



## **HAMILTON HEBREW ACADEMY**

# **BULLYING PREVENTION & INTERVENTION POLICY**

## **Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy**

At the HHA, we strive to balance the best interests of the individual with those of the class or school as a whole. Students are expected to respect themselves, their teachers, and each other. Our discipline policy provides a framework for positive expectations, remediation, and a predictable plan for disciplinary action while retaining flexibility and discretion, grounded in professional expertise and individual needs.

### **Fostering an Atmosphere of Consideration and Respect**

The school is committed to fostering consideration and respect, good manners, self-discipline, honesty, trust, cooperation, and helpfulness. The homeroom and specialty teachers bear the frontline responsibility of nurturing these attributes through modeling and guidance. Where a student does not respond positively to the teacher's efforts, the teacher will formally notify an Administrator in a timely manner.

This may include situations such as a student:

- persistently behaving in a manner that interferes with the ability of other students to learn or the teacher's ability to lead or teach;
- acting in a manner that physically or emotionally endangers himself or herself or another person;
- acting in a manner injurious to the reputation or ethics of the school or community.

When a student is unable to meet the classroom expectations and in the eyes of the teacher, the student has been given sufficient opportunity to change behaviour, the teacher may direct the student to go to the School Office. Upon arrival at the School Office, the student will be asked to complete an 'Office Visit' form. At the earliest opportunity, the teacher is asked to complete the appropriate section of the form. This will outline the issue of concern both from the perspective of the student and the teacher, and will be the basis on which the Principal or other member of the administration will work to resolve the issue.

The school shall pursue a model of collaborative conversation to identify lagging skills, which may be impeding the student's ability to meet the classroom expectations, and develop a behaviour plan in consultation with the student, teachers and parents.

If the behaviour modification plan does not achieve the desired results, then the Principal, on the basis of professional expertise and discretion, may choose one or more of the following options: a probationary period, a behavioural contract, suspension, refusal to re-enroll or expulsion.

We believe that every student has the right to be treated with respect and dignity. We understand that bullying behavior can have lifelong adverse effects on its victims, bystanders as well as perpetrators of bullying. Each year, the HHA Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy of the school is reviewed by the Principal and shared with all members of the school staff.

### **Definition of Bullying**

Through the shared understanding of the definition of bullying, communicated to all within the school environment, the Hamilton Hebrew Academy promotes a safe, caring, and orderly environment. **Bullying will not be tolerated on HHA property, at school-related activities, on school trips, or via any form of electronic devices/web media.**

### **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals, which causes fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying

occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance. Bullying is not mutual conflict or social rejection without the above elements present.

**Bullying tactics may include:**

- Physical Acts: Repeated hitting or shoving, stealing, or damaging another person's property;
- Verbal Statements: Repeated name-calling, mocking, humiliating, teasing, or threatening comments;
- Social Damage: Repeated and deliberate attempts to exclude others from the group and/or damage another person's friendships; and
- Electronic/Cyber Abuse: The repeated use of e-mail, cell phones, text, internet images and websites to threaten, harass, embarrass, spread rumours socially, exclude or damage reputations or friendships.

**Partnership Triangle: A Systemic Approach to Bullying**

A positive school climate is defined by the Ministry of Education of Ontario as "the sum total of all the personal relationships within a school." When these relationships are founded on mutual acceptance and inclusion and modeled by all, a culture of respect becomes the norm. Our belief is that positive school culture is fostered by an effective "Partnership Triangle" consisting of our staff, our students, and our parents. All members of the school's Partnership Triangle have a responsibility for the prevention of bullying and for addressing bullying when it occurs. The following details the roles of all members of the school community.

**The HHA staff will:**

- Model caring, respectful interactions;
- Raise awareness of bullying behaviour and its long-term effect on all students;
- Take every report of bullying seriously;
- Encourage students to report bullying behaviours and teach students the difference between "tattling" (getting someone into trouble) and "telling" (helping someone who is in trouble);
- Respond to all incidents of bullying;
- Provide support to new students to ensure that they understand expectations and routines;
- Provide opportunities for positive student leadership;
- Report incidents of bullying to the Principal;
- Work with students and parents to resolve bullying issues in a timely and developmentally appropriate manner;
- Teach students pro-social behaviours.
- Prompt and reinforce them throughout the school day; and
- Provide intervention and support to assist students who engage in bullying to change their behaviours.

**The HHA school administration will:**

- Implement resolutions for students who are bullied;
- Communicate to students and parents that a student who is engaged in bullying conduct will be subject to a range of interventions, including suspension;
- Provide professional development and training for teachers to support anti-bullying policies and programs;
- Provide a "Suggestion Box" in the school office where students can discreetly report bullying; and
- Make students aware that they can email the school with any concerns that they may have. **All students** at the Hamilton Hebrew Academy will:
  - Treat everyone with dignity and respect;
  - Increase their awareness and understanding of bullying behaviour and its long-term effects;
  - Realize that bullying behaviour is never acceptable;
  - Report incidents of bullying behaviour whenever they see it;
  - Engage in positive leadership opportunities;

- Provide support to new students or students who are in need of friends;
- Endeavour to disengage from being a bystander to bullying behaviours;
- Actively support our school's bullying prevention and intervention programs; and
- Support a positive school climate.

**All parents of students at the Hamilton Hebrew Academy will:**

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect;
- Report incidents of bullying behaviour;
- Raise their awareness and understanding of bullying behaviour and its long-term effects;
- Create awareness among their children that bullying is never acceptable;
- Endeavour to get appropriate social/emotional help for their child if necessary;
- Support our school's anti-bullying initiatives;
- Encourage their children to report incidents of bullying behaviour;
- Monitor social networking interactions as needed;
- Teach their children to be respectful and caring.

**The School will:**

- Promote prosocial behavior and approach issues using the CPS (Ross Greene) methodology, thereby ensuring that the entire scope of social issues is addressed, not just the obvious symptoms
- Incorporate curriculum units in each grade which promote social skills, anger management, and conflict resolution; Anti-bullying themes and activities will be incorporated into the curriculum with discussions of how bullying affects everyone, ways students can help one another, and assertiveness training;
- Provide a "Suggestion Box" in the school office will enable students to report incidents anonymously;
- Provide workshops for teachers that support the social skill development of students;
- Encourage students to befriend those who may be isolated with the use of a *friendship bench*.

**Reporting**

- Every effort will be made to guide students in a fair and consistent manner. The incident (s) will be investigated by the Principal and /or an administrative team. Listed below are the general guidelines for the reporting and investigation process.
- All teachers must report incidents of bullying to the Principal
- A verbal report must be made to the Principal for incidents for which suspension or expulsion would be considered as soon as possible following the incident
- For incidents of bullying where suspension or expulsion must be considered, teachers must report the incident (s) as soon as possible and submit a written report of the incident within 24 hours.

**Principal Response to Reports of Bullying**

According to the Education Act (subsection 306), Principals must suspend or expel a student for any incident, including bullying, that is motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate based on national or ethnic origin, appearance, religion, gender, age, mental or physical orientation or any other similar factor. After a report is made the Principal, the Principal records the incident investigates the incident, and communicates the results of the investigation to the teacher or staff who reported the incident:

- Notifies the parent/guardian of the student believed to be harmed as a result of the incident; and
- Notifies the parent/guardian of the student believed to be engaged in the bullying incident reported.

**Confidentiality**

All Incident Report Forms will be filed in the school office and will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality. As part of the investigation process, it may be required to provide identifying information regarding students involved in Code of Conduct issues to the other relevant parties.

### **Parental Rights & Responsibilities**

It is a parental right to report incidents of bullying of their child to the Principal. **All reports from parents to the Principal regarding bullying must be presented by the parent in writing, detailing the incidents with dates.** If the Principal perceives that the student is in imminent danger the Principal will take immediate action to secure the safety of that student. In all instances, the matter will be investigated in a timely manner within three business days of the Principal receiving the documentation.

Within that time frame, the parent who has filed the bullying complaint will receive a response from the school as to what action, if any, is being taken and the reasons for it. The parent of the child against whom the complaint has been brought, will be informed promptly should the claim be substantiated.

#### **If your child has been bullied:**

- Talk with your child to gain more information;
- Listen to their description of their day, including trip to and from school and any events happening at school;
- Speak to the teacher or Principal if you think your child is being bullied;
- Teach your child to trust adults who can help stop the bullying;
- Encourage your child to be independent;
- Teach your child social skills, including confidence, needed to make new friends; and
- Seek help if you are concerned about your child's psychological or emotional well-being.

#### **If you suspect that your child is bullying:**

- Take the problem seriously to prevent your child from having challenges in relationships with others;
- Talk to your child about bullying behaviour, keeping in mind that children who bully often place the blame on others;
- Tell your child that you will not accept this type of behaviour and arrange for non-violent consequences which fit the seriousness of what your child has done;
- Discuss the negative impact this behaviour has on others;
- Model for your children the importance of being considerate, kind & courageous;
- Teach them ways to resolve conflict without violent words or actions;
- Do not let them witness violent behaviour between family members;
- Spend time with your child.
- Avoid activities that promote violence or aggression (i.e. in the media);
- Increase your supervision when your child is with friends;
- Speak to the teacher or Principal if you think your child is having difficulty accepting responsibility for his/her behaviour;
- Seek help if you are concerned about your child's mental health;
- Encourage your child to make friends with others who are respectful and kind.