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## **Manitoulin Secondary School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

### **EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND OUTREACH**

Manitoulin Secondary School 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 utilize the following Ministry of Education definition of bullying in communications with the school community:

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***Bullying*** is defined 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

(iii) 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 behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

***Cyber-bullying*** is defined as bullying by electronic means 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.

Education Act, Subsection 1(1)

In its communication efforts, the School will:

- o Identify different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying
- o Understand the myths and realities of bullying behaviour
- o Identify bullying and differentiate bullying from conflict, aggression and teasing
- o Assist students in identifying and understanding those differences
- o Understand power and peer dynamics
- o Identify how biases, prejudice and hate can lead to bullying
- o Identify different manifestations and underlying factors of bullying, such as body image, racism, sexism, homophobia, disability, etc.
- o Understand a whole school approach and the essential importance of a positive school climate for student achievement and well-being
- o Develop awareness and understanding of the factors that contribute to a safe, inclusive, caring and accepting school climate
- o Identify ways to make students aware of how they can help prevent and address bullying
- o Identify strategies to engage parents in conversations about bullying prevention and how to promote a positive school climate
- o Reach out to parents and the broader school community
- o Reflect on relationships and interactions and focus on promoting healthy relationships using a variety of strategies
- o Become knowledgeable about community partners and resources available in the community.<sup>1</sup>

Manitoulin Secondary 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.<sup>2</sup>

The School will endeavour to increase education, awareness and outreach by using the following best practices:

- Utilize Ontario Provincial Police Community Liaison
- Publicize activities and resources available in parent newsletters
- Provide information and opportunity for discussions at monthly staff meetings
- Inform and gather input from school council
- Analyze information from school climate surveys from students, staff and parents

<sup>2</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 3.

- Support staff with professional learning opportunities as they relate to bully prevention and intervention
- Provide school-wide assemblies and special activities to promote bully prevention
- Provide student support through workshops, IEP development, Behaviour Safety Plans
- Utilize school website
- Promote Kids Helpline
- Hold Grade meetings to discuss issues of concern
- Support GSA conferences and regular meetings of in-school group (Rainbow Rights)
- Support annual MSS Day of Action
- Participate in Days of Pink
- Make referrals to support agencies as required

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<sup>1</sup> *Supra* note 1,  
pgs. 2-3

<sup>2</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 3.

Manitoulin Secondary School has identified the following strategies to engage parents in conversations about bullying prevention and how to promote a positive school climate:

- contact families of the victims of any bullying issues to discuss bullying prevention
- promote character education throughout school
- ensure all staff have an open door policy
- encourage parents and families to participate in school activities
- encourage parents and families to reach out to community resources such as; counselors, pediatricians, Child and Family Centre, Addictions counselors
- encourage students to talk to parents, or trusted adult, about issues and solutions
- have one on one conversations with those affected
- provide information at Parents' Nights
- share information through Parent Newsletters
- review school and board Code of Conduct with parents

### **EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE**

Manitoulin Secondary School recognizes that effective anti-bullying strategies must be evidence-based.

Manitoulin Secondary 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:

- o 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.
- o Identify children, youth and adults involved in bullying (including the bully, the person being bullied, and those who may have witnessed or been affected by the bullying).
- o Review and update the School's strategies as a result of gathering new information and share with the school community.<sup>3</sup>

### **Pre-evaluation strategy**

The School's main issues of concern and areas requiring improvement raised by students, staff and parents in the school climate surveys and based on other relevant information are the following:

- some bullying occurs; verbally, socially, physically and electronically
- gym changerooms are difficult to supervise and some bullying occurs in these locations
- some bullying occurs in the school cafeteria, hallways and busses
- some parents believe their child's grades are a barrier to their child's learning
- the procedure for the reporting of bullying needs to be better understood by students and parents
- additional information regarding bullying needs to be provided to students

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<sup>3</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 3.

The School's current processes for reporting bullying are as follows:

- students are encouraged to report, immediately, any bullying incidents to an adult in the school
- staff are instructed to report any bullying incident to administration, if they are unable to handle it themselves
- administration is usually informed of an incident in a timely manner
- an investigation takes place: victim(s) and witnesses are interviewed, data is gathered to make informed decisions
- parents and guardians of all stakeholders are notified
- a resolution is determined that may include; apology, suspension, participation in restorative justice session(s), mediation, police involvement

The Schools' current processes for response, support and following up on issues have been reviewed and revised as appropriate.

Based on a review of the school climate survey results and other relevant information, the following statements are true:

- most students enjoy coming to school
- most students feel accepted
- most students feel that MSS is a friendly place
- most students have never been bullied at school
- character traits are posted around the school
- anti-bullying posters are around the school
- contact information for help, as needed, is posted near the Guidance area

Manitoulin Secondary School proposes the following action plan to address some areas of concern regarding bullying:

- provide current and relevant information on the topic of bullying to our students
- provide students and parents with information about how to report bullying
- involve more students in bully-prevention discussions and activities
- recommend and facilitate group counseling for students who have been bullied
- provide staff training for bullying prevention
- educate all stakeholders about policies and procedures as they relate to anti bullying and anti-discrimination
- include peer interventions in bullying prevention procedures

### **Post-evaluation Strategy**

Manitoulin Secondary 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.”<sup>4</sup>

Upon re-evaluation, the School will update the information in this plan to reflect the effectiveness of its anti-bullying initiatives.

### **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The School recognizes that a whole school approach and a strong policy and legislative framework are important for bringing widespread change.<sup>5</sup>

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.<sup>6</sup>

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)<sup>7</sup>, by taking the following steps:

- review at school council meeting and ask for feedback
- review and ask for feedback from staff
- conduct a school climate survey with all school community members at least every three years
- include select policies in parent newsletters
- post school policies and procedures on our school website
- include student behaviour guidelines and code of conduct in student agendas

The roles/responsibilities of the school community (students, staff, parents, and community members) are as follows:

- be informed and aware of school and board policies and procedures
- follow guidelines
- work with school personnel to uphold policies and procedures
- report any misdoings or misconduct to school personnel
- if any school community members have questions, inquire by asking school staff for clarification or guidance

See School Code of Conduct.

<sup>4</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 3.

## PREVENTION

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.<sup>8</sup>

The roles and responsibilities of the Safe and Accepting School Team (which will be communicated with the school community) are as follows:

- report any concerns to administration
- follow up with stakeholders as required
- provide resources required to assist in decision making and problem-solving
- facilitate and work cooperatively with stakeholders to solve the issue

The responsibility of the Safe and Accepting Schools Team is to advise the principal on the development and annual review of safety issues including bullying prevention for the school. Their role also includes fostering a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate (Operational Procedures for Bullying Prevention and Intervention).

Safe School Committee Members are:

Yana Bauer, Tammy Gordon, Frank Gurney, Jessica Jorgenson, Shan Keatley, Leslie Marshall, Dawn Noble-McCann, Laurie Zahnow, Mike Zegil

Based on an evidence-based analysis, the School has identified and implemented as appropriate the following practices and initiatives for bullying prevention:

- o bullying prevention and intervention programs or activities that are evidence-informed and that address the needs identified by the Board or the School<sup>9</sup>:
- o relationship building and community building programs that are present in the school, classroom and in the larger community<sup>10</sup>
- o activities that promote a positive school climate<sup>11</sup>:
- o awareness raising strategies for students, e.g. social emotional learning, empathy, developing self-regulation skills<sup>12</sup>:
- o awareness raising strategies to engage community partners and parents in early and ongoing dialogue<sup>13</sup>
- o ways to link curriculum and daily learning
- o ways to support and encourage role modeling by caring adults and student leaders within the School and school community

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<sup>8</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 4.

<sup>13</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 4.

The School has also identified and implemented as appropriate the learning and training opportunities for school staff and the school community that are needed<sup>14</sup>.

Manitoulin Secondary School will also:

- o provide opportunities for regular check-ins with students at risk or affected by bullying
- o provide opportunities for teachers to development effective classroom management strategies using progressive discipline
- o establish and maintain respectful and caring classrooms
- o attempt to align supervision plans to address where and when bullying happens, as identified through climate surveys.<sup>15</sup>

### **INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES**

The School recognizes the importance of using timely interventions and supports with a school-wide approach.<sup>16</sup>

To this end, Manitoulin Secondary School will:

- o use teachable moments within a progressive discipline approach to address inappropriate behaviour, and consider mitigating and other factors
- o have in place processes and strategies to identify and respond to bullying when it happens
- o identify strategies for supporting all students involved in bullying
- o communicate the progressive discipline approach to the school community and the procedures in place to support the student

Manitoulin Secondary School supports the use of the following evidence-informed interventions and support strategies in a timely manner and using a whole school approach:

See Policy 6.14 and 6.15 and the Operational Procedures that identify bullying prevention strategies, identify supports for students involved in bullying and progressive discipline strategies.

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<sup>14</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> *Supra* note 1, p. 4.