Renfrew County Catholic District School Board

SAfe Schools –Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

### RCCDSB Vision Statement: INSPIRED BY OUR RICH HERITAGE AND CHALLENGED BY THE STRUGGLES OF OUR PAST, WE ARE AN INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY CALLED TO EXPRESS OUR MISSION AS CHURCH TO PASS ON THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST, TO MAKE IT RELEVANT IN THE WORLD TODAY, AND TO BE THE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

#### IN A SPIRIT OF FREEDOM, AFFIRMATION AND CELEBRATION TODAY, WE STRIVE TO…

* Facilitate an active faith journey rooted in prayer and the sacraments.
* Enhance relationships among members of the home, school, parish and extended community.
* Foster a world view shaped by the Catholic conversation about life’s meaning and purpose.
* Nurture the giftedness, self-worth and potential of each individual.
* Reverence the dignity of the whole person.
* Integrate the Catholic faith tradition in a critical analysis of the arts, media and technology.
* Sustain safe school environments characterized by warmth, hospitality, good humour and joy.

#### OPEN TO MYSTERY AND ENDLESS DISCOVERY IN THE LORD, WE ARE CALLED TO…

* Develop and implement a distinctive Catholic curriculum based on the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.
* Make a difference as faith-filled community builders. Challenge the consumer culture with lives dedicated to the principles of social justice in the spirit of gospel values.
* Model a servant leadership style following the example of Jesus.
* Claim our role as global stewards cherishing the environment and all life in it.
* Engage in the pursuit of life-long learning.
* Love unconditionally.

***This is what Yahweh asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God.***

 *Micah 6:8*

**Safe Schools**

**We believe that every member of our board community is created in the image of God, and is a child of God.**

**We believe that each member of our board community should be treated with reverence, respect and dignity.**

**We believe that each member of our board community has the right to attend school safely.**

At the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board, we believe that our schools should be places that emphasize Catholic social and moral beliefs, responsibility, respect, and academic excellence in a positive school climate. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted.

All students, parents/guardians, teachers, other staff members, trustees, volunteers, visitors, parish and community members have the right to be safe, and to feel safe, in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to contribute to a positive school climate.

As a part of the living out of these beliefs and the Board Vision Statement, the RCCDSB and its schools focus on prevention, early intervention and progressive discipline as the keys to maintaining a positive school environment in which students can learn and teachers can teach.

## Education, Awareness and Outreach

The Ministry of Education provides school boards with definitions and expectations that must be considered when creating board plans. The Education Act, PPM 128, PPM 144, and PPM 145 provide direction as to code of conduct expectations, bullying prevention and intervention and progressive discipline.

**Bullying Is Defined as (from** [**PPM 144**](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.pdf)**)**

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.

**Bullying**

(1.0.0.1) For the purposes of the definition of “bullying” in subsection (1), behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

**Cyber-bullying**

(1.0.0.2) For the purposes of the definition of “bullying” in subsection (1), 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.

Aggressive behaviour may be intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect. It can take many forms, including physical, verbal, and social. If aggressive behaviour is physical, it may include hitting, pushing, slapping, and tripping. If it is verbal, it may include name calling, mocking, insults, threats, and sexist, racist, homophobic, or transphobic comments. If it is social, or relational, aggression, it is more subtle and may involve such behaviours as gossiping, spreading rumours, excluding others from a group, humiliating others with public gestures or graffiti, and shunning or ignoring. Social aggression may also occur through the use of technology (e.g., spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of e-mail, cell phones, text messaging, Internet websites, social networking, or other technology).

There are many Myths and REalities Connected with Bullying behaviour.

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| **Myth** | **Fact** |
| Bullying does not cause any serious harm. | Bullying is associated with a range of physical and mental health problems, as well as suicide, educational problems, antisocial problems, and relationship problems. |
|  Children who are victimized need to stand up and fight back. | Encouraging children who are victimized to fight back may, in fact, makes the bullying interaction worse. We know that when children use aggressive strategies to manage bullying situations, they tend to experience prolonged and more severe bullying interactions as a result (Mahady Wilton, Craig, & Pepler, 2000). |
|  Only a small number of children have problems with bullying. | Approximately 12% of girls and 18% of boys reported bullying others at least twice in previous months, whereas 15% of girls and 18% of boys reported being victimized at least twice over the same time period (Craig & Harel, 2004) These figures suggest that in a classroom of 35 students, between 4 and 6 children are bullying and/or are being bullied. Many more children observe bullying and know that it is going on. At some point, the majority of children will engage in some form of bullying and experience some form of victimization. A small minority of children will have frequent, long-lasting, serious, and pervasive involvement in bullying and/or victimization (Craig & Pepler, 2003). |
|  Bullying is a school problem. | Bullying occurs wherever children gather to live, learn, or play. As such, the majority of bullying tends to occur in the classroom, on the school playground, and on the school bus where children are most often together. Although bullying tends to occur in school, we know that bullying is a community problem, not just a school problem. As the primary institution in children’s lives, schools can play a leadership role in addressing bullying problems. |

All examples taken from the Prevnet website-for more information, follow This [link](http://prevnet.ca/BullyingFacts/FactsandMyths/tabid/121/Default.aspx) to The PrEvNEt Website. This [webpage](http://safeatschool.ca/index.php?q=plm/bullying-prevention/interrupting-bullying/simple-strategies/is-it-conflict-or-is-it-bullying-whats-the-difference) contains some questions which help to distinguish the difference between bullying and conflict. This [activity](http://safeatschool.ca/index.php?q=plm/bullying-prevention/interrupting-bullying/simple-strategies/conflict-resolution-versus-bullying-prevention-worksheet) contains case studies with can help with Determining next steps.

**Bullying–how is it different from conflict, aggression, teasing?**

**It can be challenging to distinguish between conflict, teasing, fighting and bullying. One distinguishing characteristic is the presence of a power imbalance.**





**Conflict: If two people or groups of people are struggling to get along, but the power balance appears to be equal, this is more likely to be considered a conflict.**



**Bullying: If one person or a group of people is exerting their power over another person, a power imbalance exists, and this may be a situation of bullying.**

**A whole school approach and a positive school climate are essential for student achievement and well-being.**

**What are factors that contribute to a safe, inclusive, caring and accepting school climate?**

Students, staff members, and parents feel safe, and are safe, included, and accepted.

All members of the school community demonstrate respect, fairness, and kindness in their interactions, building healthy relationships that are free from discrimination and harassment.

Students are encouraged and given support to be positive leaders and role models in their school community.

Open and ongoing dialogue takes place between the principal, staff members, families, and students. All partners are actively engaged.

The learning environment, instructional materials, and teaching and assessment strategies reflect the diversity of all learners.

Every student is inspired and given support to succeed in an environment of high expectations.

Bullying prevention and awareness-raising strategies for students and staff are reinforced through curriculum-linked programs.

(Indicators take from [PPM 144](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.pdf))

**Safe schools Teams**

Each school in the RCCDSB forms a ‘Safe Schools Team’. This team, which might consist of staff, students, family members and members from community at large, is formed to assist schools in celebrating their strengths when it comes to safer schools and preventative measures, and also to help identify areas of need. It may also be known as the ‘Safe and Caring Schools Team’ or the ‘Safe Schools Team’.

Each year, part of the mandate of the Safe Schools Team is the development and review of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan which is outlined in the following pages. The team will look at the strengths and needs of their school, through the use of data generated from student and parent surveys, as well as anecdotal reports, and develop an ‘Action Plan’ for Bullying Prevention and Intervention specific to their school. (**see School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Planning Template**)

The Action Plan will identify Proactive/Preventative Initiatives, Responsive/Intervention Initiatives, Learning Opportunities, Monitoring and Areas of Responsibility and an Evaluation Cycle for the Action Plan. The Action Plan should be reviewed at the same time as the School Improvement Plan for Student Achievement is reviewed.

## Bias-Free and Equitable Approaches to Safe Schools

In 2004, the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops stated “the right of each student to be free of harassment, violence or malice in speech or action is unequivocal and schools carry the clear obligation to provide a positive school environment for all students and staff” (Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2004, p. 10). We are called to ensure that approaches to bullying and other negative behaviors, and the consequences that result, are without bias. Biases that must be taken into consideration include: race, gender, culture, socio-economic status, and ability. It is important that principals and staff consider and review bias when deciding responses to individual situations. Documents that may help to support these decisions include:

[Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf)

[Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/caring_safe_school.pdf)

[Supporting Bias-Free Progressive Discipline in Schools](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/SupportResGuide.pdf)

**When making decisions about student behaviour and follow-up actions, schools must consider mitigating factors. These include:**

* The student does not have the ability to control his or her behaviour.
* The student does not have the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour.
* The student’s continuing presence in the school does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any person.

**Other Factors to Be Taken into Account**

* the student’s history;
* whether a progressive discipline approach has been used with the student;
* whether the activity for which the student may be or is being suspended or expelled was related to any harassment of the student because of his or her race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender, or sexual orientation or any other harassment;
* how the suspension or expulsion would affect the student’s ongoing education;
* the age of the student;
* in the case of a student for whom an Individual Education Plan (IEP) has been developed: whether the behaviour was a manifestation of a disability identified in the student’s individual education plan;
* whether appropriate individual accommodation has been provided;
* whether the suspension or expulsion is likely to result in an aggravation or worsening of the student’s behaviour or conduct.

Ongoing interventions and supports may need to be revisited and/or readjusted to sustain and promote positive student behaviour and/or address underlying causes. Interventions for students with an IEP might include changing accommodations. (Information taken from ‘*Supporting Bias-Free Progressive Discipline in Ontario’* Ministry of Education 2013)

## Proactive/Preventative Initiatives

Focusing on prevention is critical and should be an ongoing effort. Fostering a positive learning and teaching environment that supports academic achievement and well-being for all students will help reduce the potential for incidents of discrimination, harassment and bullying. The following items are examples which schools may choose to put in place to prevent bullying behavior. These initiatives may include students, staff, families, parish members and the community.

**Teaching and modeling of skill(s) explicitly**

Teaching a school-wide, common problem-solving model

Teaching positive self-talk

Consistent check-ins with students (i.e. How are things going?)

Co-construct demonstrations of positive behaviour (e.g. what does it look like, sounds like and feel like?)

Staff modeling of positive attributes

Bi-monthly Student Success-style meetings

Daily quotes on announcements/ TV monitor

Explicit teaching of vocabulary

Mentorship

Guest speakers (i.e. visits with Parish Priest)

Participation-PINK Day for Peace and Prosperity

School-wide activities during Bullying Prevention and Awareness Week (third week of November)

Integrating character education/bullying prevention into curriculum lessons

Proactive learning programs such as:

Second Step

Bucket Filling

TRIBES

PALS

WITS

DARE

Our Hidden Heroes

Future Aces

PBIS

Peer Mediation

SWPBS

**Providing opportunities to practice skill(s)**

Role play

Cooperative group work

Scenarios

Scripting/rehearsing hard conversations

Community service hours

Social action projects

Discussing appropriate behaviour prior to a specific event (e.g. audience behaviour, recess behaviour)

Unstructured social time (e.g. lunch, recess, extra-curricular activities)

**Providing feedback on the demonstration of skill(s)**

Specific, timely comments to individual/group

Revisiting co-constructed demonstrations for self-reflection

Revisiting positive behaviours and highlighting next steps

**Encouraging engagement and voice**

Co-constructing criteria for focus area (e.g. bullying prevention resources)

Providing leadership opportunities-Student-led activities on the yard, Safe Schools Teams

Supporting extracurricular activities

Focus group discussions

Parent and community evenings

Providing opportunities for choice

Social action projects

Anti-Bullying Committee

**Teaching generalization of skill(s)**

Providing opportunities for practice in a variety of settings (scaffolding)

Using prompts and cues

Dealing with challenging emotions

Scripting of a hard conversation (ex. Restorative letter)

Providing and anticipating opportunities for practice

Self monitoring

Goal setting

Reflection

**Reinforcing strengths**

Discussing and re-visiting focus areas for improvement

Positive communication home (e.g. postcards, phone calls)

Thank you notes

Bulletin board

Self monitoring

Goal setting

Reflection

**Celebrating successes**

Monthly assemblies

Announcements

TV/monitor messages

Postcards

Social gathering

Bulletin board display

Character certificate

Mass

## Responsive/Intervention Measures

## focus on restorative mindset, not a punitive approach. how you do it is just as important as what you do. consider mitigating circumstances.

As a Catholic school board, we believe that we must seek to restore damaged and injured situations and relationships, and that we are able to seek forgiveness for our acts. Support must be provided to the victims of bullying, the bully and any bystanders who might have witnessed or have been impacted by the bullying.

Interventions and supports should be evidence-informed, timely and take a whole-school approach and should be presented in a spirit of reconciliation. Early and ongoing intervention can also help prevent inappropriate behaviour from escalating. Students can also be offered alternatives like volunteer activities or career counselling to help encourage positive behaviour, and engage and motivate students. Career counselling, for example, can help students set goals and develop a career path.

The RCCDSB believes strongly in the principles of restorative practices, and in progressive discipline. [PPM 145](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.pdf) outlines the Ministry of Education’s expectations with regard to student behaviour. When a student behaves inappropriately, principals will consider mitigating factors like the student's age, the circumstances of the behaviour, and the student's history before determining the most appropriate way to respond to each situation. They will consider a range of options to address the behaviour and help the student learn from his or her choices.

These options could include:

A meeting with parents

Counselling

Anger management counselling

Withdrawal of privileges, such as participation in a field trip or sporting event

Suspension

Recommending expulsion from the student's school or all schools within the board.

Students who are suspended for more than five days, or who are expelled from all schools in the board will now be given more opportunities to keep learning, as outlined in [PPM 141](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/141.pdf) and [PPM 142](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/142.pdf).

## Responsive/Intervention Measures

The following items are examples which schools may choose to put in place when responding to and intervening with bullying behavior. These initiatives may include students, staff, families, parish members and the community. We choose to focus on developing resilience for all involved in bullying situation and to emphasize reconciliation and restoration.

**Teaching and modeling of skill(s) explicitly**

Guidance/counseling

Outside community resources

Mentorship

Use of restorative justice questions

Empathy training

Problem-solving

Self awareness

Self regulation

Use of consistent language

Teaching anger management skills

Integrating bullying intervention into curriculum lessons

Second Step

PALS

WITS

Anti-Bullying Committee

**Providing opportunities to practice skill(s)**

Leadership roles

Peer mediation

Scenarios

Scripting/rehearsing hard conversations

Reviewing appropriate behaviour after a specific event (e.g. audience behaviour, recess behavior)

**Providing feedback on the demonstration of skill(s)**

Community/classroom circles

Follow-up/re-connecting

**Encouraging engagement and voice**

Reflection forms (office and classroom)

Focus on student-generated solutions

**Teaching generalization of skill(s)**

Reflection forms (office and classroom)

Use of consistent language ("over learning")

Predicting possible outcomes when problem-solving

Using prompts and cues

Self monitoring

Goal setting

Reflection

Providing extended opportunities for practice

**Reinforcing strengths**

Encouragement

Allowing time and support for improvement

Self monitoring

Goal setting

Reflection

**Celebrating successes**

Positive phone calls home

Monthly assemblies

Announcements

TV/monitor messages

Postcards

Social gatherings

Bulletin boards

Character certificates

Sacrament of reconciliation

## Learning Opportunities

The following items are examples which schools may identify as learning opportunities when planning how to help to students, staff, families, parish members and the community to prevent bullying, identify bullying and intervene in bullying. These examples may also involve the development of resilience and strategies for all children to use.

**Student:**

School announcements

Bulletin boards/visual reminders

Leadership roles, e.g. student council

Extracurricular activities

Support groups

Social skills training groups

**Staff:**

Staff meetings

Emails

Continual staff input from all employee groups

PD at EPCI, CIL-M, grades 7-9 PLCs

Attendance at conferences

Work with School Attendance Counsellors and outside agencies (Phoenix, MHAN, ATS)

Mental Health Lead

**Parents:**

Newsletters (paper/electronic)

School web site

Phone calls

School signs

Parent evenings

School council

Parent Involvement Committee

**Parish/Community:**

School signs

Newsletters

Inclusion of Parish Priest on Safe Schools Team

Media invitation

Use of Social Media-Twitter

## Monitoring

The following items are examples which schools may identify as methods to use when considering how they might monitor the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Action Plan that they have developed. Monitoring can be done both formally and informally.

Observations

Anecdotal reports

Reinforcements and celebrations

Focus groups

Extracurricular participation

Parental engagement and surveys

Office referral/reflection form

Success criteria

Attendance

Suspension and Expulsion Data

Learning skills data

School Climate Surveys (i.e. Tell Them From Me Survey, Ministry School Climate Survey, other)

External data sources

## Resources

The following items are examples of resource which schools may choose to use or access when learning more about bullying behavior. These policies, materials and programs may be relevant for students, staffs, families, parish members and the community.

***Renfrew County Catholic District School Board-Safe Schools***

To report bullying issues, or to request support in your school, please email:

safeschools@rccdsb.edu.on.ca

[Safe Schools Website](http://safeschools.rccdsb.edu.on.ca/)

Follow us on Twitter:

@RCCsafeschools

***Renfrew County Catholic District School Board Policy***

[Schools and Students Policies and Procedures](http://rccdsb.edu.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Schools-Students-Policies-Procedures%2824-Jun-13%29.pdf)

***Ministry of Education Documents and Policy***

The Provincial Code of Conduct [PPM 128](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/128.pdf)

Suspensions [PPM 141](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/141.pdf)

Expulsions [PPM 142](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/142.pdf)

Bullying Prevention and Intervention [PPM 144](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.pdf)

Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour [PPM 145](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/145.pdf)

[Supporting Bias-Free Progressive Discipline in Ontario 2013](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/SupportResGuide.pdf)

[Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students with Special Education Needs through Progressive Discipline, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2010](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/caring_safe_school.pdf)

[Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/equity.pdf)

[Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/fnmiframework.pdf)

[English Language Learners: ESL and ELD Programs and Services, 2007](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/esleldprograms/esleldprograms.pdf)

[Bullying Information for Parents](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/safeschools.html)

**Curriculum Documents**

Religious Education Curriculum 2012

Family Life Curriculum 2012

**Further information on Bullying, Prevention and Intervention**

* [RCCDSB Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan Overview Brochure](http://safeschools.rccdsb.edu.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/34/2013/06/Bullying-Brochure.pdf)
* <http://prevnet.ca/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>
* <http://www.stopbullying.gov/>
* <http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/kids-enfants/bullying-intimidation/prevention-eng.php>
* [www.cyberbullying.us](http://www.cyberbullying.us)
* [www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)
* [www.stopcyberbullying.org/parents](http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/parents)
* [www.bewebaware.ca](http://www.bewebaware.ca)
* <http://www.witsprogram.ca/>
* <http://www.futureaces.org/>
* <http://tribes.com/>
* [Our Hidden Heroes](http://tc2.ca/teaching-resources/online-resource-collections/our-hidden-heroes.php)

**Local Resources**

Your local parish [Parish Directory](http://www.pembrokediocese.com/site/index.php?option=com_mtree&task=listcats&cat_id=54&Itemid=53&lang=english)

Phoenix Centre for Families and Children <http://www.phoenixpembroke.com>

Kids Help Phone <http://kidshelpphone.ca/Kids/Home.aspx>

Mental Health Crisis Line <http://www.crisisline.ca/home.htm>

Crimestoppers <http://www.valleytips.ca/>