

Creative Preschool of East Toronto
Anti-Bullying Policy
Draft to be reviewed by Committee and Approved by CPS Board of Directors

Goal: The Creative Preschool of East Toronto is committed to providing a safe educational environment for all students, teachers, staff, and volunteers, free from physical and psychological harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Policy Statement: Every child attending the Creative Preschool has the right to an education free from psychological and physical harassment. Every staff member and every parent volunteer working at the Creative Preschool has the right to work in an environment that is free from physical and psychological harassment and intimidation.

Purpose of the Policy: This policy is designed to protect all participating members of the Creative Preschool including students at CPS, staff members at CPS, the supervisor, and parent volunteers at CPS. While this policy is designed as a preventative measure, it outlines the procedures to be followed if an incident of bullying is witnessed, or if an incident is reported. This policy also is designed to assist staff members who are witness to, or are a victim of, workplace harassment.

Definition of Bullying:

“A person is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons.”

Examples of bullying behaviour include the following:

- (a) students ignoring and excluding other student(s) from the group, *and* staff and parent volunteers ignoring and excluding other staff members or parent volunteers
- (b) students, staff, or parent volunteers teasing, taunting, or verbally abusing other students, teachers, and volunteers. This can include intimidation and the spreading of rumours
- (c) students, staff, or parent volunteers physically harming another student or teacher, staff, or volunteer by intentionally hitting, punching, or pinching
- (d) students, staff, or parent volunteers damaging the property of another student or the property of the staff, volunteers, or the property of the school.

To be considered incidents of “bullying”, “intimidation”, or “harassment” these acts must be intentional, or severe, and be persistent, meaning that the person commits these acts repeatedly over time.

Workplace Bullying Definition:

“Workplace bullying or harassment is defined as any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work. These behaviors would originate from customers (e.g., families or students at the school), or co-workers at any level of the organization. This definition would include all forms of physical and psychological harassment,

bullying, intimidation, physical threats/assaults, robbery and other intrusive behaviors, and also includes severe verbal abuse and persistent sexual and racial harassment. Incidents of harassment may also involve any abuse of authority by a superior such as intimidating, threatening, blackmailing, coercing, or undermining another staff member.”

Examples of Workplace bullying include:

- spreading malicious rumours, gossip, or innuendo that is not true
- excluding or isolating someone socially
- intimidating a person
- undermining or deliberately impeding a person's work
- physically abusing or threatening abuse
- removing areas of responsibilities without cause
- constantly changing work guidelines
- establishing impossible deadlines that will set up the individual to fail
- withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information
- making jokes that are 'obviously offensive' by spoken word or e-mail
- intruding on a person's privacy by pestering, spying or stalking
- assigning unreasonable duties or workload which are unfavourable to one person (in a way that creates unnecessary pressure)
- under work - creating a feeling of uselessness
- yelling or using profanity
- criticizing a person persistently or constantly
- belittling a person's opinions
- unwarranted (or undeserved) punishment
- blocking applications for training, leave or promotion

2. School’s Philosophical Approach – No Blame Approach:

- Encourage open communication regarding bullying, i.e., children should feel comfortable approaching staff, parent volunteers, or other staff, or student teachers if they witness an incident or are a victim of bullying. Also, parent and other volunteers should be made aware that they should report to CPS staff any incident that they may think constitutes bullying.
- Staff and parent volunteers at CPS should be encouraged to report any workplace harassment to the supervisor. If this is not appropriate, the incident may be reported to the President of the Parent Volunteer Board of Directors for CPS. The supervisor and/or President of the Parent Board will meet with the two parties to negotiate a solution.
- Staff should inform parents of incidents, including the “victim’s” parents and the “bully’s” parents, but “bullies” should not be named to the parents of the ‘victim’ to avoid blaming and to avoid parents blaming other parents.
- With the no-blame approach, teachers engage all the children to help come up with solutions to the bullying problem. Each child is asked what he/she could do to improve the situation, and each child is asked to follow through with their contribution to the solution. For example, if a child agrees to play with the victimized child during outdoor time so that child is not alone, teachers should encourage the child to follow through.

- The idea behind this approach is not to blame the “bullies” for what they’ve done so that they **stop feeling threatened** and **can be part of finding a solution**. Children who were witnesses or bystanders come to see that by doing nothing, they were encouraging or condoning the bullying. A very high proportion of bullying incidents are witnessed by others so it seems sensible to involve these people in trying to find a solution.

3. Procedure:

For bullying incidents among the students at CPS:

- If an incident is reported, the “victim” should be interviewed by teacher(s) and/or supervisor to find out what happened.
- The staff to whom the incident is reported will document these interviews in an **Incident binder**, which will include information regarding who was involved, who was interviewed, the date and time of the incident, whether the parents were called, and detail what happened, and the name of the teacher to whom it was reported. While the “bully’s” name will not be given to the “victim’s” parents, the “bully’s” name will be documented in the incident binder in order to monitor the situation.
- All incidents reported to staff must be reported to the supervisor and all information regarding bullying incidents must be shared with all the teachers so that they are aware of the situation and can be involved in the solution.
- After interviewing the “victim”, the teacher(s) hold a meeting with the rest of the children in the group, including the bully(s) and those who may have seen the incident, and those who were not involved. The teacher then explains to the group how the victim is feeling and the group then offers suggestions to find a solution.
- Staff will inform parents concerned. The teacher to whom the incident is reported will speak to the parents of the “bully” and to the parents of the “victim”. The name of the “bully” will not be given to the parents of the “victim” (since CPS has adopted the no-blame approach). The teacher can explain to the parents that they will be using a problem-solving approach and social skills training to deal with the situation.

Procedure:

For bullying incidents among the students at CPS:

- If an incident of workplace harassment or bullying is reported, the “victim” should be interviewed by the supervisor to find out what happened. If the supervisor is involved in the incident in some manner, then the incident should be reported to the President of the Parent Board of Directors. The supervisor of CPS or the President of the Board of Directors will interview the “bully” as well to determine exactly what occurred without the complainant being named.
- The supervisor or the President of the Board, whoever receives the complaint, will document the information in a **Staff Incident Binder**, which will include information regarding who was involved, who was interviewed, and the date and time of the incident. The complainants’ name will be documented, as well as the alleged perpetrator’s name;

however, the supervisor and/or President of the Board will keep these names confidential as well as any information related to the incident.

- The supervisor and/or President of the Board of Directors will work with both parties to negotiate a satisfactory solution.
- If the behaviour of the alleged “bully” continues despite classroom programs and activities aimed at resolving the problem, and after discussion with the parents of the child, then the child’s parents will be advised to seek a consultation and possible treatment with a child psychologist, psychiatrist, or behavioural therapist in order to address the causes of the behaviour.

5. Informal Remedies:

- Give “victim” (complainant) an opportunity to explain to the alleged “bully” that the behaviour was unwelcome and hurtful. (The victim could do this face to face, with teacher or supervisor present, or in writing – teacher may help student write a letter, or draw a picture, to the “bully” and the teacher may help the “bully” to read the letter or to talk about the picture).
- The staff will work together to come up with some solutions to the problem. Teachers could teach social skills to all the children to help prevent bullying, e.g. use TRIBES method.
- Teachers could talk about what bullying is to the class and how it makes other children feel.
- Teachers can involve all the children in solving the problem as a group. Ask for children’s input.
- Preventative measures may include teachers assigning partners if activities require this rather than allowing children to choose partners. Teachers may also help children who are likely to become targets of bullying to find a buddy to play with during free activity time.
- To help prevent workplace bullying, all staff should be made aware of what constitutes bullying or harassment in the workplace, and be made aware that they are entitled to a safe environment in which to work, free from harassment.
- Team building exercises could be used to foster a strong staff team. Frequent meetings at which every staff member is encouraged to participate and voice their opinions and concerns is also recommended. Review of each staff member’s responsibilities could be reviewed if necessary.

6. Follow-up: Staff will monitor the ongoing classroom dynamics and keep parents concerned informed of classroom situation. Any on-going incidents should be documented in the incident binder, and approaches used to solve the problem should be documented, e.g., meetings with students, activities used with the group, meetings or phone calls with parents, and note any improvements made.

With regard to workplace harassment and bullying, the supervisor and/or Parent Board of Directors President will monitor the situation and assist with any problem solving or negotiating between parties. Documentation of the situation and outcome should be made.

7. Suspension and expulsion:

In rare cases, it may be necessary for the CPS supervisor to ask a child to leave for a period of time (suspension), or to leave the school permanently (expulsion).

This may happen if a child's "bullying" behaviour is so pervasive and severe to the degree that that the behaviours (a) create an intimidating or threatening educational environment; (b) substantially interfere with other students' education; (c) substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school.

If these conditions are met, and the teachers at the school have exhausted all approaches and solutions, some of which are mentioned above, and have advised the parents of the child to seek psychological or psychiatric counselling for their child and/or family, and no improvements have been made, then the CPS supervisor should inform the child's parents that the school cannot manage the child's behaviour. The supervisor should inform the Board of Directors and seek their support before a final decision is made.

In the case of workplace bullying or harassment, in which the harassment has been documented as ongoing, and no satisfactory solution has been reached despite repeated negotiations between parties mediated by the supervisor and/or the President of the Board of Directors, then the perpetrator may be suspended or terminated. Approval of the members of the Board is required in these instances.

Draft 2006 by committee