

# **Bullying and Violence Prevention and Intervention Plan**



## **Analysis of the school's situation with regard to bullying and violence**

St. George's strongly values providing a safe learning environment for all students, faculty and staff. Through our ongoing implementation of our Respectful Behaviour Policy, Student/Parent Handbook and the strong culture of relationship building and community partnerships, there are few incidents of bullying and violence requiring escalated disciplinary measures.

Preventative measures including ongoing classroom discussion of safe school culture, assemblies, and conversations with the guidance team help to bolster a positive learning environment. In the event of an incident of Bullying and/or Violence, the following plan outlines clear measures to respond.

## **School Protocols for Bullying and Violence**

St. George's recognizes the need and importance of individual expression and development. At the same time, the school sees itself as a community where a spirit of social cooperation is imperative in order to create a harmonious environment for all its members. To this end, the school attempts to create a non-authoritarian atmosphere based on cooperation and respect.

It is expected that students will relate to other members of the school community with understanding and sensitivity. We are committed to teaching our students to conduct themselves in a reasonable and responsible manner.

## **Bill 56 - An Act to Prevent and Stop Bullying and Violence in Schools**

In order to prevent and stop bullying and violence in school, it is important that roles and responsibilities of all in the community are clarified. We must provide a healthy and secure learning environment which allows every student to develop to their full potential, free from any form of bullying or violence.

### **Legislation and Amended by this Act:**

- Act Respecting Private Education (R.S.Q., chapter E-9.1, Section 63);
- Education Act (R.S.Q., chapter I-13.3).

### **Definitions as per Bill 56:**

The word “**bullying**” means any repeated direct or indirect behaviour, comment, act or gesture, whether deliberate or not, (including in person or via digital communication), which occurs in a context where there is a power imbalance between the persons concerned and which causes distress and injures, hurts, oppresses, intimidates or ostracizes.

The word “violence” means any intentional demonstration of verbal, written, physical, psychological or sexual force which causes distress and injures, hurts or oppresses a person by attacking their psychological or physical integrity or well-being, or their rights or property.

## **Sexual Assault**

“Sexual assault can take many different forms, depending on the act itself or the degree of violence involved. Anyone can be the victim of sexual assault during childhood, adolescence or adulthood.

A sexual assault is an act of a sexual nature, whether or not it involves physical contact, carried out by an individual without the consent of the person to whom it is addressed or, in some cases, notably those involving children, by manipulation of feelings or blackmail.

It is an act that aims to impose the assailant’s own desires on another person through the abuse of power, through the use of force or constraint, or through implied or explicit threats.

Sexual assault interferes with fundamental rights, notably the right to bodily security and inviolability, and to physical and psychological security.” ([Information Guide for Sexual Assault Victims](#))

## **Forms of Bullying:**

1. Physical: Harm done to person or their property
2. Verbal: Insults or name calling
3. Social: Intentional exclusion from groups or events
4. Cyber Bullying - including and not limited to online and threats, insults, rumors, identity stealing, harassment, discrimination, defamation, filtering or online blocking, posting fights, inappropriate messages, images, photos, incitement to “out” one or more persons, etc...
5. Harassment: Any hurtful, degrading, humiliating or shocking behaviour in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures, that affects a person’s dignity or psychological or physical integrity and that results in a harmful learning environment for the person. A single serious incidence of such behaviour that has a lasting harmful effect on a person may also constitute harassment.
6. Sexual Harassment: Harassment that makes a person feel uncomfortable with their body or sexuality.

The following are examples of sexual harassment:

- Touching someone in a sexual way without their consent or without the person wanting it.
- Making sexual comments about someone's body.

- Assessing someone's appearance.
- Making fun of a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or questioning person (LGBTQIA2+).
- Spreading rumours about someone's sexuality.
- Forcing someone to participate in an intimate act, such as kissing or touching.

N.B.: Not all relationships are healthy; sometimes partners can intimidate each other. This kind of intimidation is called dating violence. It can be psychological, physical or sexual.

## **Confidentiality**

In all cases, the confidentiality of involved parties will be respected, unless it is deemed that a direct threat is present that will affect the safety of one or several involved parties.

## **Prevention Team: Makeup and Responsibilities**

The school will annually appoint and/or identify the members of a Prevention Team whose composition shall include but not be limited to the following individuals:

- Head of School
- Principal, Elementary School
- Principal, High School
- Guidance Counselors (Elementary School and High School)
- Teacher Representative, High School
- Teacher Representative, Elementary School
- Two Student Representatives – Student Leadership Team Co-Chairs
- Student Supervisor, High School

## **Responsibilities of the Prevention Team include:**

- Planning, for the course of each academic year, how the topic of Bullying and Violence should be addressed. Note that the Principals have the right to accept, decline any and all activities if they deem such activities do not follow the founding principles, mission and educational project of St. George's School.
- Review and update the school's [Respectful Behaviour Policy](#) (Appendix I)
- The Principals will gather all school reported incidents and formulate a report which will be submitted to the Head of School and MEES (December) at the end of each academic year.

## **Purpose of the Plan:**

St. George's School of Montreal will continuously adapt and adopt existing and new policies to address and implement an anti-bullying and anti-violence plan. The purpose behind this plan is to identify and document the following:

- Describe the prevention measures in place (current and future) designed to put an end to all forms of bullying and violence.
- Identify the measures to encourage parents to collaborate with us in preventing and stopping bullying and violence.
- Outline the strategies for creating a healthy and secure learning environment for our students.
- Specify the actions to be taken and the supervisory or support measures to be offered when an act of bullying and/or violence is observed.
- Outline the disciplinary measures applicable to bullying and/or violence and specify the follow-up required in the event of any report or complaint concerning an act of bullying and/or violence.

## **Preventative Measures – Present**

As a practice and respecting the school's mission to encourage personal growth and become responsible world citizens, bullying, intimidation and violence is addressed on an ongoing basis through the use of:

- Class discussions
- Assemblies
- One on one intervention
- Teacher-student conferences
- Advisor groups
- Administrative intervention
- Invited speakers to address parents during Parent Breakfast meetings on the topic of Bullying and Intimidation
- Invited speakers to address students on the topic of Bullying and Intimidation
- Grade 6 Digital Citizenship class
- Guidance Counselors and/or Student Support Coordinators are readily available to listen and assist students at all times
- Specific curriculum such as CORE5, Sexuality Education, and Leadership address themes

## **Preventative Measures – Future**

- Students, teachers and parents will have access to an online anonymous reporting form.
- Organizing a series of lectures for students about Cyber safety, social networking etc.
- Creating a Community POD or Leadership Group – students will be called upon to create an Anti-Bullying and Violence St. George's Guide book for students.
- The inclusion of resources on the school website and the parent bulletin related to the prevention and dealing with acts of bullying and violence.

## **Supervisory and Support Measures**

The Principal(s) will call upon the Prevention Team if a situation arises and requires such an intervention. External support resources may be consulted as necessary.

In response to a situation requiring involvement of the Prevention Team:

- The team will meet and immediately assess the situation.
- The Principal will contact the parents to inform them of the situation.
- The student will be directed to immediate medical/health intervention (if required).
- A meeting will be held with the parents to determine the best course of action for future school reintegration (if feasible) and support measures to be put in place for the child (Home and School).

## **Early Intervention Measures**

With the exception of severe incidents, all initial comportment issues, including bullying and/or violence are addressed by the Teacher, Advisor or Student Supervisor.

Should the unacceptable behaviour continue or escalate, the Prevention Team may choose to use a progressive/restorative strategy to address the infraction.

These interventions are:

- Developmentally appropriate
- Include opportunities for students to focus on improving their behaviour
- Are considered to be in the best interest of all involved
- Examples of progressive/restorative interventions may include, but are not limited to:
  - Contacting the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to collaborate on a home-school intervention and to offer parenting support
  - Review of expectations
  - Verbal reminders
  - Contract between the student, School, and family
  - Written work assignment that addresses the behaviour and has a learning component
  - Conflict mediation and resolution
  - Referral to counseling and/or external consultation
  - Group interventions and education

## **Escalated Disciplinary Action**

In cases where strategies above are ineffective or when the behaviour in question poses a serious safety risk, the Prevention Team may determine that it is in the best interest of all students involved to apply escalated disciplinary actions.

These actions are:

- Detentions
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class
- Restitution for damages
- Restrictions on in-school internet use or monitoring of St. George's Gmail email communications
- Meeting with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), student and Principal
- Referral to a community agency for anger management counseling
- Recommendation for a psychological, psychiatric, or psycho-educational evaluation
- Individual or family therapy referral
- Consultation with police, youth protection services, or other appropriate external agencies
- Short-term suspension (in-school and out of school), with support to student and parent(s). Mitigating circumstances must be considered before a decision to suspend.

- The School may suspend a student if, in its opinion, such a disciplinary sanction is necessary to put an end to acts of bullying or violence or to compel the student to comply with the School's Respectful Behaviour Policy.
- Non renewal/expulsion/withdrawal

## **Measures to Encourage Parents to Collaborate in Preventing and Stopping Bullying and Violence and in Creating a Healthy and Secure Learning Environment**

The collaboration of parents as the primary caregivers of their children is essential to the success of the prevention and intervention plan.

The School will organize parent information sessions on the theme of violence and bullying. Each year, parents and students are expected to read the Student/Parent Handbook and the Bullying and Violence Prevention and Intervention Plan as part of their re-enrolment to the school.

In the event of intervention with children, the guidance counselor or campus principal and the School team will be able to advise parents and direct them to appropriate resources.

In all cases where a child is a victim, witness or perpetrator of an act of intimidation or violence, the institution expects parents to remain calm and to be able to take the necessary distance from the events so that they can act as fairly and impartially as possible. They will need to remember that it is not they personally, but their child who may be the victim, witness or perpetrator, and that actions to change the situation must be taken. They will need to work with and accept the recommendations of the School administration.

## **Procedures for reporting an Act of Bullying or Violence and Registering a Complaint (including cyberbullying)**

All acts of bullying or violence are important and all incidents must be reported, particularly the use of social media or communication technologies for cyberbullying purposes, if only informally, to the appropriate administrator.

Faculty and Staff Members:

**Immediate Incident Reporting:** When a faculty or staff member witnesses or is informed of an instance of bullying/potential bullying which they deem worthy of reporting, they are expected to communicate a summary of the incident, including who was involved and what actions were taken, to the Campus Principal as soon as possible. Incidents that may appear isolated or innocuous may be reported informally.

**Gathering Incident Information:** Collect as many of the following details as possible

- Names of all parties (witnesses, perpetrators, etc.)
- Details of the event



- What happened
- When
- Where
- Collect corroborating information
  - Emails, text messages, camera footage, etc.
- Interventions to date (if applicable)
- Name of person reporting the incident (unless wishing to remain anonymous)

#### Parents:

If a parent witnesses or is informed of an instance of bullying/potential bullying, they are expected to report this to their child's Homeroom Teacher (ES) or Advisor (HS). The teacher in question will then follow the procedure as listed above.

#### Students:

If a student witnesses or is involved in an instance of bullying/potential bullying, they may approach any staff member, who will then follow the procedure listed above.

### **Actions to be taken when a student, teacher or other staff member or any other person observes an act of bullying or violence**

#### *Staff Members*

When a staff member witnesses an incident of bullying or potential bullying, they are expected to respond in a manner that considers the best interests of all students involved. The general guideline is:

- Intervention and coaching/correction (according to our Respectful Behaviour Policy regarding the behaviour observed)
- Immediate communication to the Campus Principal, summarizing the incident witnessed and students involved
- Follow up conversation with the target of the behaviour, away from the aggressor
- When required, communication with campus principal and/or guidance counselor

However, in instances where the physical, emotional, or psychological safety of a student could be threatened by this procedure, staff members are encouraged to exercise good judgment in deviating from these guidelines.

The Campus Principal will review incident reports as they are filed and determine if further disciplinary action needs to be taken, or if additional support measures need to be offered. The Campus Principal will complete an incident report, detailing all follow up measures taken.

#### *Others*

A person who believes they are a victim of bullying or violence or who witnesses it must speak to an adult faculty and staff member, who will welcome and accompany them throughout the process.

### *Means of filing a Complaint*

They may make their complaint verbally or submit it in writing or communicate through an e-mail.

### *Follow-up to a report or complaint of bullying or violence: Intervention and Investigation Process*

The person designated to ensure the implementation of the School violence prevention and intervention plan must

- Act impartially, diligently, and confidentially.
- Conduct a situation analysis to properly identify the problem.
- Offer support to the complainant and help them express their version of the facts.
- Ensure that the complainant is safe.
- With the consent of the complainant or the complainant's parents, meet with the person who is the subject of the complaint in order to put an end to the behaviour.
- Meet with witnesses.
- Take any action it deems appropriate to put an end to the situation.

The person believed to be subjected to violence or intimidation, as well as the person alleged to be responsible for the misconduct, will be treated impartially. The primary goal will be to protect and secure the victim and to stop the bullying.

A collaborative attitude is expected from everyone, both the victim and the person(s) suspected of bullying or violence.

The Administration of the School, through the person in charge of the file, may investigate the matter at any time, whether or not a complaint has been filed.