



REGULATIONS

SUBJECT: Bullying

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 is a dynamic of unhealthy interaction that occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance. It can take many forms, including but not limited to physical (hitting, pushing, tripping), verbal (name-calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist, or homophobic comments), or social (excluding others from a group, or spreading gossip or rumour). It may occur in person, or through the use of technology.

A power imbalance may underlie bullying as a result of real or perceived differences involving size, strength, age, intelligence, economic status, social status, solidarity of peer group, religion, ethnicity, disability, need for special education, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, and race.

A positive school climate is a crucial component of bullying prevention and is a shared responsibility. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted and free from discrimination and harassment. When the personal relationships within a school are founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, and modeled by all, a culture of respect becomes the norm. Character development initiatives and parent engagement are key components that support a positive school climate.

Schools that have bullying prevention and intervention strategies foster a positive learning and teaching environment that supports academic achievement for all students and that helps students reach their full potential. If students who are bullied, who bully others, or who witness bullying receive the necessary support, they can learn effective strategies for interacting positively with others and for promoting positive peer dynamics.

1. All employees of the Board must take seriously all allegations of bullying behaviour and act in a timely, sensitive, and supportive manner when responding to students who disclose or report bullying incidents.
2. It is the expectation of the Board that, provided that there is no immediate risk of physical harm to any individual, staff members who work directly with students on a regular basis, including administrators, teachers, educational assistants, native education workers, cultural support workers, tutor escorts, child and youth workers, psychologists, and speech and language pathologists, shall, in accordance with Board procedures, respond to any such inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour or any other behaviour that causes a negative school climate, which they have observed or heard during the course of their duties or otherwise while on school property or during a school related event. This includes bullying.
3. All employees of the board are required to report serious student incidents to the principal. These are incidents for which suspension or expulsion must be considered by the principal, as outlined in Appendix A.

Role Responsibilities*The Principal is responsible to:*

4. Lead the implementation of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan as outlined in these Regulations.
5. Actively communicate policies and procedures on bullying prevention and intervention, as well as the definition of bullying, to students, parents, teachers, and other school staff, school councils, volunteers, and school bus operators / drivers, as well as the expectations articulated in this document so that the responsibilities of all members of the school community are clearly understood.
6. Ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are responded to in an appropriate manner.
7. Contact the parents of students involved in bullying situations as appropriate under these regulations.
8. Conduct appropriate investigations into all bullying situations to ascertain the participants, their roles, situation dynamics, underlying factors, and any other aspects that are relevant to determining how best to proceed.
9. Determine appropriate disciplinary action or intervention based on the results of the investigation, applying the principles of progressive discipline and accessing available resources to support the students, whether they have been bullied, engaged in bullying, or have been affected by observing bullying. For a student with special education needs, interventions, supports, and consequences must be consistent with the student's strengths, needs, goals, and expectations outlined in his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP).
10. Inform Police and/or Family Services Agencies as required in the Protocol between the Police and the Lambton Kent District School Board.
11. Arrange for counseling through LKDSB psychological services department if appropriate or requested by victims or aggressors.
12. Take appropriate steps to ensure student safety depending on the severity of the incident. These may include implementing a safety plan; separating and supervising the students involved; providing staff support for students as necessary; developing supervision plans with the parents; and initiating a safe school transfer for placement of a student in another school or alternative program.

Staff are responsible to:

13. Take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene.
14. Document all incidents of bullying for which they have provided intervention.
15. Report the bullying to the school principal for further investigation if he or she believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists.
16. Report to Family Services Agencies as required in the Protocol between the Police and the Lambton Kent District School Board.

Students are responsible to:

17. Refrain from bullying behaviour, which 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.

18. Report incidents of bullying behaviour to the principal, teachers, or other school staff for further investigation.
19. Refuse to participate in circumstances involving bullying behaviour.
20. Remove themselves immediately from circumstances involving bullying behaviour.
21. Seek adult intervention for circumstances involving bullying behaviour.

Parents/Guardians are responsible to:

22. Inform the school should they become aware of circumstances involving bullying.
23. Partner with the school in dialogue regarding student achievement, behaviour and expectations in a manner that is open, courteous, and focused on student success.

Volunteers and Visitors are responsible to:

24. Inform the school should they become aware of circumstances involving bullying.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Planning

25. The Principal is responsible to:

- A. Form a Safe Schools team with responsibility for bullying prevention and intervention that is chaired by a staff member and composed of at least one student (where appropriate), one parent, one teacher, one support staff member, one community partner, and the principal. This responsibility may be assumed by an existing committee.
- B. Engage all members of the school community in committing to the initiative by:

Incorporating school-based bullying prevention and intervention plans as part of the School Improvement Plan inclusive of the following components and consistent with PPM 144 and Board policy:

- the definition of bullying
- prevention strategies
- intervention strategies
- training strategies for members of the school community
- communication and outreach strategies
- monitoring and review processes

Actively communicating policies and procedures on bullying prevention and intervention, as well as the definition of bullying, to students, parents, teachers, and other school staff, school councils, volunteers, and school bus operators / drivers - so that the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community be clearly understood

Making every effort to share this information with parents whose first language is a language other than English or French

- C. Conduct a school climate assessment through anonymous surveys of students, staff members, and parents every two (2) years.

D. Annually review and update the school's bullying prevention and intervention planning template based on the results of the school climate assessment and other measures as may be indicated. (Appendix B)

E. Determine appropriate next steps within the following three-part prevention / intervention framework.

Part One:

Global safeguarding of well-being and prevention of bullying; enhanced school climate through improved interpersonal relationships.

Target: All members of the school community

Focus: Strategies to educate, develop skills, and create shared understanding and reference points that include expectations for appropriate student behaviour

Elements:

- teaching strategies that support comprehensive intervention strategy focusing on healthy relationships by including bullying prevention throughout the curriculum in daily classroom teaching
- opportunities for all students to participate in bullying prevention training and leadership initiatives within their own school
- social skills instruction
- establishment and ongoing reinforcement of group norms
- an effective school-wide behaviour plan incorporating a well-defined bullying response protocol that includes appropriate and timely responses, consistent with a progressive discipline approach and procedures to allow students to report bullying incidents safely and in a way that will minimize the possibility of reprisal, with defined responsibilities for principals, teachers, parents, and students
- staff trained in pro-active supervision techniques, the identification of bullying dynamics, and the application of safe, effective intervention techniques

Part Two:

Provision of specific interventions

Target: Students who have been bullied, students who have bullied others, and students who have been affected by observing bullying

Focus: To support individual students, remediate behaviour, and heal relationships

Suggestions: Individual or small group sessions to address specific needs, involvement of parents, involvement of other professionally-trained staff as required, or involvement of community groups or agencies as deemed appropriate to the circumstances

Part Three:

Provision of significant interventions

Target: Students exhibiting significant or ongoing bully or victim behaviours, including those who have threatened or exhibited violent behaviour

Focus: To provide critical, broad-based individual support

Suggestions: Involvement of parents, safety plan, referral to psychological services, involvement of police services, involvement of community groups or agencies, or transfer of the student to a placement in another school or program.

F. Determine the effectiveness of the prevention and intervention policies and procedures via a monitoring and review process that will include analysis of the school climate through anonymous surveys of students, staff members, and parents provided by their schools on a regular cycle as determined by the board (every two (2) years).

26. The Board shall determine the effectiveness of the prevention and intervention policies and procedures via a monitoring and review process that will include performance indicators for monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating the effectiveness of the Board's bullying prevention and intervention policies.

Questions about supports for students

27. Boards must provide support for students who have been bullied, students who have bullied others, and students who have been affected by observing bullying.
28. If a parent or guardian is not satisfied with the supports that their child has received as a result of a bullying experience, their first point of contact is the school principal, to review the decisions made and the rationale for the supports identified. Every effort should be made to find resolution at this level.
29. If necessary as a subsequent step, parents should contact the board office and ask to speak with the appropriate superintendent of education. The superintendent of education will consult with the principal and parent and make recommendations as deemed appropriate, or make a final decision and communicate the decision to the principal and parent.

Implementation Date: November 26, 2002

Revised: February 1, 2008

Revised: January 26, 2010

Reference: Policy/Program Memorandum 144
Education Act

Appendix A:

Incidents for which suspension or expulsion must be considered by the principal and which must be reported to the principal by all board employees:

The purpose of reporting incidents of inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour is to ensure that the principal is aware of any activities taking place in the school for which suspension or expulsion must be considered.

Suspension Infractions:

1. Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person;
2. Possessing alcohol, illegal and/or restricted drugs;
3. Being under the influence of alcohol;
4. Swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority;
5. Committing an act of vandalism that causes damage to school or board property or to property located on the premises of the student's school;
6. Bullying;
7. Any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the moral tone of the school;
8. Any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the physical or mental well-being of any member of the school community; or
9. Any act considered by the principal to be contrary to the Board or school Code of Conduct.

Expulsion Infractions:

1. Possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm;
2. Using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person;
3. Committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner;
4. Committing sexual assault;
5. Trafficking in weapons, illegal and/or restricted drugs;
6. Committing robbery;
7. Giving alcohol to a minor;
8. An act considered by the principal to be significantly injurious to the moral tone of the school and/or to the physical or mental well-being of others;
9. A pattern of behaviour that is so inappropriate that the student's continued presence is injurious to the effective learning and/or working environment of others;
10. Activities engaged in by the student on or off school property that cause the student's continuing presence in the school to create an unacceptable risk to the physical or mental well-being of other person(s) in the school or Board;
11. Activities engaged in by the student on or off school property that have caused extensive damage to the property of the Board or to goods that are/were on Board property;
12. The student has demonstrated through a pattern of behaviour that s/he has not prospered by the instruction available to him or her and that s/he is persistently resistant to making changes in behaviour which would enable him or her to prosper; or
13. Any act considered by the principal to be a serious violation of the Board or school Code of Conduct.