



<b>NUMBER:</b>	SC: 18
<b>EFFECTIVE:</b>	Jan. 29, 2008
<b>AMENDED:</b>	Feb. 9/10 Feb. 26/12 Nov. 1, 2022
<b>RELATED POLICIES:</b>	See References
<b>REPEALS:</b>	
<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	2027-2028

**1.0 OBJECTIVE:**

- 1.1 To ensure that the school environment is one of respect, dignity and trust, consistent with the Gospel Values.
- 1.2 To develop and implement comprehensive board-wide bullying prevention strategies.
- 1.3 To develop and implement comprehensive board-wide intervention strategies to address incidents of bullying.
- 1.4 To empower all students and the entire school community to create schools free from bullying.

**2.0 DEFINITIONS:**

- 2.1 **“Bullying”** is defined in the Education Act and Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (“PPM”) 144 as 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.

For the purposes of the definition of “bullying” as detailed above, behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

- 2.2 **Cyber-bullying** for the purposes of the definition of “bullying” as detailed above, includes bullying by electronic means, commonly known as cyber-bullying, including:
- a) creating a web page, blog, social media account or post 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;
  - c) communicating material (text messages, on chat platforms or other social media platforms) electronically, to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals; and
  - d) filming or taking pictures of an individual and posting them without their consent.
- 2.3 **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).
- 2.4 **School Climate**, according to the Ministry of Education PPM 144, is defined as 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, included, and accepted, and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. Principles of equity and inclusive education are embedded in the learning environment to support a positive school climate and a culture of mutual respect. A positive school climate is a crucial component of bullying prevention.

### **3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

- 3.1 Bullying behaviours contradict the Gospel values, which are centered in the teachings of Christ. Accordingly, the Board believes that all forms of bullying are unacceptable behaviours.
- 3.2 Bullying adversely affects students’ ability to learn.
- 3.3 Bullying adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate.
- 3.4 Bullying adversely affects a school’s ability to educate its students.

- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 The Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board is committed to principles of equity and inclusive education, consistent with our Catholic teachings, which value and promote human rights and social justice in all Board policies, programs, guidelines, operations and practices.

**4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES:**

- 4.1 The Board shall ensure that a comprehensive bullying prevention strategy is developed and implemented that includes expectations for appropriate student behaviour.
- 4.2 The Board shall ensure that a comprehensive intervention strategy is developed and implemented to address incidents of bullying, including appropriate and timely responses. Intervention should be done in ways that are consistent with a progressive discipline approach as set out within the Board's Student Discipline Policy and supporting Procedures.
- 4.3 The Board shall ensure that procedures are developed and implemented that allow students and members of the school community to report incidents of bullying behaviour safely and in accordance with Board policy, procedure, legislation and Ministry Policy/Program Memorandum.
- 4.4 Board employees who work directly with students, including administrators, teachers and non-teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth work, psychology, and related areas, and educational assistants) must respond to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate in accordance with the Student Discipline Policy and Procedure. Such inappropriate behaviour may involve bullying.
- 4.5 Principals must suspend a student for bullying and consider referring that student for expulsion if (1) the student has previously been suspended for bullying, and (2) the student's continuing presence in the school creates, in the principal's opinion, an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person. When both of these conditions are met, the principal must suspend the student and consider referring the student for an expulsion hearing. Principals must also suspend a student, and consider referring that student for expulsion, for any incident under subsection 306(1) of the Education Act, including bullying, motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor (e.g., socio-economic status, appearance). Incidents of bullying involving students from junior kindergarten to grade 3 should be addressed with the appropriate positive behaviour supports in the school setting.

- 4.6 The Board must establish a bullying prevention and intervention plan for the schools of the Board, and must require that all schools implement the board's plan in accordance with the Education Act and regulations. (Appendix A)
- 4.7 The Board shall provide or make available programs, interventions, and other supports for students who have been bullied, students who have witnessed incidents of bullying, and students who have engaged in bullying. The programs, intervention, and other supports may be provided by psychologists or other professionals who have training in similar fields, either internally or through community-based services providers as determined by the Board.
- 4.8 The Board shall put in place professional development for all principals, vice-principals, teachers, and non-teaching staff (including staff in mental health, child and youth work, psychology and related areas, and educational assistants). The professional development must include ways of responding to bullying motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor (e.g., socio-economic status, appearance), that is consistent with equity education on cultural sensitivity, respect for diversity, and special education needs.
- 4.9 The Board shall actively communicate its policy and procedures on bullying prevention and intervention to students, parents, teachers and other school staff, school councils, volunteers, and school bus operators/drivers. The roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community shall be clearly articulated and understood.
- 4.10 Each school must have in place a safe and accepting schools team responsible for fostering a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate that should include at least one student and must include at least one parent, one teacher, one non-teaching staff member, one community partner, and the principal. An existing school committee (e.g., sub-committee of the Catholic School Advisory Council or school emergency response team) can assume this role. The Chair of this team must be a staff member.

**5.0 RESPONSIBILITY:**

- 5.1 The administration of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy is the responsibility of the Director of Education or designate(s).
- 5.2 The Director of Education or designate shall establish and provide annual professional development programs to educate teachers and other school staff about bullying prevention and strategies for promoting a positive school climate, in accordance with the Education Act.
- 5.3 It is the responsibility of trustees, senior administration, principals, vice-principals, supervisors, staff and the school community to foster an environment of respect, dignity and trust.

- 5.4 All policies, procedures, guidelines, and practices of the Board shall promote the principles of bullying prevention.

**6.0 REVIEW AND EVALUATION:**

- 6.1 As part of the monitoring of this policy, the Board shall conduct anonymous school climate surveys of students, staff, and parents at least once every two years.
- 6.2 This policy shall be reviewed during the 2027-2028 review cycle.

**7.0 REFERENCES:**

Education Act R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2 Part XIII  
Behaviour, Discipline and Safety  
Ontario Regulation 181/98 Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils Ontario  
Ontario Regulation 472/07 Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils  
Ontario Regulation 440/20 Suspension of Elementary School Students (2020)  
Ministry of Education PPM No. 145 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour  
Ministry of Education PPM No. 119 Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools  
Ministry of Education PPM No. 120 Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education  
Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009  
Ministry of Education PPM No. 128 The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Code of Conduct  
Ministry of Education PPM No. 144 Bullying Prevention and Intervention, revised November 25, 2021  
Ontario First Nation, Metis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework English Language Learners: ESL and ELD Programs and Services

Related Board Policies and Procedures:

A: 12 Code of Ethics  
A: 14 Promoting and Supporting Equity & Inclusion within a Catholic Community  
A: 20 Transportation Policy/Procedures  
SC: 03 Acceptable Use of the Internet  
SC:04 Field Trips Policy/Procedure  
SC: 15 Code of Conduct  
ST: 05 Student Discipline Policy/Procedure  
H: 08 Workplace Harassment  
H: 19 Violence Prevention in the Workplace