

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan Guidelines for John Caldwell School

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

Objectives of these Guidelines

- All administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school guidelines are on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All students and parents should know what the school guidelines are on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

What Is Bullying?

A person who engages in bullying behaviour intentionally hurts another person through words or **actions** which may or may not be repeated. Bullying is about using power over another person.

Bullying can be:

- **Social** - leaving out others from the group; spreading gossip or rumors about others, making others look foolish, making sure others do not spend time with a certain person.
- **Verbal/Emotional** -name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, mocking, hurtful teasing, embarrassing or threatening, making people do things they do not want to do, being unfriendly, excluding, and tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures).
- **Physical** -shoving, spitting on, pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence. (any form of violence) damaging or stealing another person's property.
- **Racist**-includes treating people badly because of their racial or ethnic background, saying bad things about a cultural background, calling someone racist names or telling racist jokes.

- **Sexual-includes leaving someone out; treating them badly, or making them feel uncomfortable because of their sex; making sexist comments or jokes; touching, pinching or grabbing someone in a sexual way; making crude comments about someone's sexual behaviour or orientation; or spreading a sexual rumour.**
- **Homophobic - bullying behaviours that are motivated by prejudice against a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.**
- **Religious-includes treating people badly because of their religious background or beliefs, making negative comments about a religious background or belief, calling someone names or telling jokes based on his or her religious beliefs in an effort to hurt them.**
- **Disability-includes leaving someone out or treating them badly because of a disability, making someone feel uncomfortable, or making jokes to hurt someone because of a disability.**
- **Cyber-the use of cell phones, instant messaging, e-mail, chat room or social networking sites to single out, harass, threaten or intimidates another person(s)**

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who **engage in bullying behaviour** need to learn different ways of behaving. **Bullying falls under the category of serious misconduct in the New Brunswick Education Act, which means that it is viewed by the school as extreme and unacceptable. All school staff is expected to respond to bullying behaviour when they witness it or are made aware of it.**

The entire school community has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issue of bullying.

Role of School Staff in Bullying Prevention and Intervention

- **All staff has a responsibility to ensure the safety of our students in the school building, while also making best efforts to ensure all students have a positive connection with the school.**
- **Staff will model exemplary behavior to ensure high standards of personal and social behavior that is expected from our students.**
- **Staff will be aware of signs and other possible indicators that a student is being targeted.**
- **Staff will take any reports of bullying behaviour seriously by thanking students for reporting and by giving support to the student/students affected.**

- **Staff will have a complete understanding of what bullying behaviour is and how a student feels when targeted.**
- **Staff will report any and all cases of bullying behaviour to school administration.**

Role of Students

- **Students will not become involved in any type of bullying behaviour.**
- **Students will intervene when witnessing a bullying incident taking place, unless it is unsafe to do so. If it is unsafe to intervene, a school staff member will be advised immediately to ensure safety of students. Some examples of intervening are: students can create a distraction to stop the bullying behaviour, they can show their disapproval either verbally or in their gestures/body language, they can ask the targeted student to leave the area.**
- **Students are expected to generally be positive and supportive school citizens where they treat each other with kindness, respect and understanding.**

Role of Parents

Even though many bullying incidences occur during school hours, it is not strictly a school problem - it is a community problem. Parents have a responsibility to support the school and teach and model respectful behavior. If parents are aware of any suspected bullying incidences, they are to report them to the school to ensure the safety of their child or any other child that may be affected. Any and all reported bullying will be taken seriously and there will be a follow up to ensure the matter was dealt with.

As a parent:

- **Know who your child's friends are**
- **Be a positive role model**
- **Be there for your child, show them that you take their concerns seriously. Show and give emotional support.**
- **If you are reporting a bullying incident, leave a message at the school identifying whose parent you are and leave as much detail as you feel comfortable sharing about why you are calling. If you would like a call back, make sure to mention that in your message.**
- **Set boundaries for your child's technology use. Know their passwords and what internet sites they frequent. Know the friends they have on social media and be a friend yourself on those sites.**
- **Create a safe environment for your children to tell you about being bullied. Many times, children are embarrassed to tell their parents what happened, thinking their parents will blame them.**

- **Do your best to communicate effectively with school staff and to approach the communication in a supportive, problem-solving manner.**
- **Remember that as a school we are bound by confidentiality. Therefore, if you make inquiries about a child other than your own, we cannot share that information.**

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is being bullied. Adults and students should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- * is frightened of walking to or from school
- * doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- * begs to be driven to school
- * changes their usual routine
- * is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- * begins skipping school/classes
- * becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- * starts stuttering
- * attempts self-injury/threatens suicide or runs away
- * cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- * feels ill in the morning
- * begins to do poorly in schoolwork
- * comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- * has possessions go "missing"
- * asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the person who bullies)
- * has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- * has unexplained cuts or bruises
- * comes home starving
- * becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- * is bullying other children or siblings
- * stops eating
- * is frightened to say what's wrong
- * is visibly upset after being on the computer or receiving text/phone messages
- * makes excuses for any of the above

These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

The Important Role of the Bystander

What is a Bystander?

- A person who knows that bullying is happening or has happened. There are two kinds of **bystanders**: one that is helpful and one that is not. For example, helpful bystanders may choose to get help from an adult. A bystander that is not helpful may choose to ignore the bullying, watch it silently, laugh, make comments, etc. **In fact, if a bystander chooses to assist or encourage the bullying behaviour to continue, that is considered bullying too.**

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

- Bystanders need skills to respond positively and safely to be part of the solution.
- **Research shows that when bystanders intervene, they can stop bullying within 10 seconds over half the time.**

Support for Bystanders:

- Guidance, social worker, administration, or teacher(s) will meet with small groups of students who are involved as bystanders to provide education about their role as a bystander in a bullying situation.
- Any recording of a bullying incident will be dealt with by administration.
- **Students will be reminded that assisting or encouraging the bullying behaviour to continue is considered to be engaging in bullying behaviour and that there will be consequences for such actions.**

School Procedures to Address Bullying Incidents

1. Report all bullying incidents to staff.
2. **In all cases** of bullying, the incidents will be recorded by appropriate staff **and stored.**
3. **In all cases, parents will be informed of the incident and depending on the severity and frequency of the bullying behaviour parents may be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.**
4. The bullying behavior or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying **behaviour** stopped quickly.
5. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
6. **Every effort** will be made to help the students who are **engaging in bullying behaviour** change their behavior.
7. **Every effort will be made to restore the targeted student's sense of safety and belonging within the school environment.**

Outcomes

- 1. Outcomes will focus on providing positive and proactive solutions that aim to prevent the possibility of future reoccurrences.**
- 2. Depending on the severity and frequency of the bullying behaviour, suspension may be considered.**
- 3. If possible, the students will respect each other and/or make peace. (mediation)**
- 4. After the incident(s) has been investigated and addressed, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying behaviour does not take place.**
- 5. Follow-up will be provided to the person who reported the bullying as well as to the parties involved in the bullying incident and their parents/guardians. Follow-up will make all parties aware that the situation was addressed and that prevention measures/supports have been put into place to ensure that the bullying behaviour is not repeated. Information will not include any specific details about someone else's child as the school is unable to release that information to you.**

How We Will Measure the Effectiveness of this Plan:

- Tell Them From Me survey data.**
- Other kinds of formative feedback from students, school staff, PSSC members, community, etc. through think-tanks, classroom meetings, home/school events, etc.**
- Number of incident reports related to bullying will be tracked and evaluated.**
- Adjustments/amendments to this plan will be made according to the evaluation outcomes achieved and not achieved.**