



LEARNERS TODAY, LEADERS TOMORROW

Canadian International School Anti-Bullying and Healthy Relationships Policy

Revised: April 30th 2024

Purpose of the Anti-Bullying and Healthy Relationships Policy

Everyone at Canadian International School (CIS), has a right to learn, be respected, and feel safe.

Students, parents and staff form a community within our school. As a school community we are committed to providing a welcoming, caring, and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a supportive and secure atmosphere. We are all responsible for maintaining a welcoming and caring environment which seeks to develop respectful and healthy relationships. When behaviours are not in line with our commitment to a caring environment, all students should feel safe to speak to an adult. To promote feelings of safety and inclusion in our school, all incidents of behaviours inconsistent with school expectations will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Canadian International School also embraces the advantages of modern technology in terms of the educational benefits it brings. With the continued advancement of technology, new and unexpected behaviours have emerged online. The school strives to teach appropriate ways to interact while online and is mindful that adverse behaviours can occur. Our expectations for appropriate behaviours also extend to online activities. It is important that we are responsive to what happens in our online communities, to ensure learning environments are safe and welcoming places for all, free of stigmatization. We are all responsible for and play a role in the maintenance and promotion of well-being for all members of our school community.

The following statements guide our commitment to the development and maintenance of healthy relationships for our students and wider school community:

- promoting healthy relationships is the most effective strategy to build a strong, safe, and caring school community
- systematic approaches that support all individuals, are most effective in supporting the development of healthy relationship skills
- healthy relationships require a coordinated and collaborative team effort with all school stakeholders
- interventions need to build social skills, interpersonal skills, assertiveness, empathy, and conflict resolution skills
- embedding empathy and social-emotional teachings into daily school and classroom teachings and aligning them with curricular outcomes helps to limit undesirable or stigmatizing behaviours

Aims and Objectives

CIS welcomes and respects diversity in our school community. The aim of this policy is to foster an empathic learning environment based on mutual respect while providing a welcoming, caring, and inclusive environment for all. At CIS, we are committed to:

- ensuring that staff, students, parents, relatives, and childcare providers develop a shared understanding of the concept of what is acceptable behaviour consistent with CIS community expectations
- promoting values of tolerance, care, honesty, integrity, and respect, as outlined by the ADEK Student Competencies Framework
- collaborating with stakeholders in support of anti-stigmatization efforts and social, emotional, physical, and academic well-being
- ensuring that all students are aware of behaviour expectations and that their concerns will be addressed with sensitivity, and that students feel safe to play, learn, and socialize
- supporting staff to promote positive relationships and to identify and respond to behaviours outside the expected school community norms
- taking positive action to prevent behaviours from continuing or escalating
- enabling consistent, swift, and positive responses to any incident that may occur, as outlined by behaviours not in line with the CIS Code of Conduct and Expectations section of this policy
- reporting back to parents/caregivers regarding concerns about behaviours and promptly responding to concerns
- providing support for children, parents, relatives, and childcare providers to help guide students through challenging times

CIS Code of Conduct and Expectations

The CIS Code of Conduct supports developing and maintaining healthy relationships, which is the goal of our entire school community. Any behaviour that does not follow the code of conduct should be recognized and reported to the school. School community stakeholders, parents, students, staff, and visitors will be aware of the code of conduct and behaviour expectations. Each infraction will be addressed with through a sequence of logical consequences based on the severity of the behaviour.

Examples of some behaviours outside the expected Code of Conduct of a CIS community member:

- disrespectful behaviours like swearing, name calling, and yelling at each other
- physical interactions such as pushing, hitting, or fighting
- discriminatory or stigmatizing behaviour (online or in-person) such as, making hurtful

comments about a person's appearance, cultural or religious attire, and/or health status

- cyber-bullying, which is defined as an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time
- bullying, which is defined as a repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour intended to cause harm, fear or distress, including psychological harm or harm to a person's reputation, often involving an imbalance of social or physical power

Procedural Responses

A concerning behaviour or incident can be reported by a student, parent, caregiver, friend or anyone who has knowledge of the problem. It may also be reported by a member of school staff who will bring it to the attention of a teacher or school administrator. Disciplinary action will be consistent with the school's Student Behaviour Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students:

Students are encouraged to participate fully in activities that raise their awareness about positive behaviours and how to build community. Building empathy is important to clearly understand how their behaviours affect others and how to help their peers who may be experiencing difficulties.

CIS students are expected to:

- demonstrate a commitment to engaging in positive interactions with peers which are respectful, supportive, and inclusive of differences and health status
- support the person who is having difficulties with other students or in their day-to-day life
- model positive behaviours and not be a bystander when peers are showing behaviours outside expected behaviours in the Code of Conduct
- encourage peers who are experiencing difficulties to inform and reach out to a trusted adult

Parents:

Parents have a responsibility to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school community, to monitor their child's use of the internet and mobile phones out of school and discourage any hurtful or discriminatory actions or behaviours.

Parents who are concerned for their children in regard to student behaviours or mental health well-being mental should contact their child's class teacher or school counsellor immediately so the school can provide support.

Teachers:

Teachers set the school climate of mutual respect and praise for success and teach empathy and social-emotional skills. Teachers take all forms of conduct, outside of what is appropriate for a CIS community member, seriously and will proactively intervene.

Teachers praise appropriate behaviour and encourage healthy relationships and interactions at CIS.

School Administrators:

School Administrators promote and engage in responsive approaches to behaviour incidents. School Administrators coordinate and support school-wide initiatives that encourage the development of a school culture that focuses on empathy, skill-based learning, and healthy relationships.

Strategies to Promote Healthy Relationships

Some of the measures and activities to encourage positive and healthy relationships at CIS include:

- clear representation around school of student rights, code of conduct, rewards for positive behaviour, consequences for undesired or hurtful behaviour, etc.
- character education programs (i.e., bucket fillers)
- regular reminders of school rules and mission statements
- healthy relationship displays, visual supports, discussions, role plays, messages in school assemblies, etc.
- peer support and mentoring
- cooperative learning, group and buddy working opportunities
- CIS Ambassadors program
- adult modelling of positive relationships
- interactive and responsive supervision
- curricular focus through health, moral education, P.E., and calm classes
- ongoing development of proactive initiatives to strengthen student skill sets and encourage kind, thoughtful, inclusive global citizens

PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour intended to cause harm, fear or distress, including psychological harm or harm to a person's reputation. It often involves an imbalance of social or physical power.

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different skills and ways of behaving to engage in healthy relationships with others. As a school we have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying. We continually work with staff, students, and parents to create a school community where bullying is not tolerated.

Bullying behaviours are a form of aggression and can be:

- physical (i.e., poking, elbowing, hitting, spitting, stealing belongings, rude or mean gestures)
- verbal (i.e., name calling, insults, racist or sexist comments, put-downs, threats of harm, taunting)
- social (i.e., gossiping, spreading rumours, excluding someone from the group, isolation, public humiliation)
- cyber (i.e., social or verbal bullying through the use of email, text messages, social media)

With the increase of technology and online platforms, it is important for students, parents, and school to be aware of cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by an individual or group using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time. Cyber-bullying can include, but is not limited to:

- bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- sending inappropriate email messages to others
- the use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear, or humiliation
- posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, including but not limited to blogs, personal websites, and/or social networking sites
- hijacking/cloning/making fake e-mail/social media accounts
- making threatening, abusive, defamatory, or humiliating remarks on social media platforms (i.e., Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter/X, WhatsApp, TikTok, etc.).

Identifying Bullying Behaviour

People don't always speak up when they're being bullied. They may feel embarrassed, afraid, or at risk of being isolated. Children and youth who engage in bullying behaviour can often lack healthy relationships with peers and/or adults. They need to be actively supported to build and strengthen positive healthy relationships with others.

Warning signs may include:

- being afraid to go to school or complaining about feeling ill to avoid attending school
- skipping school or beginning to bully other children
- social withdrawal, low mood/affect, or increased online engagement
- decreased engagement or performance at school
- losing belongings or coming home with clothes or books destroyed
- coming home or arriving at school with unexplained bruises or cuts

Bullying can cause serious harm. Individuals may experience physical symptoms, social isolation, or increased difficulty with school achievement. When bullying behaviour leads to toxic stress, it can negatively impact a child's developing brain and result in behavioural and social-emotional difficulties. Widespread bullying behaviour creates an environment of fear and hostility that negatively impacts the feelings, social experience, and learning of all students. Bullying behaviours are learned and should not be considered a 'normal part of growing up.'

Without intervention, bullying behaviours tend to remain constant or escalate rather than improve as individuals get older. The type of bullying behaviour changes as children grow older and can differ between boys and girls.

Strategies to Deal with Bullying

Our school fosters a clear understanding that bullying, in any form, is not acceptable. Our school response to bullying is a progressive model which may include the following:

- clear expectations on student rights and code of conduct
- celebration of inclusion and tolerance
- regular praise of positive and supportive behaviour by all school community members
- emphasis on communication and interaction that highlights and works to develop empathy and emotional intelligence
- adult modelling of positive relationships
- proactive parent monitoring of student social media access and use
- parent information sessions
- proactive and responsive school counsellor support

- immediate and responsive approach to any incidents reported
- restorative approach such as problem-solving circles and classroom conferences
- school meetings with students and parents
- withdrawal of privileges, suspension from school, or possible expulsion