



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

POLICY – 612

Bullying Prevention and Intervention

Area: Student Conduct and Safety
Source: Superintendent of Education – Safe Schools

Approved: June 23, 2008
Revised: November 11, 2013 (Interim); May 12, 2014; May 6, 2019; January 16, 2023

1. Introduction

Building and sustaining a positive school climate is a complex challenge requiring evidence-informed solutions. A whole-school approach involving all education and community partners is needed to bring about necessary systemic change. Providing students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe, inclusive and accepting school climate is a shared responsibility in which the Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB) and its schools play an important role. Bullying prevention and intervention policies, procedures and plans foster a positive learning and teaching environment that supports student achievement and well-being and helps students reach their full potential.

Principles of equity and inclusive education as well as our Catholic Graduate Expectations and Catholic School Teachings are embedded in the learning environment to support a positive school climate and a culture of mutual respect.

2. Definitions

Bullying (*Education Act, RSO, 1990, c.E.2*) – 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.

- 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;
- c) bullying behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

Cyber-bullying (*PPM144 Bullying Prevention and Intervention*) – the act of engaging in bullying behaviours through electronic means such as social media platforms, email, text or direct messaging, digital gaming and/or communication applications.

Progressive Discipline (*PPM 145 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour*) —a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of prevention programs, interventions, supports and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviours.

Restorative Practices (*Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario*) – ways of responding to inappropriate behaviour that focus on repairing the harm done to people and relationships rather than on punishing the offender.

School Climate (*PPM 145 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour*) – the learning environment and relationships found within a school and school community. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted, and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. A positive school climate is a crucial component of bullying prevention.

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- 3.1.1 ensure that in the school environment all members of the community are treated with respect, dignity and trust, consistent with the Gospel Values;
- 3.1.2 develop and implement comprehensive DCDSB-wide bullying prevention and intervention strategies; and
- 3.1.3 empower all students and entire school community to create schools free from bullying.

3.2 This policy provides direction for DCDSB to assist and ensure that every elementary and secondary school implements and maintains the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. This policy emphasizes the importance of addressing bullying, which can have a significant impact on student safety, learning and school climate.

4. Application / Scope

- 4.1 This policy creates expectations for behaviour for all persons on school property, during a school related activity or event, and/or in circumstances where a behaviour has an impact on the school climate. The policy supports that Ministry of Education Well-Being Strategy which places an emphasis on prevention strategies that promote and support positive student behaviour and early and ongoing intervention.

5. Principles

- 5.1 DCDSB recognizes that:
 - 5.1.1 all forms of bullying are unacceptable behaviours.
 - 5.1.2 bullying adversely affects students' well-being and ability to learn.
 - 5.1.3 bullying adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate.
 - 5.1.4 bullying, including cyber-bullying, is a serious issue and is not acceptable in the school environment (including virtual), in a school-related activity, or in any other circumstances that will have an impact on the school climate.
- 5.2 DCDSB believes that bullying prevention strategies, including but not limited to, restorative practices, should be implemented as proactive and preventative measures.
- 5.3 DCDSB recognizes that in some circumstances, bullying prevention practices might not be effective or sufficient to address inappropriate behaviour. In such circumstances, the Board supports the use of the full continuum of progressive discipline consequences as referred to in DCDSB's Student Discipline Policy be applied, if appropriate.
- 5.4 DCDSB recognizes that the school community is comprised of students, parents/guardians/caregivers, educators and other staff members, volunteers, visitors and that input from all should be considered in the development of the Bullying Prevention and Implementation Plan in cooperation with the Catholic School Council.

6. Requirements

- 6.1 The Director of Education shall:
 - 6.1.1 issue administrative procedures to support this policy and amend them thereafter as the need may arise;
 - 6.1.2 ensure that the Board establishes a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for DCDSB schools, which they must implement.

- 6.1.3 put in place curriculum-linked culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy training strategies on bullying prevention and intervention to provide administrators, educators, and other school staff the resources and support they need to disrupt and dismantle systemic barriers and to address all forms of bullying.
 - 6.1.4 actively communicate this policy and its attendant procedure on bullying prevention and intervention to students, parents/guardians/caregivers, educators and other school staff, school councils, volunteers, and school bus operators/drivers; and
 - 6.1.5 determine the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community to be clearly articulated and understood.
- 6.2 Monitoring and Review Process
- 6.2.1 DCDSB has established a monitoring and review process to determine the effectiveness of our bullying prevention and intervention policies and procedures.
- 6.3 Safe School Teams
- 6.3.1 Each DCDSB school must have in place a Safe Schools Team responsible for fostering a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate. The Safe Schools Team must be comprised of members as outlined in PPM 144 Bullying Prevention and Intervention.

7. Sources

- 7.1 [Education Act](#)
- 7.2 [Safe and Accepting Schools Act, 2012](#)
- 7.3 [Ontario Regulation 472/07 Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils](#)
- 7.4 [PPM 128 – Provincial Code of Conduct](#)
- 7.5 [PPM 144 – Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy](#)
- 7.6 [PPM 145 – Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour Policy](#)
- 7.7 [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

8. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

- 8.1 [Code of Conduct Policy \(PO610\)](#)
- 8.2 [Code of Conduct Administrative Procedure \(AP610-1\)](#)
- 8.3 [Student Discipline Policy \(PO611\)](#)
- 8.4 [Student Discipline Administrative Procedure \(AP611-1\)](#)
- 8.5 [Bullying Prevention and Intervention Administrative Procedure \(AP612-1\)](#)