

INTERVENTION POLICY FOR AGGRESSIVE and / or BULLYING INTERACTIONS

Approved by the School Board on May 25, 2016

The Lycée Français de Toronto (the “Lycée”) is committed to providing a healthy school environment that is nurturing, caring, and respectful of everyone. Each student has the right to attend the Lycée in an atmosphere that promotes equality and prohibits harassment and bullying.

Bullying is the assertion of interpersonal power through aggression. It is defined as negative physical or verbal actions that are intentional, cause distress to victims, are repeated, and involve a real or perceived power differential between perpetrators and victims. ¹

For more information on the different forms of bullying, please refer to Appendix A.

If a student has been bullied, intimidated, threatened, or has witnessed such behavior, it is his or her responsibility to confide in an adult at home or at school. Students are encouraged to be courageous, to speak up, and to uphold the Lycée’s values by appropriately standing up for themselves and others.

Through a process of progressive response and discipline, the Lycée will take action to address bullying behavior while providing support for all students involved. Repeated and/or extreme incidences may result in suspension or expulsion. Although each case will be dealt with individually, the following steps constitute the Lycée’s general progressive plan of response.

Step 1: Immediate response

It is important that all children and youth understand the school’s commitment to ensuring their safety. All aggressive behavior will be interrupted immediately.

The aggressive or bullying behavior will be identified as such and the student involved will be reminded of the school’s code of conduct. A major goal will be to take the spotlight off the child/youth being targeted and to turn the focus to the negative behavior.

Efforts will be made to help the student who was aggressive realize the negative impact of their actions and how it can hurt the student directly involved but also those that overhear it. The aggressive behavior, not the student, will be identified as negative. The student will be reminded of positive expectations.

The student who engaged in aggressive behavior will be asked for positive change in future behavior. Support will be provided for the student who was targeted.

The incident will be recorded and reported to the school administration. Based on current and past incidences it will be determined if the incident is aggression or bullying. If it is determined to be bullying, step 2 will be initiated.

If the incident is sufficiently serious, any or all of steps 2, 3 and 4 will be initiated.

Step 2: Educational consequences

Educational consequences will be applied to help the student who engages in bullying to learn that such behavior is inappropriate and harmful to other people involved.

These students need to acquire the understanding and skills that allow them to interact positively and respectfully with others. Educational learning opportunities can help children develop the insights and empathy needed to modify their behavior.

Educational learning opportunities provided will be a) swift, b) consistently applied, and c) delivered in a nonaggressive manner.

Examples of educational consequences include:

Having the student who bullied-

- Lead a class discussion on the harmful effects of bullying or how peers can prevent bullying
- Write a story on the negative impact of bullying
- Write a note to their parents explaining their behavior and the consequences of it
- Develop a role play
- Prepare a class presentation
- Read about bullying prevention
- Make posters for the school
- Work on building empathy and how to see the perspectives of other children/youth
- Work on building leadership skills and find opportunities for positive leadership

The student who engaged in bullying behavior will be involved in making amends or repairing the relationship to help him or her take responsibility for his/her behavior and to develop an understanding of the impact of bullying. Such repair is important for the well-being of the student involved and to mitigate the negative impact of the overall school climate and perceptions of safety.

Follow-up will include

- 1) Contact with the parents/guardians of both the student who engaged in bullying and the victim and,
- 2) Monitoring of the students involved.

Step 3: Support & counseling

When a problem with either the child who engages in bullying or the victim persists over time in spite of educational intervention, a more intensive response will be undertaken.

In such cases, a long-term strategy will be developed for both the student who is bullying and the victim.

- Support within the school and the community will be identified.
- School staff will meet with parents to review the problem and to discuss possible solutions. This may include exploring the underlying causes of the aggressive behavior as well as recognizing the student's strengths and challenges. Based on the student's needs, additional intervention may be recommended, such as individual counseling, mental health support, parenting/guardian support and/or skills training.
- Involved students will be assessed for the need for academic support.
- Staff will work with parents to connect them with the appropriate support and resources within the school and/or the community.

School staff will follow up with parents/guardians and the student to continue the support and help ensure that positive progress is being made.

Step 4: Application of discipline

If an incident referred to in previous steps is of a serious nature, or if the above steps have not been successful in stopping bullying behavior and increasing positive behavior, it may be necessary to impose disciplinary steps. These will range, depending on the circumstances, from (i) excluding the student accused of bullying behavior from extracurricular school activities; (ii) detention; (iii) suspension; or (iv) expulsion. In extremely serious cases, it may be appropriate to suspend or expel the student immediately as a result of the first incident of bullying. Otherwise, it is the expectation that discipline will be imposed progressively if behavior does not improve.

If a student is suspended, it is important that the student remain connected to the school and to his/her academic program. During the course of the suspension he/she will be provided access to learning resources.

Reintegration strategies will be developed in the expectation that the student will rejoin the school community and abide by school policies.

If available, the student will be referred to alternative programs that build skills, positive behavior and attitudes, as well as ongoing learning opportunities.

Ongoing Bullying Prevention Efforts

The Lycée is involved in many bullying prevention efforts throughout the year and have formed a Wellness committee comprised of teachers, administrative staff, and parents to review and expand the school's bullying prevention/intervention efforts on a continual basis. Details of the Lycée Bullying Prevention plan for the 2016/17 year will be available online in the near future.

Source : PREVNet, www.prevnet.ca

¹Currie, C. et al., eds. Social determinants of health and well-being among young people. Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study: international report from the 2009/2010 survey. Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2012 (Health Policy for Children and Adolescents, No. 6).

Registration in the school implies acceptance of LFT's rules and regulations

RESOURCES

Ontario Ministry of Education
Policy Document

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.pdf>

Stop Bullying

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/index.html>

Public Safety Canada

<http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/bllng-prvntn-smr/index-eng.aspx>

Pan-Canadian Joint
Consortium for School Health

<http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/index.php/resources/hbsc-factsheets?highlight=YToxOntpOjA7czo4OiJidWxseWluZy17fQ>

REFERENCES

¹Kowalski, R. M. (2000). "I was only kidding!": Victims' and perpetrators' perceptions of teasing. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26, 231-241.

²Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009). Policy Program Memorandum No. 144. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.pdf>

³Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence (PREVNet). (n.d.). Bullying: Definitions. <http://www.prevnet.ca/research/fact-sheets/bullying-definitions>

⁴The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education. (2010). Interim Edition <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/healthcurr18.pdf>

What are the forms of bullying?^{1,2,3}

1) Physical bullying can be:

- hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, beating up, stealing, or damaging property.

2) Verbal bullying can be:

- name-calling, mocking, hurtful teasing, humiliating or threatening someone, racist or sexist comments, harassment.

3) Social bullying can be:

- excluding others from the group, gossiping or spreading rumours, setting others up to look foolish, and damaging friendships;
- treating people badly because of their identity, saying bad things about a culture, calling someone racist names, telling racist jokes
- treating people badly because of their religion or beliefs, saying bad things about a religion or belief, calling someone names, telling jokes about a religion or belief
- leaving someone out or treating them badly because they are a boy or a girl, making someone feel uncomfortable because of their sexual orientation/gender identity/gender expression, making sexist comments or jokes, touching, pinching or grabbing someone in a sexual way, making rude comments about someone's sexual behaviour, calling someone gay, a fag, a lesbian or other names describing sexual orientation
- leaving someone out or treating them badly because of a disability, making someone feel uncomfortable because of a disability (e.g., mental or physical), making comments or jokes to hurt someone with a disability
- treating someone badly because of his/her appearance (e.g., weight-based teasing) or social class (e.g., not having name brand clothing or possessions).⁴

4) Electronic bullying:

Electronic communication lets youth connect with each other in all kinds of ways. Youth use social media to create relationships with others. Healthy face-to-face and online relationships mean that interactions are respectful. Disrespectful interactions become bullying. Cyberbullying:

- is electronic communication used to upset, threaten or embarrass another person;
- is using email, cell phones, text messages, and internet sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude, or damage reputations and friendships;
- includes put-downs, insults, spreading rumours, sharing private information, photos or videos or threatening to harm someone.
- is always aggressive and hurtful.