



Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School



*Focus on what a student can do as the starting point, not what they cannot. See challenges as opportunities to explore, not something to avoid. Start with small success and build upon them to create a foundation of **HOPE** and **OPTIMISM**.*

(Source Unknown)

Promoting Positive School Climate and Well-being



Preamble

The ALCD SB is dedicated to creating and promoting positive school climate and well-being in all of our schools. Respecting the dignity of all persons by fostering trusting relationships through policies and practices that promote equity, inclusion and diversity are at the core of our Catholic values, the Board's spiritual theme of *Faith in Action* and our provincial *Catholic Graduate Expectations*. A positive school climate is directly linked to student success and well-being ensuring students are motivated to do well and will realize their full potential. We are committed to sustaining healthy and nurturing communities of belonging that are safe, caring and respectful and built on the principles of restorative practice and progressive discipline.

The ALCD SB and its school communities engage in a whole school approach in putting prevention and intervention strategies in place to facilitate a positive relationship between students, staff, parents and community partners.

I. Education, Awareness, and Outreach

Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School proclaims that all people are created in the image and likeness of God and, as such, have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness. The school further recognizes that a whole-school approach to engaging the school community will help the school's efforts to address inappropriate behaviour.

As followers of Jesus, the Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School community recognize we are all responsible to create communities of shared belonging that are safe, sustainable, inclusive, respectful and healthy.

As a means to accomplishing this goal we strive to:

- Make known that a positive school climate is essential for student achievement and well-being;
- Identify the factors that contribute to a safe, inclusive caring and accepting school climate;
- Support relationship building and focus on promoting healthy relationships using a variety of strategies;
- Educate parents and students regarding the differences between bullying, conflict, aggression and teasing and the importance of restorative practices;
- Explore and identify the underlying factors that contribute to conflict and/or bullying;
- Work in partnership with parents and the broader school community to build awareness about the resources and pathways available;
- Be responsive to conversations with our community as we continue to build relationships and resiliency.

Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School communicates and shares with the school community, policies and procedures including our School Code of Conduct, equity and inclusive education, progressive discipline approach, promoting positive school climate and well-being. These practices are embedded in our Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School Code of Conduct, so that all will have access and a common understanding.

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

- A whole-school approach to creating a safe and caring school;
- Religious and Family Life Education curriculum focused on building and fostering secure relationships;
- Student Leadership opportunities;
- Community Partnerships.

We have identified the following strategies to engage our school community in conversations about promoting a positive school climate:

- Our Caring and Safe Catholic School Team reflects members with various roles within our school community;
- Discussions with our students and staff about ways in which we can further live by the Gospel values;
- Discussions with our School Council on furthering to develop a positive school climate;
- Communication between Home-School-Parish.

II. Evaluation of Evidence

Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School recognizes that effective prevention strategies must be evidence-based.

We base our interventions, strategies, practices and programs on evidence from the school climate surveys and other relevant information. We proactively strive to take the following steps to assess prevention initiatives and strategies:

- 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;
- To ensure the students' needs and interests are always at the forefront of our planning;
- Identify children and youth involved in conflict or bullying (including those who may have witnessed or have been affected by the situation);
- To focus on the growth mindset, learning from our mistakes with follow-up/check-ins to ensure the situation has been restored;
- The importance of a restorative approach, face-to-face communication (I statements) individual student profiles and risk assessment will be considered in this process.

Our strategies will be reviewed and updated as necessary as a result of gathering new information.

Pre-evaluation strategy

Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School's areas of focus based on various information gathering sources are the following:

- Continuing to ensure the value of students' voice as active agents of change and participants in the problem-solving;
- To continue implementing strategies, reflecting the asset approach;
- Staff as an active presence during transition times, on the yard, and promoting safe and caring schools.

Our areas of focus with respect to the physical environment are:

- Ensuring supervision of students inside the school and on school property;
- Monthly Health and Safety Walks of the school;
- Communication with staff (staff meetings and as concerns arise).

Our current processes for reporting on, responding to, supporting are as follows:

- Making Connections ~ Building Relationships-students have a strong sense of self-advocacy (someone at the school consistently provides encouragement and can be turned to for advice-Tell Them From Me Survey 2017, 2015 and 2013);
- Restorative Discussions ~ an opportunity for all those involved in the situation to come together, as necessary the information is documented and possibly the need to extend the discussion to supporting and caring adults at home or with community partners;
- Use of the Board's *Caring and Safe Catholic School Administrative Procedures*.

Based on various sources, school climate survey results and other relevant information, the following areas have shown success/improvement:

- Students feel comfortable informing a staff member if they were to see unsafe behaviour;
- The connection between our behaviour and the Catholic Graduate Expectations (increase with student seeing the importance in living a life in the way Jesus would want us to behave-TTFM).

Based on various information, including the school climate survey and other relevant data, we propose the following action plan:

- SIPSAW priority to reflect mental health and well-being
- School-based initiatives which highlight our Catholic Graduate Expectations
- Partnership with community partners

“Every child, every person needs to know that they are a source of joy; every child, every person, needs to be celebrated. Only when all of our weaknesses are accepted as part of our humanity can our negative, broken self-images be transformed.” (Jean Vanier: *Becoming Human*)

Post-evaluation Strategy

Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School will reassess as necessary the results of subsequent school climate surveys to verify the efficacy of the positive 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. “Making Connections and Building Positive Relationships” will continue to be highlighted and explored. The student voice with creating our SIPSAW will provide insight and direction to ensuring each student feels valued and is a contributing, accountable member by supporting our positive school climate.

III. Policies and Procedures

Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School recognizes that a whole school approach and the policies and procedures of ALCDSB are important for promoting positive school climate and well-being. We also recognize the goals of policy initiatives must address the areas of challenge identified in school/Board climate surveys and other relevant data.

We strive to 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 Caring and Safe Catholic Schools, by taking the following steps:

- Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School's *Code of Conduct* is easily accessible to families and to the community;
- Sharing of Student voice SIPSAW and school SIPSAW with School Council.

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

- To follow the standards of behaviour as outlined in our Code of Conduct;
- To participate in a whole-school approach to positive school climate in order to ensure that schools are safe, inclusive, and accepting.

Prevention

Archbishop O'Sullivan Catholic School recognizes that fostering a positive learning environment will help to reduce possible conflict, bullying, harassment, and discrimination incidents. We are committed to taking steps to strengthen preventative measures.

The roles and responsibilities of the Caring and Safe Catholic Schools Team are as follows:

- Responsible for addressing issues identified in the School Climate Surveys and other related data;
- Engage in conversation, a review process and action plan based on a situation-by-situation basis;
- Review and reflect on current practices and next steps;
- Familiarize ourselves with policies and procedures for Safe and Caring Schools.

From its evidence-based analysis, we have identified the following practices and initiatives for promoting positive school climate and well-being:

- Prevention and intervention programs or activities that are evidence-informed and that address the needs identified by the Board or the School;
- Demonstration of ways in which we support our Board Spiritual theme of "Faith in Action" through the use of an audit trail board;
- Class discussions and co-construction understanding of expectations;
- Student created SIPSAW focusing on student priorities under the three pillars.

Relationship-building and community-building resources that are present in the school, classroom and in the larger community:

- Promoting connections to caring adults;
- Peer assistance and mentoring programs;
- Youth Workers;
- Mental Health and Addiction Nurse;
- Community partners.

Activities that promote a positive school climate:

- School-wide focus on gospel values and Catholic Graduate Expectations;
- School-wide social justice and charity initiatives;
- Spirit Weeks;
- Student leadership opportunities.

Awareness-raising strategies for students, e.g. social-emotional learning, empathy, developing self-regulation skills:

- Roots of Empathy;
- Free the Children;
- ECO Pals;
- PALS (KFL&A);
- Bus Patrollers;
- Student Coaches;
- Peer supporting.

Awareness-raising strategies to engage community partners and parents in early and ongoing dialogue:

- Discussion with Caring and Safe Catholic Schools Team and School Council on results from School Climate Surveys;
- Presentations by our School Resource Officer;
- School assemblies to promote awareness.

Strategies for linking curriculum and daily learning for promoting positive school climate and well-being:

- School-wide focus on restorative practice as a whole-school approach;
- Health and Physical Education Curriculum information (Power point presentation shared at staff meeting and with School Council);
- Curriculum review and Professional Development opportunities.

Strategies to support and encourage role modeling by caring adults and student leaders within the school community:

- Catholic Student Council;
- Peer assistance and mentoring programs;
- Leadership opportunities.

We have identified the following learning and training opportunities for school staff and the school community that are needed:

- Training and professional development promoting positive school climate and well-being;
- Promoting Positive School Climate and Well-being pamphlet;
- Discussions, reflection and updates with our Code of Conduct.

IV. Interventions and Support Strategies

We recognize the importance of using timely interventions and supports with a school-wide approach.

To this end, we strive to use:

- Teachable moments within a progressive discipline approach to address inappropriate behaviour, and consider mitigating and other factors;
- Processes and strategies to identify and respond to bullying when it happens;
- Restorative Practices are in place to support prevention and intervention practices;
- Progressive discipline approach awareness with the school community and the procedures in place to support the student.

We support the use, in a timely manner and using a whole school approach, of the following evidence-informed interventions and support strategies:

- Restorative practices;
- Discussion with Board Social Worker (Mental Health Leader);
- Referral of students to school Youth Worker

Bullying - means 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
- 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 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 ("intimidation")
- c) For the purposes of the definition of "bullying" above, behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

Cyber-bullying

For the purposes of the definition of "bullying" above, 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.