Community, Culture and Caring
School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

At Merwin Greer Public School, we believe the most effective means to address bullying is through a comprehensive, school-wide approach that engages all stakeholders – students, parents, guardians, staff, School Councils, volunteers, and the community.

This school-based plan aligns with the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Our school plan promotes a school-wide approach to ensuring we have a safe, inclusive, and accepting school environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, and other inappropriate behaviours.
The Board's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, as well as our school's plan, reflect the Ministry of Education guidelines.

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1. EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND OUTREACH

Merwin Greer Public School. recognizes that a whole-school approach to involving and engaging the school community will help us to address inappropriate behaviour.

We will focus on education, awareness, and outreach by doing the following:

Restorative Practices – daily use, circles in the classroom, Zones of Regulation

A circle is a way of meeting with people and of having conversations in which the shape itself implies, community, connection, inclusion, fairness, equality, and wholeness. It draws on the Aboriginal tradition of the Talking Circle in a complex multi-cultural, contemporary society. Meeting in a circle ensures that everyone is respected, has a voice, and is appropriately heard.

Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviour:
Consequences for unacceptable behaviour are appropriate for the individual, circumstances, and actions. Consequences include learning opportunities to help reinforce positive behaviours and help students make future good choices. For students with special needs, consequences and support are consistent with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The Board, principals, and vice-principals consider all mitigating circumstances and other factors, as required by our Safe, Caring, and Restorative School Manuals

Progressive Discipline checklist – list of practices used:

restorative practice,
warnings,
time-outs,
time-owed,
restricted privileges,
restitution, i.e., financial, community service,
suspensions, and/or
expulsion.

We will engage parents in conversations about preventing bullying and in promoting a positive school climate by recognizing that effective anti-bullying strategies must be based on evidence. We will base our bullying prevention and intervention strategies, practices, and programs on evidence from our school climate surveys and other relevant information and communications we receive. We will measure the success of our anti-bullying initiatives and strategies:

Evaluate the evidence to identify the main areas of concern and issues in the physical environment, determine current procedures, and assess the success of those procedures, based on results of the school climate surveys and other relevant information.

Identify children and youth involved in bullying (including the bully, the person being bullied, and those who may have witnessed or been affected by the bullying), as well as identify and assess any roles.

Review and update our anti-bullying strategies because of gathering new information and sharing the information with our school community.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

We will evaluate the results of future school climate surveys to make sure our follow-up actions are effective. This evidence will identify and measure the success of steps we took to prevent or respond to bullying and to support students. This will help us to make further changes, where needed, to ensure safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive school environments.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

We recognize that a consistent, whole-school approach, strong policies, and appropriate legislation are important for bringing widespread change.

We also recognize that our policies and goals must address the challenges identified in our school climate surveys and other data.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Violence prevention strategies and programs (Jaffe et. Al.p.6) need to focus on: (select as many areas as are applicable)
Healthy lifestyles and relationships
Student leadership
Character Education – Empathy, Courage, Respect
Citizenship development
Conflict resolution
Restorative practice
Bullying prevention
Peer mediation

2. EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE (see Appendix B)

Pre-evaluation strategy

Issues of concern by our students, staff, and parents are raised through tools such as:

Use the school climate survey results
Student focus group
School Assessment Checklist

Concerns raised regarding our physical environment are raised through tools such as:

Workplace Physical Environment Risk Assessment
School Safety Audit

The steps we follow for reporting, responding to, and following up on issues are as follows:

Complete a Safe Schools Incident Report form and follow up on the incident
Review our school climate survey results and other communications to help identify concerns, address them, and identify best practices.

Based on our school climate surveys and other communications, we will continue to work on the following areas that need improvement:

Student Leadership Activities
Direct instruction on inclusive language
Increase Indigenous cultural learning
Increase racialized students' academic achievement and well-being
Use of planned lessons focused on Equity
Community speakers to promote understanding
Book studies for teaching staff

3. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS (see Appendix B)

We will actively communicate our policies, procedures, and guidelines to our school community. We also will involve our school community in reviewing our policies, procedures, and guidelines relating to bullying, discrimination, and harassment), by taking the following steps:

Informing parents through Edsby
Informing parents through School Messenger

The roles and responsibilities of everyone in the school community - including students, staff, parents, and community members are as follows:

Everyone has their own unique and equally valued perspective.
Thoughts influence emotions, and emotions influence actions.
Empathy and consideration.
Needs and unmet needs.
Collective responsibility for problem-solving and decision-making.

4. PREVENTION (see Appendix C)

We recognize that promoting a positive, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment will help to prevent bullying, harassment, and discrimination. We are committed to taking steps to prevent bullying.

These steps include active use of our Safe, Caring, and Restorative School Team, which promotes a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate. This team will include a student, parent, teacher, non-teaching staff member, community partner, and the principal.

The roles and responsibilities of this team are as follows:

provide opportunities for teachers to develop effective classroom management skills using progressive discipline
establish and maintain respectful, safe, caring, and restorative classrooms

Other steps to prevent bullying, harassment, and discrimination will include:

A. PROGRAMS TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO BULLYING

Restorative Practices
Participation in all Days of Pink
Zones of Regulation, Kelso's Choices, Step 2
Student Council and other opportunities for Student Leadership
School Code of Conduct

KPR equity and diversity contacts
Publicizing KPR's Report Bullying weblink through school messenger and the school website
Clubs
Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy Toolkit
Guidelines on the non-use of racial and other Epithets and slurs
Guidelines for supporting transgender and gender-diverse students

B. PROGRAMS THAT BUILD POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Restorative practice
Circles in the classroom
The restorative classroom, using restorative approaches to foster effective learning
School Council meetings
School Open House
Assemblies

C. ACTIVITIES THAT PROMOTE A POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

School focus on KPR Character Traits
Seven Grandfather Teachings
Circles in Classroom
Positive Choices/Positive Decisions
Assemblies & In-School Presentations
Belonging and Inclusion
Calming Routines
Mind Up Curriculum
School Spirit Days

D. AWARENESS-RAISING STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS

Social-emotional learning programs
Participating in Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week in November, Pink Shirt Day in February, and the Day of Pink in April

E. RAISING AWARENESS AND ENGAGING PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

School council-focused discussions to raise awareness and engage parents
Information sent through School Messenger and Edsby

F. CURRICULUM AND DAILY LEARNING

3-part lesson and restorative practice

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) on building safe classroom communities using the 5 themes and 5 useful questions:
Everyone has a unique and equally valued perspective.
Thoughts influence emotions, and emotions influence actions.
Empathy and consideration.
Needs and unmet needs
Collective responsibility for problem-solving and decision making

G.   STAFF AND STUDENT ROLE MODELS

We also have identified the following learning and training opportunities for staff and the school community:

Staff training
Circles in the classroom
Building safe classroom communities
Emotional Intelligence and Restorative Practice

Below is a list of challenges most likely in our school setting
Frequent turnover among administrators
Increased reporting of violence with the implementation of new programs
Unpredictable crisis
Difficulty developing and sustaining committees with community partners
External changes that change the mandate

5. INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES (see Appendix C)
We will take the following steps to respond to all incidents of bullying, harassment, discrimination, and other inappropriate behaviours, and to support students.

Provide Safe Methods for Students to Report Bullying
Speak to a Teacher, other staff member, Principal or Vice Principal
KPRDSB Report Bullying Web link – available on all school websites
Anonymous drop box in school
Via parent/guardian conversation with school staff
Texting or emailing a school staff member
Kids Help Phone Line – available on all school websites
Restorative practices
Progressive discipline

APPENDIX A – BULLYING DEFINITIONS AND COMMUNICATION

We use the Ministry of Education's definition of bullying as follows:

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").

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.

In other words, bullying:
   • is a deliberate act to harm or exclude someone or "put someone down"
   • usually happens more than once over time
   • involves someone having more power over another and abusing that power

Cyber-bullying means using the internet, social media, texting or other electronic means to bully someone.

In communicating with students, staff and our school community, we will:

- Identify different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying
- Understand the myths and realities of bullying behaviour
- Identify bullying and how it is different from conflict, aggression and teasing
- Understand power and relationships among peers
- Identify how bias, prejudice and hate can lead to bullying
- Identify different signs and underlying factors of bullying, such as body image, racism, sexism, homophobia, disability, etc.
- Understand a "whole school approach" and the importance of everyone contributing to a positive school climate for student achievement, success and well-being
- Understand the factors that contribute to a safe, inclusive, caring and accepting school climate
- Identify ways to make students aware of how they can help prevent and respond to bullying
- Identify ways to engage parents in conversations about preventing bullying and promoting a positive school climate
- Reach out to parents and the broader school community to promote safe, caring, inclusive school environments
- Reflect on our relationships and interactions, and focus on promoting healthy relationships
- Become knowledgeable about community partners and resources available in our community

We also will share with our school community, all related policies and procedures. These include the Board and School Code of Conduct, equity and inclusive education policy and guidelines for religious accommodations, procedures to address incidents of discrimination, progressive discipline approach, and bullying prevention and intervention plans and strategies.

APPENDIX B - EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE

We recognize that effective anti-bullying strategies must be based on evidence. We will base our bullying prevention and intervention strategies, practices, and programs on evidence from our school climate surveys and other relevant information and communications we receive. We will measure the success of our anti-bullying initiatives and strategies:

- Evaluate the evidence to identify the main areas of concern and issues in the physical environment, determine current procedures, and assess the success of those procedures, based on results of the school climate surveys and other relevant information.

- Identify children and youth involved in bullying (including the bully, the person being bullied, and those who may have witnessed or been affected by the bullying), as well as identify and assess any roles.

- Review and update our anti-bullying strategies as a result of gathering new information and share the information with our school community.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

We will evaluate the results of future school climate surveys to make sure our follow-up actions are effective. This evidence will identify and measure the success of steps we took to prevent or respond to bullying and to support students. This will help us to make further changes, where needed, to ensure safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive school environments.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

We recognize that a consistent, whole-school approach, strong policies, and appropriate legislation are important for bringing widespread change.

We also recognize that our policies and goals must address the challenges identified in our school climate surveys and other data.

APPENDIX C – PREVENTION, INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES
We also will:
- "check in" regularly with students who are at risk of being bullied or who are affected by bullying
- provide opportunities for teachers to develop effective classroom management skills using progressive discipline
- establish and maintain respectful, safe, caring, and restorative classrooms
- provide supervision in areas where and when bullying happens, as identified through climate surveys

INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT STRATEGIES
We recognize the importance of responding immediately to bullying and providing support to students as quickly as possible through a school-wide approach.
To this end, we will:
- use" teachable moments" and progressive discipline to address inappropriate behaviour
- consider mitigating other factors that are affecting a student's behaviour
- ensure we have steps in place to identify and respond to bullying when it happens
- identify ways to support all students involved in bullying
- communicate the progressive discipline approach to our school community, as well as procedures we have in place to support students