students early in the disciplinary process and involving them in a plan to improve the behavior;

Consequences are at the discretion of the Principal and Vice-Principal. In the case of severe misbehavior, our format of progressive discipline consequences may be superseded. As incidents arise, it is recognized that each situation is unique. Mitigating circumstances will be considered for student age, frequency of incidents, nature and severity of incidents, student exceptionalities, extenuating circumstances, and the impact on the school climate.

Monitoring and Review

Our FIAT – Faith In Action Team members will also be part of our Safe & Caring Schools Team for the 2021-2022 school year

Faith in Action Team Members:

- Grade 8 FIAT Members – Student Leaders
- Ms. S. Muvrin – Teacher
- Ms. H. Cadet – Child and Youth Counselor
- Parent Rep. – TBD
- Ms. E. Carey – Vice-Principal
- Mr. C. Tilley – Principal

FIAT will meet to specifically review/address our Bullying Prevention Plan 4 times annually in November, January, March, and May.



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