



## **The Sacred Heart School of Montreal Bullying and Violence Prevention and Reporting Policy**

The Sacred Heart School of Montreal has a policy of zero tolerance towards bullying and violence. The school is committed to the goal of fostering in its students the development of respect for themselves and for others and thereby ensuring an emotionally and physically safe learning environment for all.

Sacred Heart students are taught to respect each other's individuality and differences and to treat others, as they themselves would like to be treated. Under no circumstances should a student engage in behaviour that is injurious to another, whether by verbal, physical, electronic, written or any other means.

Cultivating and maintaining a secure and comfortable learning environment requires the close collaboration of students, administrators, faculty, staff, parents and volunteers. Anyone (student, parent, teacher, staff member or volunteer) who is aware of, suspects, suffers from, or witnesses any instance of bullying and/or violence is obligated to report it to the Head of School or the Director of Academics. A written report will be kept in a confidential file.

### **What is Bullying?**

The definition of "bullying" and "violence" as stated in the Quebec Government's Bill 56, Section 22:

"Bullying" means any repeated direct or indirect behaviour, comment, act or gesture, whether deliberate or not, including in cyberspace, 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.

"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.

While isolated instances of inappropriate behaviours may not necessarily constitute bullying or violence, they will also be addressed by the school in a timely manner. (Please refer to the school's Policy on Disciplinary Probation and our Code of Ethics.)

### **Reporting Bullying**

Bullying is a complex cultural, economic and social phenomenon with multiple causes. It requires careful, case-by-case investigation as well as a variety of possible interventions and sanctions at the school level. The procedure for reporting and investigating bullying at The Sacred Heart School of Montreal is as follows:

- Any student, parent, teacher, staff member or volunteer who becomes aware of any bullying incident should immediately report it to the Head of School or the Director of Academics. If a student is more comfortable confiding in another trusted adult, she is encouraged to do so; the adult in question is then obligated to advise the Head of School or the Director of Academics.

- Any bullying report is kept in the strictest confidence.
- The Head of School or the Director of Academics gathers information by interviewing separately the complainant and/or the alleged victim and the alleged offender in order to assess the seriousness of the situation.
- If the alleged offense involves written or pictorial material (including electronic communications), the administration will request a copy.
- The administrative team will meet to assess the situation. Once bullying has been established, the Head of School will invite the offender's parents to a meeting to discuss the matter. When necessary the school's personal counsellor will be asked to participate.
- The school will provide psychosocial support to the victim, the offender and any witnesses through individual intervention, adult mentorship, peer support, school activities or referral to outside professionals and organizations when appropriate.
- The offending student will be automatically placed on Disciplinary Probation, with the possibility of immediate suspension. If the bullying recurs, the student risks being expelled.

**The Head of School reserves the right to expel the offending student immediately.**

### **Reporting Violence**

The procedure for reporting and investigating acts of violence at The Sacred Heart School of Montreal is as follows:

- Any student, parent, teacher, staff member or volunteer who witnesses or is a victim of violence should report it immediately to the Head of School or the Assistant Head.
- The Administration will act immediately to ensure the safety of all concerned.
- If the situation warrants it, the Administration will contact the appropriate authorities\*.
- Once the situation has been dealt with, the Administration will follow up with a thorough assessment of the incident and will provide psychosocial support to all parties affected.

**The Head of School reserves the right to expel the offending student immediately.**

\*Local authorities and organizations that will assist the school in the case of bullying and/or violence:

#### **Police Station 12**

Contact: Constable Adalbert Pimentel,  
agent socio-communautaire  
514-280-0412

#### **Youth Protection Services**

514-935-6196

#### **CSSS de la Montagne**

Contact: Psychosocial desk  
514-934-0354

#### **Agence Ometz**

Contact: Carol Liverman  
514-342-0000

## **Awareness and Prevention Measures**

We at The Sacred Heart School of Montreal are committed to making every effort to prevent bullying and violence by increasing awareness and fostering a learning environment that promotes healthy relationships. These are some of the measures we have implemented as part of our bullying and violence prevention strategy:

- Training faculty and staff to recognize and understand bullying and violence
- Providing faculty and staff with training in intervention
- Offering workshops to parents
- Providing prosocial workshops for students at each grade level
- Supporting student initiatives in promoting empathy and a culture of respect