



POLICY P.142.SCO

TITLE: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION

Date issued: XX December 2019

Last revised:

Authorization: Board: XX Month 2019

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To ensure an organizational culture that is committed to the prevention of child sexual abuse.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

- 2.1 **Appropriate Physical Contact** means touching a student, within reasonable boundaries, in response to meeting their education and well-being needs.
- 2.2 **Board** means the Board of Trustees of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.
- 2.3 **Concerning Behaviour** means behaviour deemed by a reasonable observer as possibly violating reasonable boundaries, posing a risk to the personal integrity or security of a student, or contributing to a student's physical or psychological discomfort/jeopardy.
- 2.4 **Disclosure** means the process in which a student reveals ~~victimization~~ **inappropriate** experiences.
- 2.5 **District** means the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.
- 2.6 **Grooming** is a purposeful process used by offenders to manipulate the perception of a child and the adults around the child to gain sexual access and ongoing access to that child.

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 Every student has the right to feel safe at school without fear of abuse, whether emotional, physical, or sexual.

- 3.2 The Board believes that consensual and appropriate physical contact with students can be a component of caring, professional relationships to support student learning and well-being.
- 3.3 The Board acknowledges that the relationship between staff or volunteers and students is a relationship of trust, power and authority and therefore staff and volunteers will always bear the responsibility for conducting themselves with integrity and professionalism.
- 3.4 The Board has a duty of care toward all students who attend OCDSB schools and a moral and legal obligation to protect them from sexual abuse.
- 3.5 The Board recognizes that sexual abuse can occur regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, or relationship status, race, ethnicity, or abilities.
- 3.6 The Board recognizes that students who are victims of sexual abuse may experience a range of effects that can profoundly affect their lives and well-being.
- 3.7 The Board believes that early identification and early intervention with respect to staff members or volunteers who engage in concerning behaviour with students is critical to prevention.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

- 4.1 In collaboration with all members of the school community, the Board shall make every effort to protect students from sexual abuse by:
 - a) creating a culture of awareness about grooming and child sexual abuse;
 - b) building a culture of open dialogue about appropriate behaviour and understanding how to raise concerns about behaviour; and
 - c) ensuring processes are in place for reporting and investigating concerning behaviour.
- 4.2 The Board shall allocate resources at all levels to support the implementation of this policy.
- 4.3 The District shall establish a schedule to provide training and awareness about the risks of child abuse and importance of child protection for staff, volunteers and students.
- 4.4 The District shall have practices in place for the reporting of concerning behaviour and the documentation of allegations of misconduct.
- 4.5 The District shall provide a fair and professional assessment of and follow up on reported concerning behaviour while providing protection of students and their privacy.
- 4.6 Every employee shall complete an annual declaration confirming their understanding of and responsibilities for ensuring child protection.

- 4.7 The Director of Education/Secretary of the Board is authorized to issue such procedures, guidelines and other materials as may be necessary to implement this policy.

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Education Act, 1990

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1990

OCDSB Policy P.100.IT Appropriate Use of Technology

OCDSB Policy P.103.HR Alleged Employee Misconduct Toward a Student

OCDSB Procedure PR.533.SCO Police Involvement in Schools

OCDSB Procedure PR.542.HR Alleged Employee Misconduct Toward a Student

OCDSB Procedure PR.605.SCO Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect of a Student under 16 Years of Age

OCDSB Procedure PR.622.IT Appropriate Use of Technology

OCDSB Procedure PR.694.SCO Child Protection