

2015-2016 Ottewell School - Safe and Caring School Strategies

Ottewell School creates a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. The following initiatives outline the variety of strategies Ottewell School uses to ensure students feel our school is safe and caring, and to build understanding of and prevention of bullying.

Initiative?	Details?	When?
Student Handbook	Every spring, we review our Student Handbook, which has been recently revised and reformatted. It is available on our website and in SchoolZone. Parents and Students are expected to read the handbook at the beginning of each year and return their signed forms in September, indicating they understand our school's expectations.	Spring and September
Grade 7 Sneak a Peak	Each year on the Friday before classes start, we invite our new grade 7 students and their parents to visit the school, meet their teachers, and go through an orientation without the entire student population here.	August
Student Leadership	Our Student Leadership group builds student leadership capacity and cultivates positive community spirit and connection through various spirit events and "give back to the community" activities.	Ongoing
Me to We	Our Me to We group builds leadership and community spirit by exploring social issues and empowering students to make a meaningful impact both locally and globally.	Ongoing
Gay-Straight Alliance	<p>The goals of our GSA club are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● promote a school culture of equality for sexual and gender minority students ● help create our school as a caring and inclusive space for all students ● help foster respectful relationships to prevent bullying and discrimination 	Ongoing
September Start Up Grade Assemblies	Every year, the administration prepares a presentation to deliver to each grade in the school gym. Our presentations each year have a new theme that is designed to motivate students to care about each other and to care about their learning. We also review school expectations. This year our theme was Dare to Dare Greatly.	September
Fyrefly Presentations to Grade 7 Classes	University of Alberta's Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services provide interactive workshops designed to increase students' understanding of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) terminology, engage with common assumptions and stereotypes, and discuss some of the challenges that sexual and gender minorities face in school.	October

<p>“The Bully Project” Concrete Theatre Presentations to Grade 8 Classes</p>	<p>The Bully Project is an interactive play for Junior Highs that explores the complex reasons why bullying behavior happens, and what young people and the adults and communities who care about them can do about it. The Concrete Theatre is an award winning professional theatre company.</p>	<p>October/November</p>
<p>National Bullying Awareness Week</p>	<p>The 3rd week of November is National Bullying Awareness Week in Canada. Activities for NBAW 2015 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers wearing pink shirts - Monday ● Homeroom Squirt Reading Activity - Bullying: Myths and Facts - Monday & Bullying Resource Page ● Student Leadership Leads Random Notes of Kindness at lunch ● GSA Leads a School Spirit Activity ● Homeroom shirt decorating activity during Squirt ● Teachers wearing decorated shirts - Friday 	<p>Third Week of November</p>
<p>National Pink Shirt Day</p>	<p>In February, we again revisit bullying and kindness. Pink Shirt Day across Canada encourages everyone to wear something pink to show that we are all working together to prevent bullying in our schools, in our communities, and online. Pink Shirt Day comes from two Nova Scotia high school students, who decided to take a stand against bullying in their own school.</p>	
<p>Ottewell School Bullying Resources</p>	<p>This Fall 2015 our Bullying Resources page and documents on our School Website have been improved, giving students and parents resources and strategies for how to respond to and report bullying concerns.</p>	

Please refer to our Ottewell School Student Handbook on our website and in SchoolZone and the sections on Student Rights, Student Responsibilities, Relationships and Bullying.



Ottewell School Student Handbook

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(780) 466-7331

ottewell.epsb.ca
SchoolZone.epsb.ca
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School Culture & Citizenship

Student Rights

At Ottewell School, students have the right to feel:

- safe
- comfortable and cared for
- included and not discriminated against on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious belief, gender, physical or mental disability, marital or family status, source of income or sexual orientation
(Alberta Human Rights Act)

Students have the right to:

- a high quality learning and working environment
- processes and procedures that reflect Edmonton Public's core values of accountability, collaboration, equity, and integrity

Student Responsibilities

At Ottewell School, students have the responsibility to:

- act in a way that contributes to our school being welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe
- act in a way that respects the diversity and fosters a sense of belonging of others in our school
- know and comply with the rules of our school
- cooperate with all school staff
- contribute positively to our school and our school community

Relationships

Students are expected to treat all other students as equal and with respect. We coach students to follow the Golden Rule to: "Treat others the way you want to be treated."

Conflicts will arise in all relationships. All parties are expected to work together and fairly to resolve

the conflict peacefully. School administration will assist students in resolving conflicts.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as: "Repeated and hostile or demeaning behavior by an individual in the school community where the behavior is intended to cause harm, fear, or distress to one or more individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation."

Bullying can take different forms:

- Physical – pushing, hitting
- Verbal – name calling, threats
- Social – exclusion, rumors
- Cyber – using the computer or other technology to harass or threaten

When bullying behaviors are observed and reported at Ottewell School, they are addressed and resolved as soon as is reasonably possible. **All Ottewell students are expected to refrain from, report and refuse to tolerate bullying or bullying behavior.** Students who are bullied or see someone being bullied are expected to stand up against bullying and report it to adults. School administration will work with both the bully and the bullied and their families to ensure this unacceptable behavior stops.

School Community

Students are responsible for their conduct in all areas of our school community, including in classrooms, in hallways, in the Snack Shack line, in washrooms, in change rooms, in the Ottewell neighborhood, on field trips, and online. **Students are responsible and accountable for their behavior and conduct:**

- While involved in school-sponsored or related activities

Ottewell School adheres to the following stance from The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities: <http://safeandcaring.ca/>

Bullying is not a normal part of growing up and it does not build character. Bullying is a learned behavior - children and youth often learn bullying behaviours when they either experience being bullied or see it happening to others. When bullying behaviours go unchecked, the implicit message is that the behaviours are acceptable. Therefore it is important that when bullying behaviours are observed and reported, they are addressed and resolved as soon as is reasonably possible.

Bullying is different from conflict. Conflict is defined as a disagreement or struggle over opposing beliefs, needs, feelings or actions and is a normal part of life. Students as well as adults can benefit from learning how to resolve conflict peacefully and recognizing the difference between a conflict and bullying. All inappropriate and hurtful behavior needs to be addressed and it is important to identify what the behaviour is in order to resolve the situation effectively.

From Alberta Education:

Help Create a Bully-Free Alberta

Helpline

Call the Bullying Prevention Helpline. It's available toll-free 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-888-456-2323. Help is provided in more than 170 languages.

You can also call the Mental Health Helpline at 1-877-303-2642 if you are experiencing mental health issues or mental distress.

Chat online with staff from noon to 8:00 p.m., daily.

Please refer to Alberta Education's web resources on Bullying:

<https://education.alberta.ca/teachers/safeschools/bullying-prevention.aspx>