



Quinte Region Christian Schools BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION POLICY

Preamble

Quinte Region Christian Schools (the “School”) is not exempt from student behaviour which could undermine a positive school climate of respect and understanding for all persons. The School believes in promoting Christ-honouring self-control and acceptable behaviour in respect to God, each other, and the rest of God’s creation. When students flourish in these areas, they will contribute to a thriving Christian school community. When students flounder in these areas, they will need to become aware of their behaviour, take corrective action, and seek to be reconciled. Reconciliation includes experiencing forgiveness and learning to forgive—it points to restoration in the Christian school community.

The purpose of this Policy is to promote the School’s mission and to provide a framework to support and maintain a positive school climate that is God-honouring.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the *Code of Conduct Policy*, *Discipline Policy*, *Sexual Harassment-Students Policy* and any other policy that deals with behaviour.

Definitions

Bullying is aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a student where:

- a. the behaviour is intended by the student to have the effect of, or the student ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of:
 - 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
 - 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 student and the individual based on a variety of factors, including and not limited to, size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, and factors related to the *Human Rights Code*.

This behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written, or other means. It can be physical (e.g., hitting, pushing, tripping), verbal (e.g., repeated name-calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist, or hurtful comments), or social (e.g., excluding others from a group, spreading gossip, or rumours). It can also occur through the use of technology (e.g., spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of email, cell phones, text messaging, internet websites, social media, or other technology). It includes cyberbullying, defined below.

Cyber-bullying: Bullying by electronic means includes but is not limited to:

- a. creating any online content 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 or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals.

Bullying prevention is a whole-school approach that heightens expectations for a safe and caring school climate. It includes a shared understanding about the nature and underlying causes of bullying and its effects on the lives of individual students and the school community.

Bullying intervention is a comprehensive and effective response to the bullying incident that takes into consideration all parties involved in the bullying incident. It should provide specific support for the student who has been bullied, intervention for the student who was bullying, and strategies for responding to students who were directly observing the bullying incident.

Harm can be experienced in several ways, including physical, mental, emotional, and psychological.

A **positive school climate** is a crucial component of prevention; it may be defined as the sum total of all of the personal relationships within a school. When these relationships are founded on mutual understanding and modelled by all, a culture of respect becomes the norm.



Principles

1. The School believes that all students should feel safe at school and deserve a positive school climate.
2. The School also believes that a caring and challenging learning environment where all students are valued is a necessary condition for student success.
3. The School understands that students cannot be expected to reach their full potential in an environment where they feel insecure or intimidated.
4. The School recognizes that a whole-school approach is required, and that everyone—educators, school staff, parents, students and the wider community—has a role to play in creating a positive school climate and preventing inappropriate behaviour such as bullying, sexual assault, gender-based violence and incidents.
5. The School acknowledges that an open and ongoing dialogue among the Principal, school staff, parents and students is an important component of creating a positive school climate.
6. The School recognizes that bullying:
 - is a dynamic of unhealthy interaction that can take many forms.
 - adversely affects students' ability to learn;
 - adversely affects the school climate, including healthy relationships;
 - adversely affects a school's ability to educate its students;
 - can cause a range of psycho-social problems for all involved that may extend into adolescence and adulthood.
7. While a Christian school has minimal obligations to the *Education Act*, the School aligns itself with the following principles:
 - Principals and teachers have an obligation to maintain order and discipline in the classroom and on school grounds.
 - Teachers and all School employees are required to report any serious incidents.
 - Student safety extends to the treatment of students during daily interactions.
 - Principals will investigate all reported bullying incidents and follow School protocols when dealing with these incidents.

Bullying Prevention, Intervention and Support Strategies

1. Prevention and Awareness

- All employees of the School must take all allegations of bullying behaviour seriously and shall act in a timely, sensitive, and supportive manner when responding to students who disclose or report bullying incidents.
- All School employees and volunteers who work directly with students shall respond to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate. Such behaviour includes all inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour, including bullying, at any time, at the School and at any school-related event if, in the employee's opinion, it is safe to respond to the behaviour.
- Bullying in any form will not be tolerated at the School, 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.
- Reports of circumstances or actions that represent bullying or may constitute bullying will be addressed in an age-appropriate manner in accordance with the circumstances of each individual case. All students are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying, physical aggression, intimidation or threats, or suspected incidents to a staff member immediately. The staff member will be responsible to ensure that the School's procedures are followed.
- The School will attempt to minimize the possibility of reprisal for anyone who reports bullying behaviour. (See Appendix A)



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(**Note:** for older students, see the *Discipline Policy* for a more age-appropriate form.)

- The School recognizes the proactive value in ensuring there is timely adult supervision, a well understood code of conduct, appropriate devotions, and a challenging academic and co-curricular program, etc., which all serve to direct the student away from disrespectful behaviour towards others.

2. Teaching and Training Strategies

- School staff will promote positive classroom and school culture by actively teaching procedures, routines, community values, and expectations for behaviour.
- The School will make sample programming materials available for teachers to select based on the age and needs of their students (e.g. *Responsive Classroom*, *Leader in Me*, *The First Days of School*.)
- Students will have opportunities to participate in leadership initiatives within the School.
- The School will empower and equip staff or other adults who have significant contact with students, as necessary, to address bullying incidents.

3. Progressive Discipline

The School will put in place a comprehensive intervention strategy to address incidents of bullying, including appropriate and timely responses. Intervention and support should be consistent with a progressive discipline approach. The strategies could range from early interventions to more intensive interventions in cases of persistent bullying, with possible referral to community or social service agencies.

Specific Directions

The Principal is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement, monitor, and review this policy.



APPENDIX A – BULLYING INCIDENT REPORT

Please fill in this form and submit it to a trusted staff member.

This information will be read by the principal and treated very confidentially.

Your Name (optional):

Your Teacher:

:

Were you bullied? Yes No

Did you witness the bullying? Yes No (If no, how did you find out about the bullying?)

The name of the person who was being bullied is:

What kind of bullying was this? Physical (like hitting or kicking)

Verbal (like name-calling)

Cyberbullying (like using a cell phone to say or show things about someone in a bad way)

When did this happen? Date:

Time:

Name(s) of the Bully(ies):

Names of the Bystanders:

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

4.

4.

Where did the bullying happen? Check one:

At school: In the bathroom In the hallway

In the classroom On the playground

In the change room Other (describe):

Not at school (give location)

Online

Explain what happened:



APPENDIX B – IDEAS FOR BULLYING PREVENTION (FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL)

Plan

Consider finding anti-bullying curriculum material which could be used from time to time as part of a health class or ethics class or the regular curriculum.

Elementary schools in particular can establish a homeroom program to be implemented in the first three or four months of the school year. For example:

By the end of September:

- establish clear procedures, routines, and expectations, using interactive modelling where appropriate
- review the *Student Code of Conduct*
- review bullying intervention and reporting procedures (e.g. see Appendix A)
- provide suggestions for awards associated with good behaviour (e.g., classroom leadership award; good stuff tickets)
- locate good devotions or stories that address community building and bullying prevention
- establish responsive classroom sessions and routines
- set up activities for non-structured time (e.g., *intramurals*, *classroom games*)

By the end of October:

- share students' description of a school free of bullying
- share ideas of what a victim/bystander/bully can do to help
- share students' designations of high-risk areas in your school and strategies to promote safety
- share students' rewording of the student code of conduct with a positive framework

By the end of November:

- book a visit by the police officer to talk about bullying
- share suggestions for bully-busting strategies (e.g., have more equipment for the outdoors etc.)

Monitor and Correct

1. Supervise

- be present at the classroom door and in the halls during arrival and transition times
- be on time in the classroom and for other activities
- be in the classroom/cafeteria during lunch time as assigned
- be aware of rules and procedures
- keep alert and avoid casual conversations with colleagues when students are to be supervised
- wear outdoor identity vest
- walk around on the playground
- attend to concerns immediately
- inform home room teacher or principal (or designate) if something needs to be addressed further

2. Track

- document serious concerns
- home room or assigned teacher calls parents if repeated bullying-type behaviour is noted; such calls should be documented
- homeroom or assigned teacher calls parents if repeated victim-type behaviour is noted; such calls should be documented



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- supervising teacher or homeroom teacher should be advising the principal of severe bullying concerns

3. Support

- bring needs and concerns to the Lord in prayer and through devotions
- contact special education department for further follow-up if students involved are special education students
- advise parents to contact Shalem or Kids Help Phone, for confidential counseling services
- bring in the staff designate (e.g. guidance counsellor, student services, vice-principal) to meet with bully(ies) and the victim; explore having parents meet with the staff designate

4. Discipline and Reconciliation

- depending on the severity of the case, the homeroom teacher or assigned teacher should discipline the offending student(s) and advise the principal
- severe or unresolved cases shall be dealt with in the spirit of correction and love where the principal takes into the consideration the victim, the bully, and the circumstances; this could still include suspending the bully
- a session of restorative justice may occur at any time (Note: this may take place before the principal considers suspension or expulsion)
- if there is no reconciliation and ongoing issues, the Principal will bring the matter to the Board of Directors for other action, such as expulsion