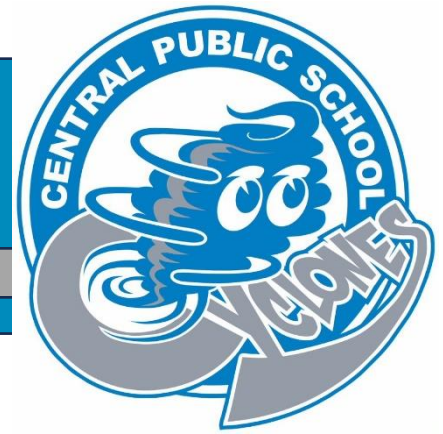


# Central Public School

## Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan



### **Purpose:**

Central Public School is committed to creating an environment where students feel safe and welcomed. This plan is an integral step towards achieving this goal. In working together, we can all strive to prevent bullying and ensure that our students can thrive and succeed in school.

Bullying can have a severe impact on a child's mental health and their academic performance. By implementing a comprehensive prevention and intervention plan, we can support students in ensuring that they are participating in a safe and positive learning environment while also improving attendance and overall performance in school.

As stipulated in the Education Act, subsection 303.3(3), every school must implement the Board's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. In order to comply with this Ministry policy, each school will create and implement a plan tailored to meet the unique needs of their students and the greater school community. Central recognizes the importance for us to work together as a school community to develop a positive school climate that reflects our desire to support student achievement along with student well-being.

Teachers and ESS are the critical agents of social change in bullying programs. They have an essential role in creating a respectful classroom, in managing their classrooms effectively, in promoting communication about bullying, and in responding in a supportive manner to the children involved in bullying.

### **Factors Affecting School Climate:**

Central recognizes various factors that contribute to a safe, caring, welcoming and inclusive school climate for creating a positive learning environment for all students. One key factor is promoting respect and understanding among students from different backgrounds. Central has worked to foster this in the following ways:

- Culture Day
- Recognition of 'Days of Acknowledgement' on morning announcements and through sharing with staff to incorporate in lesson planning
- Ongoing diversity training for staff
- Opportunities for students to engage in various cultural celebrations with their peers from different backgrounds.
- Black History Month Celebrations and Bulletin Board "Black History is Every Month"
- MSA (Muslim Student Association) and Bulletin Board
- GSA (Gender-Sexuality Alliance)
- Celebration of Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week, November 18-22, 2024 – The theme of this year's campaign was in keeping with what was developed last year:

**WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS BY FOSTERING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**

- School mantra said at every assembly – Always remember: Be kind, be fair, be honest, be true, and all these things will come back to you!

Another factor that is practiced widely at Central is that of promoting positive behaviour and addressing negative behaviour through actively focusing on kindness. This component also extends to the understanding that our interactions with others are co-dependent on how we deal with our own mindfulness and mental well-being. This is visible in the following ways:

- Focus on ‘Kindness’ messages via announcements
- Daily positive quotes to start our day in the right way on the announcements
- CYW presentations in classrooms about anti-bullying and being a good friend
- Social skills groups with CYW
- BANA Presentations for grades 6-8 students “Self-Esteem & Body Image”
- Caught-ya coupons, used to “catch” kindness – weekly prize draw

Lastly, a factor that Central actively initiates is that of involving parents and community members in school events and decision-making to foster a sense of belonging and inclusivity.

Some guest speakers, presentations and initiatives that reinforce the Kindness/Inclusion school messages are:

- **Youth Diversion Presentations** (Grades 5-8)
- **Role of the Upstander:** Mme Symchyshyn and Mrs. Cunningham shared a presentation with students about their role in the school community as upstanders rather than bystanders in their ‘Words Matter’ presentation. This message is intended to be repeated annually at school-wide assemblies, over announcements, etc.
- **Pink Shirt Day:** February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – Everyone in the Central community is encouraged to wear pink shirts to show that we are taking a stand against bullying.
- **Best Buddies “Everyone Deserves a Friend” Campaign:** One-to-one friendships created between younger and older students
- **Anti-Bullying Poster Contest and T-shirt Design:** Students design a t-shirt with an anti-bullying message. The CYW chooses the top 10 and then staff vote on the winner. The design is made on a t-shirt and they will be available for purchase through the online store. Posters are displayed throughout the school

## Student Awareness:

Student awareness of how they can prevent, address, and report bullying begins with education and the various training programs provided to students both explicitly as anti-bullying programs but also, inherently in our school initiatives surrounding mindfulness, mental health, kindness, and inclusion.

Students are made aware of how to recognize signs of bullying and to speak up when they witness these types of behaviours.

Our Student Handbook states:

“At Central Public School, we proactively try to prevent bullying and pledge to deal with incidences of bullying when they occur. **Bullying is defined as a form of repeated, persistent,**

**aggressive behaviour** that is directed at an individual(s) that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear, distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation (Ministry of Education). Please encourage your child to tell an adult or please call the school personally.

**Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. The actions are intentional or repetitive, exerting some form of power and control.**

#### **Examples of Verbal Bullying Behaviours**

- Making fun of another student
- Name calling, put-downs, insults, taunts, sarcasm
- Hurtful comments about individual differences, family, clothes, or other possessions
- Racial and/or religious slurs
- Hurtful comments about sexual gender and preference
- Spreading rumours
- Telling students not to play or interact with another student
- Unwelcome comments that degrade or make another feel uncomfortable
- Intimidating telephone calls
- Threat of violence against a person, their friends or family
- Public challenges to do something

#### **Examples of Non-Verbal Bullying Behaviours**

- Graffiti
- Hateful or hurtful written comments
- Slamming books
- Passing notes with the intent to humiliate or threaten another
- Written comments telling others to exclude, ignore or reject another
- Revealing personal information that could lead to public humiliation
- Internet bullying behaviours (e-mails, text messages, social media posts)

#### **Examples of Physical Bullying Behaviours**

- Hitting, pushing, kicking, shoving, poking, chasing, spitting
- Physical intimidation or assault with or without a weapon
- Defacing or destroying property
- Stealing, extortion
- Acts that demean another such as hazing and pantsing
- Unwanted touching

**The Central staff works diligently to ensure that the school is free from bullying. We need your help in reinforcing the following strategies that will assist your child if confronted with bullying behaviour:**

- Seek help from an adult or peer
- Make assertive statements to the bully, addressing your feelings
- Look the bully in the eye and tell them to stop
- Walk away from the bully

- Remember there is safety in numbers
- Avoid certain places to avoid a bullying situation

If you know that someone is being bullied, report the situation to the nearest teacher or adult. Incidents of bullying, regardless of place of origin, will be dealt with at the school level if it affects the moral tone of the school and/or welfare of the students.

Please note that all Human Rights violations will be treated seriously and will provide opportunities for further learning.

To eliminate bullying, students, staff, administration and parents all need to take a role. Therefore, at Central, we will adhere to the following responsibilities: We will not bully other; We will demonstrate kindness and respect towards others; We will help students who are bullied in a supportive manner by using our words and/or reporting what we see to an adult; We will include everyone in games and activities; We will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Students who do not follow these rules will be subject to consequences (see Interventions and Consequences section).”

Our student handbook also highlights several key areas that, when implemented effectively, contribute to an overall sustainable engagement in preventing bullying in daily activities. When students are mindful of their digital responsibilities, appropriate internet use, and human rights, they are better equipped to recognize and respond to incidents of bullying in their environment. This handbook is reviewed annually with all students in their homeroom classrooms.

## Central Student Voice:

Our Student Leadership Ambassadors provided feedback on Central’s approach to Bullying Prevention and Intervention. This is what our student leaders had to say:

1. **What types of things do you feel help us to prevent bullying at Central?**
  - The teachers are constantly involved and the school in general talks about it a lot and makes it clear that it’s not acceptable
  - Having a trusted teacher or member of staff we’re able to talk to. The staff advocates anti-bullying and take everything very serious
  - Providing a space and positive environment for students and making sure every student feels welcome at school is very important. To prevent bullying students can tell a trusted adult or just talk about their feelings because bullying should always be stopped!
2. **What interventions do you feel help when there is an issue of bullying/cyber-bullying?**
  - If an issue occurs where a student is getting bullied, you can intervene by: 1) Telling an adult like a parent or teacher. 2) Standing up and talking to the bully.
  - The best thing to do as a student would be to tell an adult and leave the situation
  - Some things that with bullying/cyber-bullying are, when someone is being bullied, stand up for them. Even if you are being bullied yourself, don't be scared to speak up. Try to avoid getting into trouble online and in school
3. **What else could we do to make our school a safer place?**
  - Things we can do to make our school safer is that we can make the older kids help the little so they can learn the right way of being kind to others

- To make our school safer, we should continue to promote bullying awareness
- Central is an amazing place and I always feel so safe. I have not had an issue with feeling unsafe because staff and students always do a great job on making sure students here feel welcome and safe. I would not want to change one thing about that!

**4. What makes you feel like you belong at Central?**

- The welcoming staff and students make me feel like I belong at Central. The staff welcome us with warm smiles in the morning and at the end of the day. They make me feel included and safe everyday
- What makes me feel like I belong at Central is being a part of school events and helping everyone out at the school
- Celebrating almost all celebrations makes me feel included

## Parent/Guardian Engagement

We are fortunate to have strong family connections and support at Central. Families are truly our partners in their child(ren)'s education and support the learning and initiatives that occur at school. Our staff invites families in frequently to participate in class activities such as reading, sharing of cultures and activities such as cooking, crafts, etc. During whole school events such as Carnival, we welcome parent volunteers who help the day to run smoothly. In addition, our Culture Day is one of the highlights of the year and couldn't happen without the direct involvement of parents/guardians, grandparents and other extended family members.

Our School Council strives to create a welcoming environment for families and students. Council provided drinks at our Meet the Staff event and will be an active part of our Culture Day, having applied for the PRO Grant to support that initiative. They also support classroom activities and materials that help to build community for our students.

Parents/guardians are now able to join us during our monthly spirit assemblies and it has been wonderful to share student success and initiatives with them. Each month the Family and Caregiver Mental Health and Well-Being newsletter is shared with families to help support mental health and well-being. The feedback has been positive, and we look forward to continuing these events and sharing these resources with families.

Our most recent Climate survey (Spring 2024) indicates that 93.5% of our parents/guardians believe that their child(ren) feel welcome at school and has a caring adult at school. Of the 46 parents who responded to the survey, 80.5% believe that bullying is taken seriously at Central. As a staff, we are striving to increase these numbers even more this year.

We strive to assist our families' knowledge about community partners and resources in the school and in the broader community. They reinforce that we are a family at Central and that we all have the responsibility to work together to support our students

## Communication:

In January, this plan will be shared with our staff, School Council and is being posted on our website.

## Initiated Programs:

The following is a representation of Board-approved programs that are already being implemented at Central:

- *Zones of Regulation*: Zones of Regulation are visible throughout Central. Students are familiar with the language as a way to describe how they are feeling and learn strategies to help them self-regulate.
- *Character Education Initiatives*: Monthly assemblies to recognize students representing these character traits (Kindness, Respect, Citizenship, Resiliency and Collaboration) and weekly draws for students that have represented the goals of our character education initiative.
- *Socio-Emotional Learning Kits*: Teachers use these kits and accompanying lessons in their classroom instruction.
- *Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training*: Staff trained in ASIST to provide needed support for students, as necessary.

## Roles & Responsibilities:

### Students:

As per the Central Student Handbook (2023-2024), student responsibilities concerning bullying include:

- We will not bully others
- We will demonstrate kindness and respect towards others
- We will help students who are bullied in a supportive manner by using our words and/or reporting what we see to an adult
- We will include everyone in games and activities
- We will tell an adult at school and an adult at home

### Staff:

According to AP-AD-45, the GECDsB's administrative procedure concerning "Bully Prevention and Intervention", the role of teachers and other staff members include:

"As role models, teachers and school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth
- empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community;
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parent(s)/guardian(s);
- maintain consistent standards of behaviours for all students;
- demonstrate respect for all students, staff, parent(s)/guardian(s), volunteers, and the members of the school community;
- prepare students for the full responsibility of citizenship; and
- provide representation to the Safe Schools team.

Teachers shall also assist principals in maintaining close co-operation with the school community and in establishing and maintaining consistent disciplinary practices in the school

and in classrooms. In addition, teachers must assist principals by reporting incidents of bullying and assisting the principal in conducting an investigation (2017).”

### **Parents/Guardians:**

Parents/Guardians are asked to work in collaboration with the school, staff members, and students by also playing a role in the prevention and intervention of bullying. AP-AD-45 (2017) states that parents/guardians fulfill their role by:

- “show[ing] an active interest in their child’s schoolwork and progress;
- communicat[ing] regularly with the school;
- [being] familiar with the Board’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and school code of conduct, including school rules;
- encourag[ing] and assist[ing] their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- assist[ing] school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child;
- provid[ing] representation to the safe schools team. (2017)”

### **Community Members:**

In outlining ways in which the greater Central community can be involved and accountable in supporting the student body, AP-AD-45 states that all school administrators and staff who have frequent contact with students should receive training programs on how to prevent and intervene in bullying. These programs will cover “cultural sensitivity, respect for diversity, and special education needs” (2017) of students. To ensure that everyone in the school community is aware of their roles and responsibilities, the policy will be made available and actively communicated by the administration to students, parents, staff, school council, and volunteers. Additionally, our school has a Safe Schools Team that is comprised of at least one student, one parent/guardian, one teacher, one support staff member, one community partner, and the principal.