

2025-2026

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

OUR SCHOOL COMMITMENT

We are committed to fostering a safe, accepting and supportive learning environment that promotes well-being (i.e., cognitive, emotional, social, physical) and the academic achievement of all learners. We believe that this is achieved through a Whole School Approach. We will respond to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate and will investigate all reports of bullying. We will provide support to those affected by bullying, including those who engage in bullying.

A Positive School Climate:

- Ensures that everyone is treated with dignity and respect;
- Expects, welcomes and includes everyone;
- Values, affirms and supports the expression of diverse identities;
- Promotes, protects and upholds Indigenous Inherent Rights and Human Rights-including students' right to education without discrimination and employees' right to employment without discrimination;
- Centres the rights of the child/student in ways that are not discriminatory and that do not cause or perpetuate harm;
- Prioritizes relationships, well-being and equity through a whole school approach.

While we work proactively to promote positive and respectful interactions, we will also address any behaviour or interaction that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate, including bullying, discrimination and other forms of harmful interaction. In planning our responses, we will consider and provide support for all impacted staff and students, including those who were harmed, those who witnessed the harm, and those who caused harm.

We will promote a Positive School Climate in both proactive and responsive ways.

MINISTRY STATEMENT

“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.”

Taken from Ministry of Education, PPM 145

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“Bullying will not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstances (e.g., online) where engaging in bullying will have a negative impact on the school climate.”

Ministry of Education of Ontario, PPM 144

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Healthy Relationships are grounded in treating one another with dignity and respect.

Healthy Relationships provide:

- A sense of security and stability
- Basic needs
- A sense of being valued and belonging
- Support and guidance to learn essential skills and understanding
- Protection from excessive stress

All adults who are responsible for children play an important role in teaching them about healthy relationships and bullying. Teachers, parents/guardians, and other adults involved in children's lives:

- Model relationship skills and attitudes
- Create positive situations in which children and youth interact

Children will only learn positive relationship skills and attitudes if they observe and interact with adults who model positive relationships when interacting with children and adults.

PREVNet

HARMFUL INTERACTIONS

Bullying: 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,

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- 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 ancestry, size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power (e.g., popularity), 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”, behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

Aggression: A response to conflict, threat or an internal emotional state of anger/irritability in which the intent to harm may or may not be present.
Aggression...

- (a) can take direct or indirect forms, including physical, verbal, social and electronic
- (b) can become bullying when a power imbalance in a relationship develops over time because repeated acts of aggression may intimidate the person on the receiving end

Teasing: A type of “playful” interaction that can range from positive (e.g., bantering, joshing, ribbing) to negative (e.g., mocking, pestering, tormenting)

- (a) Positive teasing takes place within a healthy relationship. It is good natured, fun and reciprocal
- (b) Negative teasing is characterized by words or actions that cause harm on one or both sides of the interaction. Negative teasing harms relationships as well as the school climate

Slurs and personal insults: The use of discriminatory, targeted or hateful language that is focused on Human Rights Code grounds, a person's identity or personal characteristics is never acceptable, whether this language is used in the context of bullying, conflict, teasing or aggression. These include:

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- (a) Slurs and phrases that dehumanize, mock, ostracize, discriminate against or victimize others based on race, Indigenous identity, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, religion, ethnicity, neurodivergent traits, ability, financial status, family status, etc.
- (b) Personal insults that target traits like body type and other physical characteristics, “intelligence,” personality traits or personal interests

Conflict: A normal type of interaction that everyone should learn to navigate and resolve effectively. Conflict may be distinguished from other harmful interactions in that...

- (a) there is no power imbalance between those in conflict, or at least, the power imbalance is not being weaponized by the person with more power
- (b) all parties are typically invested in resolving the conflict (or at least ending it)
- (c) conflict most often occurs among people who share an existing relationship: classmates, siblings, friends, partners, colleagues, etc.
- (d) tensions underlying the conflict are not related to identity (e.g., ancestry, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion) and may be amplified by stressors for one or both parties in conflict
- (e) conflict typically centers on disagreement, personal errors, unclear or unmet expectations, or poor communication

Cyber-bullying: For the purposes of the definition of “bullying” seen here, 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.
- (d) engaging in threatening, offensive or demeaning comments online towards another member of the school community

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Our Positive School Climates Team

Our Positive School Climate Team leads our planning to promote a safe, inclusive, and welcoming school climate.

Chair:

Principal: T. Running Vice-Principal : A. Phelan & A. Lue

Teacher(s): All Staff

Student(s):

Community Partner(s): A. Tulalian, PHN

STRENGTHS AND GOALS

What the Data Tells Us – School Climate and Well-being Surveys and Other Data

As part of the on-going monitoring and evaluation process, schools gather data from various sources, including school climate surveys of students, staff and parents/caregivers every two years. Our school data indicates the following:

Strengths:

The School Climate data indicated that the vast majority of our students feel safe at school. The data also indicated that students feel DASS shares in the collective responsibility in fostering healthy relationships that build welcoming, respectful, safe and inclusive environments. DASS Staff work to ensure both classrooms and the school environment are safe and stable environments for students to learn. DASS provides students in need with some of their basic needs which include: Healthy Breakfast and Lunch programs, on-site food bank, and a community closet for students to access clothes and household items. DASS continues to support and guide students by providing access to a Social Worker on-site as well as a Mental Health Worker through CMHC. DASS has made it a priority to have all staff trained in developing and fostering strategies to create trauma sensitive classrooms and build resilience. DASS maintains a close connection with Eastview Boys and Girls Club to help students access housing, Ontario Works and other community services and supports.

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Goals:

DASS is committed to making our school a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. At DASS we believe in fostering a sense of belonging and promoting a strong self-worth to prevent bullying. Our goal is twofold:

1. To present students with viable pathways for future employment and connections to community partners. Students will further their ability to be successful in a career pathway plan by achieving academic success; in support of this, a comprehensive Student Success plan will be put in place.
2. Some of our student population state that they never or only sometimes have friends. To continue fostering a sense of belonging and well-being we will focus on creating opportunities for students to engage in healthy peer relationships within the school environment. This will be achieved by cohorting students with wrap-around student success support to promote positive peer groups within the school community.

PROACTIVE APPROACHES

What We are Doing in Our Classrooms and in Our School - Strategies that Promote a Positive School Climate

Our school is implementing a variety of strategies to support student well-being, affirm and promote diverse identities, and create a welcoming environment. These strategies involve students, staff, parents and community members as part of a whole school approach. Below are highlights of our strategies:

- Following Progressive Discipline: A Bias-free Approach
- Using Restorative Practice
- Cohorts with wrap around student success support, for example: a dedicated caring teacher for every 15 students per session, meeting individual student needs
- Helping students develop a positive sense of self by offering academic supports and a wide range of community supports
- At DASS we create a culture of caring by modelling patience, acceptance, understanding, kindness, compassion and warmth with positive interactions amongst staff and positive interactions between staff and students
- Bullying awareness and prevention through classroom activities and large group presentations
- Fostering Healthy relationships (e.g., Restorative Practice in classrooms/office and in health curriculum)

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- Equity and inclusive education (Equity courses)
- Building resiliency utilizing our Guidance team, Wellness Team and Community Supports
- Community Connections (Eastview Boys and Girls Club, Durham Youth Workers, Addictions Counsellors, Pinewood)
- Conflict resolution-conferencing with students, parents and guardians
- Culturally responsive pedagogy and Equity/Inclusive education- equity continuum including Indigenous Education and support staff through PD along with the Anti-Oppression Department
- Positive Mental Health - Staff PD, Social Worker, Psychologist and Mental Health Worker available to support students
- School-based community events
- Problem solving and decision-making skills
- Vision of inclusive student services to support staff and students to become barrier smashers
- Positive sense of self- school -wide focus, growth mindset PD
- Cyberbullying awareness and safety in the online learning environment -Anonymous Tips (Report Bullying Button)
- Guidance and administration value open communication
- We are continually promoting self-reflective pedagogy and working on ways to make improvements throughout our school community
- Staff are actively incorporating, universal design for learning, as well as, inclusive resources for lessons and activities
- School participation in the Durham Youth Drug Awareness Conference
- Student Participation & Resources from TAMH conference to support Teen Mental Health, implemented at the school level

How Student Voice is Present in Our School

Engaging students to help shape the learning environment is an important component of a whole school approach in promoting a positive school climate – a climate in which *each and every* student feels that they matter. The following examples are highlights of student voice in action at our school:

- DASS Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA), Anti-Black Racism Team
- DASS HUB Fairs: Community Connections - virtual & in-person
- Durham Youth Drug Awareness Committee (DYDAC)
- Equity Courses to reflect diverse student population
- DASS Student Voice Surveys

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- Inquiry Based Learning
- Open and continual access to Guidance Counsellors and Mental Health Supports
- Guidance office open to all students-provides calm, quiet areas for support
- Inclusive Student Services incorporates safe spaces and is accessible to all students

How we create the conditions whereby students feel safe to report bullying and other harmful interactions at our school.

Creating the conditions within which students may feel safe to report begins with investment in relationships and the promotion of a Positive School Climate. Additionally, procedures may be put in place that facilitate students and parent/caregiver reporting as well as procedures that outline the requirements for staff to report such instances in accordance with legislation.

Student Reporting:

- Reporting bullying or other harmful interactions to a trusted adult (e.g., parent/caregiver, teacher, administrator, support staff, police liaison officer).
- Using the “Report Bullying Now” button on the school/board website provides students a more discreet means of reporting bullying behaviours.

Staff Reporting:

- “The Education Act states that an employee of the board who becomes aware that a student at the school of the board may have engaged in a serious student incident shall report the matter to the principal as soon as reasonably possible” (PPM 144)
- When appropriate, staff complete and submit the “Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part I” to the principal. The principal provides written acknowledgement to the employee using the “Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part II” (PPM 144)

Parent/Community Reporting:

- Reporting bullying and other harmful interactions to the classroom teacher, support staff and/or administration
- Using the “Report Bullying Now” button on the school website

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Strategies that help students to feel safe to report (e.g., relationship-building strategies, reporting mechanisms, awareness-building)

- Ensuring the safety of all involved
- Responding to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school
- Contacting the parents of the person(s) who has been harmed and the parents of the person(s) who has caused harm, in accordance with legislation
- Collaborating with community partners, when appropriate
- Developing an action plan that is responsive and supportive
- Engaging in restorative practice conferencing, when appropriate
- Implementing a Safe Schools Student Safety Plan, when necessary
- Implementing/reviewing a Special Education Behaviour Safety Plan, when appropriate

How We Are Building Capacity for Promoting Healthy Relationships as Part of a Positive School Climate at Our School.

Training/learning opportunities occur at the board level, community level and school level. Here are highlights of our training/learning opportunities:

Student:

- Police Liaison visits
- Annual Women's Empowerment Conference
- DASS HUB Fairs: Community Connections
- Safe Schools Bullying Awareness and Prevention Conference
- Training on how to report bullying using REPORT BULLYING
- Talking About Mental Illness (TAMI)
- Psychological and social worker services
- Vetted evidence-based/evidence-informed training that reinforces curriculum connections
- Pink and Orange Shirt Day Activities
- SHSM-Arts and Culture, Construction and Hospitality and Tourism

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Staff:

- Introduction to Restorative Practice Framework
- Circle training
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy training
- School Climate Survey/Safe and Accepting Schools
- Mental Health First Aid for Adults Who Interact with Youth training
- Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol training
- Safe Schools Bullying Awareness and Prevention
- Anti-Oppression, Equity, and Inclusive Education; Orange Shirt Day, Pink Shirt Day
- Equity representatives training
- New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) training
- Safe Schools updates/trainings at staff meetings

Parents/Guardians:

- Pathways Meetings during registration with a Supportive Person and/or parent for those under 18
- Community Fairs

RESPONSIVE APPROACHES

How We Respond to Bullying and other harmful interactions at Our School

Our school response follows a bias-aware approach to progressive discipline that involves the following immediate and long-term actions:

- Ensuring the safety of all involved
- Responding to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate
- Conducting a school-based investigation (consulting the Police/Board Protocol, when necessary and appropriate) considering mitigating, human rights and other factors
- Contacting the parents/caregivers of the person(s) who has been harmed and the parents/caregivers of the person(s) who has caused harm, in accordance with legislation
- Considering the broader context and implications of the harmful interaction (e.g., racism, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, Islamophobia, antisemitism, faithism, classism, ableism, misogyny) in order to inform both immediate and long-term responses

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- Developing an action plan that is responsive and supportive
- Taking concrete steps to repair relationship and restore a Positive School Climate
- Considering individual, class, and/or whole-school learning opportunities to foster the conditions wherein similar situations may be prevented in the future
- Consulting and collaborating with community partners, affinity groups and DDSB departments, as appropriate (e.g., DBEN, DENSA, KIEN, MEND, Equity, ISS, Indigenous Education, Positive School Climates)
- Implementing a Positive School Climates Student Safety Plan, when necessary
- Implementing/reviewing an Inclusive Student Services Behaviour Safety Plan, when appropriate

How We Provide Ongoing Support to Those Impacted by Bullying at Our School

Support for the person(s) who has been harmed, the person(s) who has caused harm and the person(s) who has witnessed harm may include:

- Furthering school-level support such as connection to a caring adult, classroom and yard considerations, special needs considerations, participation in co-curricular programming
- Implementing board-level supports such as social work or psychological services (with consent)
- Identifying community support resources
- Implementing a Student Safety Plan when necessary

Follow-up for the person(s) who has been harmed, the person(s) who has caused harm and the person(s) who has witnessed harm will include:

- Individual monitoring based on specific needs (e.g., regular check-ins)
- Conversations or learning opportunities as needed to support self-awareness, understanding of impact, social-emotional learning skills, and/or to inspire a shift in ideological trajectory if needed, e.g., in cases where ignorance, hate or discrimination are at play

COMMUNICATION

To support a whole school approach, the school will communicate with staff, students, parents/caregivers and the community. Communication methods include:

- Social media; Instagram, email messaging and school website
- Posters and bulletin boards
- Staff meetings, Professional Development

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- Student leaders
- Discussions and conversations
- Announcements
- Classroom visits mentored by the students, staff and administration
- Assemblies/presentations

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

As part of the continuous improvement model, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be monitored regularly through:

- Positive School Climate Team meetings
- Staff meetings, division meetings, department meetings, committee meetings
- School Learning Plan discussions
- Self-Reflection and discussion

Please visit [Durham District School Board](https://www.durhamdistrictschoolboard.ca/) website for more information on how the Durham District School Board is supporting student well-being and promoting a positive school climate.