

# ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-VIOLENCE PLAN & POLICY

VALCARTIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**School Year: 2022 - 2023**

date

GB reviewed and approved:



## **Definitions**

### *Violence*

"Any use of force, verbal, written, physical, psychological or sexual, against any person, by an individual or a group, with intent to directly or indirectly wrong, injure or oppress that person by attacking his or her integrity, whether psychological or physical well-being, rights or property." (Art. 13, EA)

An aggressor is defined as someone who demonstrates power in terms of strength and expresses or shows this power. The aggressor acts purposively with deliberate will. Acts of violence can be self-directed or be towards others. There can be devastating effects on the victims, witnesses and classmates. There are degrees of violence which can affect the individual on a physical, social, material and/or psychological level or can infringe on an individual's rights and liberties.

### *Bullying*

"Any behavior, spoken word, act or gesture, whether deliberate or not and of a repetitive character, expressed directly or indirectly including cyberspace, in a context characterized by a disparity in the balance of power between the concerned persons, having the effects of engendering feelings of distress, injury, hurt, oppression or of being ostracized." (Art. 13, EA)

Bullying can show itself in diverse forms such as homophobia, racial discrimination or violence in relationships. For example, it can be seen in the following behaviours: name-calling, derisive laughter, defiance, humbling or threatening another person, making racist or sexist comments, hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, punching, stealing or damaging property, excluding from the group or isolating socially, gossiping or rumor-mongering, mocking, ending friendships, etc.

### *Indirect Bullying*

Indirect bullying is defined as organizing the diminishing of the social status or exclusion of a targeted person from the group (e.g. making someone less popular, isolating an individual). This type of behavior and attitude is often difficult to perceive. For example, it can be seen in the following behaviours: gossiping, spreading rumors, making a fool of someone, denigrating that person or suggesting that he or she be excluded from a group, using of non-verbal language (e.g. turning one's back, mumbling or rolling one's eyes), etc.

Bullying is aggression and not necessarily a physical altercation. The term conflict means a shock or a clash. It suggests differences that are opposite, i.e. a difference between two individuals, two groups or an individual and a group, who are interacting because their interests, their objectives, their values, their way of doing things, their roles or their ideas are in sharp contrast. A jostle, a fight, an insult or another threat restricted to two individuals on an equal power footing is not considered bullying. Bullying exists when there is an imbalance of power between two individuals or an individual and a group.

### Interpretation of the definition of bullying as opposed to normal conflicts

Criteria	Bullying	Conflict
<i>In intention to do harm or not</i>	Intimidation is an incident between two or more students where one acts aggressively towards another, whether deliberately or not.	<i>Conflict is an altercation between two or more students who do not share the same point of view. The conflict can result in acts of violence.</i>
<i>A dominate person or group</i>	The student who intimidates through bullying wants to win and to do so, he or she tries to dominate the target person. Those who intimidate generally have an advantage over those being bullied (e.g. bigger, older, more popular, more numerous). An imbalance of power exists.	<i>Students argue and heatedly discuss an issue to get across their point of view. Power-wise, they are on an equal footing.</i>
<i>Feelings of distress and powerlessness for the student being bullied</i>	There is a victim, because the student facing aggression feels powerless. Students who bully feel they are entitled to resort to violence, but won't want to necessarily take that step. When violence does ensure, the bully justifies or dismisses responsibility (e.g. denial, frivolity). The student subjected to bullying withdraws into silence, becomes confused, even sometimes accepting the wrong-doing and protecting the aggressor from exposure. Victims show a noticeable restraint and lack of freedom in the way they argue back or defend themselves. They can also be overwhelmed by a sense of shame or despair.	<i>The conflict results in no obvious victim, even though both parties may feel they have lost. Each is free to give their own version of events or defend their point of view.</i>
<i>Repeated incidents</i>	Acts of bullying are repeated. Intimidation requires specific intervention. Mediation is not the first intervention to be envisaged.	<i>Conflict can fester if it is not solved. It can be settled by negotiation and/or mediation.</i>

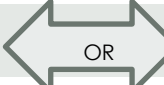
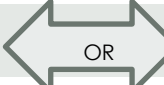
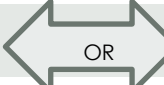
Information provided by Eastern Townships School Board

Annually, the Governing Board is responsible for approving the anti-bullying and anti-violence plan, and any updated version of the plan, proposed by the school principal. The main purpose of the plan must be to prevent and stop all forms of bullying and violence targeting a student, a teacher or any other staff member (Art.75.1, EA).

This action plan and policy is destined for students mainly, but all employees may refer to the Board's harassment policy if needed. Valcartier Elementary School strongly believes that all forms of violence and bullying are unacceptable behaviours regardless of the age or status, i.e. students, employees, parents, etc.

## Flowchart

When violence or a bullying incident has been reported or witnessed

<b>Verify if the incident matches the definitions:</b>	<p>The word bullying means any behavior, spoken word, act or gesture, whether deliberate or not and of a repetitive character, expressed directly or indirectly including cyberspace, in a context characterized by a disparity in the balance of power between the concerned persons, having the effects of engendering feelings of distress, injury, hurt, oppression or of being ostracized.</p> <p>The word violence means any use of force, verbal, written, physical, psychological or sexual, against any person, by an individual or a group, with intent to directly or indirectly wrong, injure or oppress that person by attacking his or her integrity, whether psychological or physical well-being, rights or property.</p>						
<b>Inform the administration</b>	<p>Validate the information received and determine its credibility</p>						
<b>Evaluate the action plan</b>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; width: 50%;">Retain the incident</td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 10%;"></td> <td style="text-align: center; width: 40%;">Discard the incident</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the school team</li> <li>• Schedule a meeting</li> <li>• Follow the action plan</li> </ul> </td> <td></td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with parent and students</li> <li>• Keep track of events</li> <li>*Ends of process</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	Retain the incident		Discard the incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the school team</li> <li>• Schedule a meeting</li> <li>• Follow the action plan</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with parent and students</li> <li>• Keep track of events</li> <li>*Ends of process</li> </ul>
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<b>Make necessary changes to the action plan</b>	<p>Reconvene the school team to evaluate the efficiency of the plan</p> <p>Develop the action plan for the future, if needed</p>						

## School Analysis

Being a safe school has been part of VES' Educational Project for over 20 years. We teach, model, practice and reinforce rules and positive expectations. We recognize good behaviours. We use the

“Soaring Eagles” to officially recognize students who have demonstrated the monthly targeted character traits.

We have students reflect about misbehaviour and school-wide expectations with the help of an adult supervisor as part of our REBAA system. Parents are informed of reflections made. We keep track of all incidents using the SWIS online tracking system. REBAA refers to Reflection and Evaluation of Behaviours, Actions and Attitudes.

This priority reflects a trend in growing public awareness of the increasing need for a focus on physical well-being in today's children. Within the framework of the physical education program and well-being area, critical issues related to positive, active social relationships are addressed, as children practice many of the social skills necessary to be good citizens in their school and community. Our cycle 3 students are surveyed every year with an online, confidential survey called *Tell Them From Me*. We use this data to help guide future decision making in this area.

### Results (Sources: Registered Suspension Tally Sheets, Tell Them From Me Survey)

School year (#of respondents)	Sense of belonging to VES (%)	Anxiety levels: moderate to severe (%)	Victims of bullying: past 6 months (%)	Feeling safe in, to and from VES (%)	# of suspended days given for violence + bullying
2017-2018 (22)	86	23	10	73	1.5
2016-2017 (21) including gr. 4 now	90	0	10	76	1
2015-16 (15)	93	21	27	93	0.5
2014-15 (14)	100	Ne	Ne	Ne	1
2013-14 (7)	86	0	14	100	0
2012-13 (13)	92	0	8	92	Ne
2011-12 (13)	100	8	8	92	ne

### Code of Conduct (Extract)

The complete version of the Code of Conduct is given to all parents at the beginning of each school year.

Once the code of conduct is explained and discussed, the students are expected to accept responsibility for behaving in accordance with them. Students have the right to top quality education, safety, and respect. These rights come with responsibilities and expectations. We expect VES students to be active responsible learners, to be safe and to be respectful.

The applicable disciplinary sanctions, according to the severity or repetitive nature of the prohibited acts (Art. 76.3, EA), may consist of: loss of privilege; time outs; compensation for pain or hurt inflicted; or parents may be contacted for assistance or billed for damaged goods. Any acts of violence and bullying are dealt with according to the school's Anti-bullying and Anti-violence plan. Serious consequences are given by the administration such as: limiting/denying access to an area of the school; withholding participation in any extracurricular activities, school trips, sports events or school sponsored activities; withdrawal of recess or lunchtime privilege; exclusion; detention; in-school or home suspensions; and expulsion.

The bullying behaviours, and verbal or other exchanges, are prohibited at all times, including during school transportation, and regardless of the means used, including social media (Art. 76.2, EA), therefore, the following behaviours will not be accepted:

- \* intentional punching, pushing, kicking, hitting, spitting, pinching, squeezing, twisting, slapping, swearing, etc.
- \* intentional throwing of rocks, snowballs, or any harmful object.
- \* possession/use of: firecrackers, knives, cap guns, or other objects that could cause harm to themselves/others.
- \* intentional teasing or bullying.
- \* stealing or damaging property or learning materials of the school or others. Parents will be charged accordingly.

\*These are examples, and are not limited to only the above list.

## Preventative measures

### First line: Communication

Staff members communicate frequently with parents, students and with each other. It is important to communicate that all forms of violence and bullying is unacceptable.

### Second line: Consultation

Staff members will discuss situations with administration and ask for advice from the professionals available. We have on-call services from the Jeffery Hale's nurse and social worker, a guidance counselor/psychologist (12%), a 4% spiritual animator, a CLC coordinator (50%) and an SQ partnership.

### Third line: Teach character traits

Teachers use character building programs to develop social skills, build self-esteem and teach steps to stop violence and bullying. Ethics related lesson plans are built into the English Language Arts curriculum. School-wide projects are created and encourage positive interactions in a proactive approach against bullying and violence.

### Fourth line: Create distances

Staff members keep a keen eye on students engaging in doubtful behaviours and will separate potential bullies from potential victims.

### Fifth line: Positive behaviour

Staff members create a positive behavior system where students understand school-wide expectations, reflect and see the impact of one's actions and attitudes. Teachers and CLC Coordinator set up projects that promote peaceful conduct and violence prevention. Monthly, students are exposed to a character trait, practice it and are recognized for their understanding of it. Positive specific feedback serves to sustain behaviour that is appropriate and effective.

All members of the Valcartier Elementary School community come together to discuss preventative measures, teaching strategies, support measures, evaluate support measures and review action plans. Our partners are: the Central Quebec School Board, the Governing Board members, the Parent Participation Organization, employees of the Community Hall, the SQ, the military police officers, teachers, support staff, professionals and the administration.

## Reporting process and complaints

Reporting of an incident: All instances of bullying or violent acts must be reported to school personnel. Means of reporting include discussions, photocopied electronic discussions, emails, phone calls or written notes.

Collecting of Data: The employee who is made aware of an act of violence or bullying will use the proper listening skills to collect factual information about the incident(s). Factual notes are handed to the principal to be tallied. The principal will tally incidents reported from students directly, by staff and by parents using the SWIS data bank and via the Board's incident report form.

Listening skills include: pay attention and keep quiet while the person reports incidents; be patient, allow time for the person to talk; ask clarifying questions without prompting (e.g. could you repeat? I am not sure I understand, could you explain again?); use open-ended questions; take notes.

Formal complaints: Students and parents may file written reports of conduct they consider to be bullying. These written reports shall be specific as to the actions giving rise to suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the alleged conduct, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying and the names of any potential witnesses. These written reports can be given to any teacher or staff member who will then forward them to the principal for review and action.

Informal complaints: Students may make an informal complaint of conduct they consider to be bullying by verbal report to a teacher or staff member. Such informal complaint shall be specific as to the actions giving rise to suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the alleged conduct, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying and the names of any potential witnesses. The individuals who receive the informal complaint shall promptly forward a written report including the information provided to the principal for review and action.

Anonymous complaint: Students who make an informal complaint as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence with staff members. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such actions may be taken that does not disclose the source of the complaint and is consistent with the due rights of the students alleged to have committed acts of bullying.

### Action plan and responsibilities

Actions	Roles and Responsibilities <b>*All incidents will be treated confidentially</b>
Report of and collecting data of an incident of bullying or violence	All members of the Valcartier Elementary School Community
Receive and deal with all reports	The school principal will retain or discard incidents after analysis of the incident
Complete the School Board's incident and or accident report	The school principal or secretary will write an incident/accident report from GPI and file in the office files for future reference
Meet with the people involved in the incident	The school principal will meet with the victim(s), alleged perpetrator(s) and witnesses including staff members and will document content of the meeting
Inform parents of students involved	The school principal will contact parents of the victim(s) and alleged perpetrator(s)
Determine actions to be taken	The school principal will schedule a meeting with the school team: teachers, support staff, and professionals. The school team will create an intervention plan to put in place for the victim(s) and alleged perpetrator(s)
Inform the Director General if a suspension has been given to the alleged perpetrator(s)	The school principal will inform the Director General of incidents and sanctions by means of the monthly register sheet

Inform parents of suspended students	The school principal will call parents of suspended student(s) to discuss assistance, remedial and reintegration measures imposed on the student(s)
Inform parents of possible assistance	The school principal will inform parents of their right to request assistance from the person designated by the Board
Inform the Police	If warranted by the severity of the incident, The school principal will call the police department
Evaluate the action plan	The school team will evaluate the impact of the actions put in place and modify the plan if needed
Refer parents to the School Board's Complaint Examination Procedure	If parents and students are not satisfied with the actions taken and further modifications brought, they will send a written letter to the Director General. The director General will look into the situation and propose possible solutions
Refer parents to the Secretary General	If parents and students are not satisfied with the actions taken, they will send a written letter to the Secretary General. The Secretary General will refer the complaint to the revision committee
Reevaluate the complaint expressed by parents	If the parents and students are still not satisfied, the question is submitted to the Council of Commissioners
*At any time during the process, parents and students may refer a complaint to the Student Ombudsman	

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality is beneficial to everyone involved. It allows the parties to resolve issues in a private manner and protects them against harmful gossip.

Every participant in this process is expected to maintain confidentiality throughout the process and thereafter. Only those who must be informed of the details will be involved.

To protect the interests of all parties involved, all information must remain confidential. All instances of bullying and violent acts must be reported to the school personnel.

## Support measures

Through our character building programs, we help students: stick up for themselves and each other; break the code of silence; feel stronger and more confident; use humor and other social skills to disarm perpetrators.

The school team looks out for warning signs to identify potential perpetrators and victims to prevent acts of violence and bullying.

The school team sends a clear message that bullying is never caused by the victim. Counseling is provided to work with the victim and the perpetrator. Students are invited to join a counseling mentorship program with a chosen staff member. The professionals are available on call to help students deal with violence and intimidation.

The school team tries to contain the incident and prevents reoccurrence by setting peer guidance. Victims may be assigned class, school, bathroom, cafeteria, yard and bus buddies to empower students while learning in a safe environment. Alleged perpetrators may be, in the same manner, assigned an escort to prevent further incidents.

The school team encourages victims and perpetrators to go through self-esteem booster activities such as planned successful learning situations, community involvement, school-wide projects and character building programs, etc.

After a suspension, the perpetrator and parents will meet with the school team. The school team will discuss expectations regarding acceptable behaviours and the code of conduct and behavior contract to sign. Alleged perpetrators can be distracting, disruptive, frustrating and even scary at times, but they need as much help, understanding and compassion as the victims themselves.

## **Disciplinary sanctions**

The aim for sanctions is to help the victim feel safe and stop bullying as well as to hold the alleged perpetrator accountable.

In order to respond appropriately, the school team must be aware of individual needs and of the following risk factors that may affect behaviours: learning difficulties (dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, Autism), family difficulties and social disadvantages. These particularities will be taken into consideration when determining sanctions.

Disciplinary sanctions and corrective actions may include, but are not limited to one or more of the following:

Reflection sheet and apology letter; limiting or denying student access to a part or area of the school; withholding participation in any extracurricular activity, school trip, sports event or school sponsored activities; withdrawal of recess and lunchtime privileges; fixed period exclusion (a student will learn and work from an office other than the classroom for a determined period); detention; in-school suspension; home suspension; expulsion.

## **Follow-up**

A student who has engaged in bullying is likely to do it again. Similarly, a victim is at risk for being victimized by other students. It is important to pay close attention to both victims and alleged perpetrators.

The school principal will meet with the victim after the implementation of the support measures. The school principal will assess the efficiency of the measures put in place.

A chosen staff member, from our counseling program, will make sure to check in with the victim, before or after targeted transitional periods, to coach social skills prior to an activity or to find out if the student is experiencing any further bullying or acts of violence. The Check-in staff member will take notes to keep the facts straight and have a written record of the conversations.

A chosen staff member, from our counseling program, will make sure to check in with the alleged perpetrator, before or after targeted transitional periods, to restate the expected behaviours or to find out if the student is demonstrating any further bullying or acts of violence. The Check-in staff member will take notes to keep the facts straight and have a written record of the conversations.

The school team will be monitoring the situation closely.

## **Useful links**

CQSB Harassment Policy:

[http://www.cqsb.qc.ca/MyScriptorBD/publication/911389/POLICY%20FOR%20COUNTERING%20ALL%20FORMS%20OF%20HARASSMENT\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.cqsb.qc.ca/MyScriptorBD/publication/911389/POLICY%20FOR%20COUNTERING%20ALL%20FORMS%20OF%20HARASSMENT_ENG.pdf)

Bullying prevention sites:

[www.daretocare.ca](http://www.daretocare.ca)

<http://www.pacerkidsagainstbullying.org>



<http://www.stopbullying.gov>

## **Annex**

Included: Intervention plans and follow-up Check-in form

## Victim's Intervention Plan

Date:		Staff Members:			
Student's name:		Status:		<input type="checkbox"/> Victim	
Problematic Behavior:					
Classroom measures to take:		<input type="checkbox"/> Preferred seating to separate victim from alleged perpetrator <input type="checkbox"/> Teach a curriculum that promotes kindness, communication, cooperation, friendship and includes lessons and activities stressing empathy, anger management, and conflict resolution skills			
Individual measure for the victim:		Lesson Plan:			
		Teaching material needed:			
		<input type="checkbox"/> Review class and school rules. Take a stand on violence and bullying – Zero tolerance. Reassure the victim that we are taking care of the situation			
Set up:		<input type="checkbox"/> support measures	Bus buddy <input type="radio"/>	Class buddy <input type="radio"/>	Yard buddy <input type="radio"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/> Preferred seating	Class <input type="radio"/>	Cafeteria <input type="radio"/>	Bus <input type="radio"/>
Alternative routes to and from:		Cubbies <input type="radio"/>	Yard <input type="radio"/>	Bathroom <input type="radio"/>	Cafeteria <input type="radio"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Character building skills		Professional help requested:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Conference with students:		Past behavior:			
		Strategies to change behavior:			
		Find ways to monitor process:			
		Incentive system for improvements:			
Additional comments:					
Inform parents		Date:		Comments made:	

## Alleged perpetrator's Intervention Plan

Date:		Staff Members:					
Student's name:		Status:		<input type="checkbox"/> Alleged perpetrator			
Problematic Behavior:							
Classroom measures to take:		<input type="checkbox"/> Preferred seating to separate victim from alleged perpetrator <input type="checkbox"/> Teach a curriculum that promotes kindness, communication, cooperation, friendship and includes lessons and activities stressing empathy, anger management, and conflict resolution skills					
Lesson Plan:							
Teaching material needed:							
Individual measure for the victim:		<input type="checkbox"/> Review class and school rules. Take a stand on violence and bullying – Zero tolerance. Warn of future consequences					
		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate consequences		Apologize <input type="radio"/>		Discuss the incident <input type="radio"/>	
				Pay for damaged belongings <input type="radio"/>		Spend time in the office or elsewhere <input type="radio"/>	
				Forfeit recess or other privileges <input type="radio"/>		In-School suspension <input type="radio"/>	
				Home suspension <input type="radio"/>		Other:	
Set up:		<input type="checkbox"/> support measures <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred seating		Bus escort <input type="radio"/> Class escort <input type="radio"/> Yard escort <input type="radio"/>			
				Class <input type="radio"/> Cafeteria <input type="radio"/> Bus <input type="radio"/>			
Alternative routes to and from:		<input type="checkbox"/> Cubbies <input type="radio"/> Yard <input type="radio"/> Bathroom <input type="radio"/> Cafeteria <input type="radio"/>					
Character building skills		Professional help requested:					
Conference with students:		Past behavior:					
		Strategies to change behavior:					
		Find ways to monitor process:					
		Incentive system for improvements:					
Additional comments:							
Inform parents		Date:		Comments made:			

## Follow-up Check-In form

<b>Conference Date:</b>			
<b>Conducted by:</b>			
<b>People present:</b>	<input type="radio"/> Administrator	<input type="radio"/> Teacher	
	<input type="radio"/> Support Staff	<input type="radio"/> Student	
	<input type="radio"/> Parent	<input type="radio"/> Professional	
	<input type="radio"/> Other		
<b>According to the student, the situation is</b>	Better <input type="radio"/>	Worse <input type="radio"/>	No different <input type="radio"/>
<b>Comments made by the student:</b>			
<b>Person making parental contact:</b>		Date:	
<b>Additional actions:</b>			