



Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Westgate Collegiate and Vocational Institute

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Lakehead Public Schools is committed to the success of every student and values the contribution of students, staff, parents and the school community in creating a safe and caring learning environment. Through the promotion of Integrity, Acceptance, Responsibility, Empathy and Respect, Lakehead Public Schools values and embraces the physical, spiritual, emotional and intellectual diversity of our student population and community. We acknowledge the importance of active collaboration with our students, their parents and family members and our community agencies as we each have a role and responsibility in the mental wellness continuum of care for our children and youth.

The Education Act requires school boards to develop a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and to require all of its schools to implement the plan. This document is intended to facilitate the School's implementation of the Board's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, with a view to promote a school-wide approach to ensuring a safe, inclusive and accepting school environment free of bullying, harassment, discrimination, and other inappropriate behaviours. The Board's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is based upon the Ministry of Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (the "Model Plan")¹ released January 29, 2013, and the requirements set out in this document have been taken directly from the Model Plan.

Westgate CVI recognizes that a whole-school approach to engaging the school community will help the school's efforts to address inappropriate behaviour. To this end, the school will utilise the following Ministry of Education definition of bullying in communications with the school community:

Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

- Students who bully are learning to use power and aggression to control and distress others
- Students who are victimized become increasingly powerless and find themselves trapped in relationships in which they are being abused
- Students use power in many ways:
 - Size, strength, intelligence, age
 - Social status
 - Economic status
 - Knowledge of another person's vulnerability

Types of Bullying Behaviour (may include, but are not limited to the following):

- **Physical:** Repeated hitting, kicking, shoving, or beating up another person
- **Property:** Repeated stealing, or damaging another person's property.
- **Verbal:** Repeated name-calling, mocking, humiliating, teasing, threatening, racist comments, and sexual harassment.
- **Social:** Repeated rolling of the eyes, excluding others from the group, gossiping, spreading rumours, making another person or persons look foolish, and damaging another person's friendships.
- **Electronic/Cyber:** The repeated use of email, cell phones, text, internet and web sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude or damage reputations or friendships
- **Racial:** Repeated aggression directed to a person or persons because of their religious beliefs or background; repeatedly saying negative things about a religious background or belief; repeatedly calling a person names or making fun of his/her religious beliefs or background.
- **Sexual:** Repeatedly leaving a person or persons out or treating them badly because of their gender; repeatedly making crude comments about a person or persons' sexual behaviour; repeatedly making sexist comments or jokes, touching, or grabbing someone in a sexual way; repeatedly spreading sexual rumours about a person or persons; repeatedly calling a person or persons gay, fag, lesbian, or other inappropriate names.
- **Ability:** Repeatedly excluding a person or persons or treating them badly because of an ability or need for special education; repeatedly making comments or jokes to hurt a person or persons with a disability
- **Homophobic:** The repeated ill treatment of another individual based on his/her sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation, including disclosure of someone else's sexual orientation. Ill treatment may include gossiping, physical or verbal aggression, physical or mental violence, obscene or sexualized gestures, or cyber harassment.

In its communication efforts, the school will:

- "Identify different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- Understand the myths and realities of bullying behaviour.
- Identify bullying and differentiate bullying from conflict, aggression and teasing.
- Understand power and peer dynamics.
- Identify how biases, prejudice and hate can lead to bullying.
- Identify different manifestations and underlying factors of bullying, such as body image, racism, sexism, homophobia, disability, etc.
- Understand a whole school approach and the essential importance of a positive school climate for student achievement and well-being.
- Develop awareness and understanding of the factors that contribute to a safe, inclusive, caring and accepting school climate.
- Identify ways to make students aware of how they can help prevent and address bullying.
- Identify strategies to engage parents in conversations about bullying prevention and how to promote a positive school climate.
- Reach out to parents and the broader school community.
- Reflect on relationships and interactions and focus on promoting healthy relationships using a variety of strategies.
- Become knowledgeable about community partners and resources available in the community.

EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE

The school recognizes that effective anti-bullying strategies must be evidence-based.³ The School will base its bullying interventions, strategies, practices and programs on evidence from the school climate surveys and other relevant information. The school will take the following steps to assess anti-bullying initiatives and strategies:

- 1) Evaluate the evidence to determine the main areas of concern, and identify issues in the physical environment, determine current procedures, and assess the strategies in place based on results of the school climate surveys and other relevant information
- 2) Identify children and youth involved in bullying (including the bully, the person being bullied, and those who may have witnessed or been affected by the bullying). The school will consider using a risk assessment approach in this process.
- 3) Review and update the School's strategies as a result of gathering new information and share with the school community.³

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| <p>EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND OUTREACH</p> <p>The school will also communicate and share with the school community, policies and procedures including the Board/school Code of Conduct, equity and inclusive education policy and guidelines for religious accommodations, procedures to address incidents of discrimination, progressive discipline approach, and bullying prevention and intervention plans and strategies.”⁴</p> <p>The school will endeavour to increase education, awareness and outreach by using the following best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • board/school websites and FB pages, signage and posters in the school and classrooms, other print materials • student handbooks and other forms of school-home-community communication (ie. newsletters) • information events and/or school initiatives (ie. anti-bullying days, white ribbon campaigns, guest speakers) • partnerships with community stakeholders (ie. CCTB, TBay Police, John Howard Society) • media coverage of school initiatives and stories <p>The School has identified the following strategies to engage parents in conversations about bullying prevention and how to promote a positive school climate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Council • Safe Schools Team • Restorative Practice Meetings | <p>PRE-EVALUATION STRATEGY</p> <p>Westgate’s main issues of concern raised by students in the 2017/18 COMPASS Survey of School Health (as administered by researchers at Waterloo University) are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21% of respondents reported being bullied • 10% of respondents admitted to have taken part in bullying others • 15% of respondents reported being verbally attacked; 8% reported being cyber-attacked; 4% reported being physically attacked <p>The school’s concerns raised in respect of the physical environment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • size of school and grounds, student population vs. staff population, supervision <p>The School’s current processes for reporting, response, support and following up on issues are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hierarchical approach beginning at teacher/classroom level. Progress to student services (including social work) and administration • involvement of parents (as required) and community supports (as required) • documentation (both formal and informal) • meetings, case conferences, counselling, restorative meetings (as appropriate) • Peer Mediation (‘On-Track’) Program <p>Based on a review of the COMPASS survey results and other relevant information, the following areas have shown success/ improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the past two school years, the Peer Mediation Program at Westgate has mediated over 900 conflicts with a 97% success rate • 1% of the suspensions levied in the 16-17 school year were for “bullying” (a 2% drop from the school year prior) • 79% of Westgate students reported feel safe at school <p>Based on the COMPASS survey and other relevant information, areas requiring improvement are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mental health needs. 26% of our students reported feeling ‘depressed’ most days in the last week • communication of supports. 13% of our students stated they wouldn’t know who to approach if they needed help <p>Based on the above, the School proposes the following action plan to address areas of concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff training with respect to obligations under PPMs 144, 145 and 119 • staff training with respect to restorative practices • staff training with respect to adolescent anxiety and depression • re-evaluation of referral processes, staff responses to situations and means of documentation • review of current supervision schedule | <p>PREVENTION</p> <p>The school recognizes that fostering a positive learning environment will help to reduce possible bullying, harassment, and discrimination incidents. The school is committed to taking steps to strengthen prevention measures.⁹</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of the Safe School Team (which will be communicated with the school community) are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “monitors and reviews school climate and recommends appropriate interventions/preventions as needed” (Policy 8071- section 6.6) • “use data related to bullying behaviours to monitor and review the effect of school bullying prevention programs” (Policy 8071- section 6.6) <p>Based on its evidence-based analysis, the School has identified the following practices and initiatives for bullying prevention:</p> <p>a. bullying prevention and intervention programs or activities that are evidence-informed and that address the needs identified by the Board or the School¹⁰:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progressive discipline and restorative practices • safety plans and/or behaviour support plans (for kids with behavioural difficulties) • counselling • Peer Mediation Program (‘On-Track) <p>b. relationship building and community building programs that are present in the school, classroom and in the larger community¹¹ :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • partnerships with community stakeholders (ie. CCTB, TBay Police) • guest speakers and information sessions/posters/ videos/displays • parent-teacher conferences, meetings and on-going communication • administration that is visible and accessible <p>c. activities that promote a positive school climate¹²:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • equity and inclusion initiatives, like anti-bullying campaigns • establishment of student groups, like the Gay-Straight Alliance and Wellness Ambassador Group • character development initiatives, like Spring-Up-to-Clean-Up and community volunteering (ie. Shelter House) • events promoting school pride, like Spirit Days and cultural activities (like pow-wows) • reinforcement of positive behaviours through means like “good news postcards, “VP recognition certificates,” intercom announcements and FB posts on student accomplishments <p>d. awareness raising strategies for students, e.g. social emotional learning, empathy, developing self-regulation skills¹³:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct (and student handbooks) • dialogues with and training of school staff, including but not limited to teachers, guidance counselors and administrators • restorative practice meetings • peer mediation • counselling opportunities (ie. anger management) and social work involvement • assemblies, direct teaching and modelling of pro-social behaviours • information events (ie. anti-homophobia days) and student activities (ie. Xmas Cheer, White Ribbon campaign) <p>e. awareness raising strategies to engage community partners and parents in early and ongoing dialogue¹⁴ :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school council meetings and information nights • case conferences and on-going communication with community stakeholders, like CCTB • FB page and home-school communication (ie. newsletters) <p>f. ways to link curriculum and daily learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • character education and direct teaching of social skills (social-emotional learning) • good citizenship activities (ie. building handicap ramps for the community; fixing bikes for underprivileged) • culturally diverse course content <p>g. ways to support and encourage role modeling by caring adults and student leaders within the School and school community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentoring opportunities (ie. phys ed students training special needs athletes for Special O) • leadership initiatives (ie. charitable fundraisers) and involvement in co-curricular clubs/groups • team-building activities (ie. partnerships with elementary Academies) and school initiatives (ie. Xmas Cheer) <p>The School has also identified the following learning and training opportunities for school staff and the school community that are needed¹⁵:</p> <p>Teaching and non-teaching staff should be aware of relevant legislation and their mandated obligations related to it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill 157 (school safety) • PPM 144 (bullying), PPM 145 (progressive discipline) and PPM 119 (equity and inclusion) • Progressive Discipline and Restorative Practices <p>The School will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide opportunities for regular check-ins with students at risk or affected by bullying; • provide opportunities for teachers to development effective classroom management strategies using progressive discipline; • establish and maintain respectful and caring classrooms; and, • align supervision plan to address where and when bullying happens, as identified through climate surveys¹⁶ |
| <p>POLICY AND PROCEDURES</p> <p>The school recognizes that a whole school approach and a strong policy and legislative framework are important for bringing widespread change.⁶ The school also recognizes that the goals of policy initiatives must address the areas of challenge identified in school climate surveys and other relevant data.⁷</p> <p>The School will actively communicate its policies, procedures and guidelines to the school community (including involving the school community in the review and/or development of policies, procedures and guidelines relating to bullying, discrimination and harassment)⁸, by taking the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student handbooks, school FB page, signage and posters • Safe Schools Team and School Council • on-going professional development (staff meetings, PD days) • grade assemblies and dialogues with students • recurring activities and events (ie. anti-bullying days) • home-school communication (ie. parents’ nights, newsletters, synrevoice) <p>The roles/responsibilities of the school community (students, staff, parents, and community members) are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate respect and model pro-social behaviours • raise awareness of bullying behaviour and its effects • resolve bullying issues in a timely and appropriate manner • employ Progressive Discipline and Restorative Practices | <p>POST-EVALUATION STRATEGY</p> <p>The school will reassess the results of subsequent school climate surveys to verify the efficacy of the anti-bullying initiatives implemented. The “post-evaluation phase gathers evidence to test the efficacy of the prevention, responses, interventions or supports provided in order for changes to be made, where necessary.”⁵</p> <p>Upon re-evaluation, the school will update the information in this Template to reflect the effectiveness of its anti-bullying initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • survey results from 16-17 to 17-18 show ‘no change’ with respect to bullying. • success rate of the Peer Mediation Program continues to be positive | <p>INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES</p> <p>The school recognizes the importance of using timely interventions and supports with a school-wide approach¹⁷. To this end, the school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use teachable moments within a ‘progressive discipline approach’ to address inappropriate behaviour, and consider mitigating and other factors; • have in place processes and strategies to identify and respond to bullying when it happens; • identify strategies for supporting all students involved in bullying; • communicate the ‘progressive discipline’ and ‘restorative practices’ approach to the school community and the procedures in place to support the student. <p>The school supports the use of the following evidence-informed interventions and support strategies in a timely manner and using a whole school approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly defined, communicated and enforced Code of Conduct • documentation (ie. “Safe Schools Incident Reporting Forms”) • modelling of positive attributes and behaviours and direct teaching of social skills (social-emotional learning) • progressive discipline and restorative practices • effective supervision schedules and on-going staff training • collaboration (ie. Safe Schools Team, social worker) and community partnerships (ie. TBay Police, CCTB) |
| <p>¹ Ministry of Education, “Working Draft: Safe and Accepting Schools Model Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan” January 2013, Queen’s Printer for Ontario, 2013, available online at: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/BullyingPreventPlan.pdf</p> <p>² <i>Supra</i> note 1, pgs.2-3. ¹⁰ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.4.</p> <p>³ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p. 3. ¹¹ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.4.</p> <p>⁴ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p. 3. ¹² <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.4.</p> <p>⁵ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p. 3. ¹³ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.4.</p> <p>⁶ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.3. ¹⁴ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.4.</p> <p>⁷ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.4. ¹⁵ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.3.</p> <p>⁸ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.3. ¹⁶ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.4.</p> <p>⁹ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.4. ¹⁷ <i>Supra</i> note 1, p.4.</p> | | |

