


Toronto Catholic District School Board

**Dr. Brendan Browne**

Chief Executive Officer

**Adrian Della Mora**

Chief Education Officer

**Michael A. Caccamo**

Superintendent of Education Safe Schools and Curriculum Leadership & Innovation

**Catholic Education Centre**

80 Sheppard Avenue East
Toronto ON M2N 6E8
www.tcdsb.org







2026 - 2027

# Safe Schools Plan





*At Toronto Catholic*
*we transform the world through witness,*
*faith, innovation and action.*











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| SCHOOL NAME | Divine Mercy Catholic Elementary School | PRINCIPAL: | Tarascio, Giacomo |
| SUPERINTENDENT: | Roy Fernandes | | |
| SCHOOL ADDRESS: | 101 Van Horne Ave Toronto ON M2J 2S8 | | |
| STUDENT ENROLMENT: | 428 | | |

## OUR MISSION

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community rooted in the love of Christ. We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge and to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.

## OUR VISION

At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

We believe in the worth and dignity of every person and that people thrive in a safe, healthy and compassionate environment. We strive to foster student achievement and well-being by providing all students with safe, healthy learning environment.

One of the ways we can achieve this goal is by using a whole-school approach to develop and nurture a positive school climate. The Safe Schools Action Team will consist of a variety of stakeholders in each school community responsible for advising the principal about school safety. The team will collaborate with the principal to create the local Safe Schools Plan.

### SAFE AND ACCEPTING SCHOOLS TEAM

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| **Administrative Rep** | **Tarascio, Giacomo** | **Teacher Rep** | **Riserbato, Katelyn** |
| **Teacher Rep** | **Frenette, Carrie** | **Support Staff Rep** | **Peluso, Anna** |
| **Teacher Rep** | **Galati, Saverio** | **Parent Rep** | **Winston,Venetia** |

### SAFE SCHOOLS PLAN

All schools are required to develop and implement school-wide plans to help create a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment. Each Safe Schools Plan will consist of the following components:

1. Bullying Awareness, Intervention and Prevention
2. Progressive Discipline
3. Promoting a Positive School Climate
4. Emergency Response Plan

In order for all students, staff members and parents/visitors in the school facility to be prepared to respond to a serious threat, the response procedures must be practiced. The Toronto Police/School Board Protocol, 2011 requires a minimum of 2 Lockdown Drills every school year.

Please see below for the scheduled drills:

### LOCKDOWN DRILLS 2026-2027

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| **1** | **2026-09-25** | **2** | **2026-12-02** |
| **3** | **2027-02-05** | **4** | **2027-05-07** |

## 1. Bullying Awareness, Intervention and Prevention Plan

Providing students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe and respectful society is a key goal of the TCDSB. Providing students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe and respectful environment supports academic achievement for all students, which in turn, helps them to reach their full potential. Research and experience show that bullying is a serious issue that has far-reaching consequences for individuals, their families and peers and the entire school community. Schools that have bullying intervention and prevention strategies foster a positive learning and teaching environment that supports academic achievement for all students and that helps students reach their full potential. PPM 144

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| **School Vision** | The staff, students and parents at Divine Mercy are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all. In keeping with this commitment, all stakeholders will work together to ensure that everyone feels emotionally safe, accepted and respected at the school. We continue to work towards an inclusive community that strives to be culturally responsive and equitable. |
| **Goal #1** | Divine Mercy will strengthen its culture of acceptance and respect by fully integrating principles of cultural responsiveness and equity into all school operations. We will embed restorative practices and justice across all student-staff interactions to ensure every stakeholder feels emotionally safe, accepted, and respected and to foster a genuinely inclusive community. |

### Initiatives/Strategies/Practices

A number of strategies will be implemented which may include:
-Catholic School Graduate Expectations (CSGE) to be integrated into school activities and classroom lessons with a focus on Responsible Citizenry and Caring Family Member.
-A focus on ensuring culturally responsive resources to increase students' sense of belonging.
-Students will be empowered to be positive leaders in their classrooms, school and community. The code of conduct will be understood and implemented by all members of the school community.
-Classroom lessons on a healthy balanced lifestyle.
-Fully Alive lessons on inclusion and empathy.
-Daily prayers by students over the P.A. system
-Raise awareness against bullying from JK-Grade 8
-Dialogue with support staff, Guidance counsellor, Social Worker and adminstration

### Responsibility

-All members of the Divine Mercy community have a responsibility to treat each other in a manner which affirm each other and Gospel values.
-Parents have a responsibility to work closely with school staff and to closely monitor their children's behavior and wellbeing (particularly their children's use of the internet and social media).
-Involvement of resource teachers when needed.

**Resources**

The following resources will be utilized to support these initiatives/strategies/practices:

Board-wide resources
-Fully Alive and Religion Program
-Resource Teachers
-Student Leadership Team
-Safe Schools Department
-TCDSB Safe School Policy
-Board Learning Plan

Community resources
-Police Liaison Officer
-TPH Nurse
-Presentations

**Measurement of Progress**

The following metrics will be used to measure progress in achieving the Goal:

-Teachers are proactive in intervening and dealing with situations in an appropriate and timely manner

-A reduction in the number of bullying incidents reported to the office.

-Student Climate Survey

-Positive parent feedback

# TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL

## Safe Schools Plan

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| **School Vision** | The staff, students and parents at Divine Mercy are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all. In keeping with this commitment, all stakeholders will work together to ensure that everyone feels emotionally safe, accepted and respected at the school. We continue to work towards an inclusive community that strives to be culturally responsive and equitable. |
| **Goal #2** | At Divine Mercy we will establish, implement, and assess a comprehensive, faith-based program rooted in Jesus' teachings on love, empathy, and forgiveness to enhance student well-being school-wide. This initiative will proactively cultivate student self-esteem and develop appropriate skills for friendship and conflict resolution, thereby working to prevent bullying behaviours from occurring. Furthermore, staff will ensure all reported incidents are promptly and thoroughly investigated and addres |

**Initiatives/Strategies/Practices**

-Take advantage of teaching opportunities when situations arise within the classroom and school yard
-Use drama skits to respond in various situations (bystander role)
-On-going communication home to parents, speaking to parents on a regular basis.
-Incorporate programs that encourage community and non-bullying initiatives, such as Pink Shirt Day, Purple Shirt Day.
-School wide initiatives: Virtue of the Month, Kindness Initiatives, Bucket Filling activities.
-Explicit instruction on respectful relationships, empathy, and conflict resolution through classroom meetings and community circles.
-Teach digital citizenship, responsible online behaviour, and cyberbullying prevention through grade-appropriate lessons.
-Use restorative conversations and reflection sheets to help students understand the impact of their actions and repair relationships.
-Encourage student leadership through peer mentoring, student-led initiatives, and promoting positive school culture.
-Regular classroom discussions focused on inclusion, belonging, diversity, and acceptance.

**Responsibility**

-All school staff will draw on resources supplied by the Board, the Police Liaison Officer, the Public Health Nurse, the school Guidance Teacher, the school Social Worker and outside agencies.
-Students will lend student voice to the anti-bullying protocol.

**Resources** The following resources will be utilized to support these initiatives/strategies/practices:

Board-wide resources
-Fully Alive and Religion Program
-Resource teachers
-Student Leadership Team
-Safe Schools Department
-Catholic Graduate Expectations
-Curriculum Resources - HPE Cyberbullying and internet safety (Gr. 4 and up)

Community resources
-Police Liaison Officer
-TPH Nurse
-Presentations

**Measurement of Progress** The following metrics will be used to measure progress in achieving the Goal:

-Teachers are proactive in intervening and dealing with situations in an appropriate and timely manner
-Students are comfortable reporting inappropriate behaviour
-Positive peer relations
-Positive parent feedback
-Positive Peer Relations as measured in the Safe and Caring School Climate Survey

# TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL

## Safe Schools Plan

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| **School Vision** | The staff, students and parents at Divine Mercy are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all. In keeping with this commitment, all stakeholders will work together to ensure that everyone feels emotionally safe, accepted and respected at the school. We continue to work towards an inclusive community that strives to be culturally responsive and equitable. |
| **Goal #3** | To foster a safe, inclusive, and equitable school environment by educating and empowering all students with age, grade, and developmentally appropriate strategies to resolve conflicts, build positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. |

**Initiatives/Strategies/Practices**

-Presentations on Anti-bullying and a focus on equity, diversity and inclusion
-Participation in Anti-bullying week and announcements outside of anti-bullying week (e.g. pink shirt day for community week in November)
-Mental Health awareness resources from Special Services and OECTA
-TCDSB initiatives (e.g. Draw God)
-Daily announcements that include Virtue of the Month reflections, Scripture connections, and messages promoting kindness, inclusion, and respect.
-Recognition of positive behaviour through virtue awards, kindness acknowledgements, and school-wide celebrations.

**Responsibility**

All members of the Divine Mercy community have a responsibility to treat each other in a manner which affirm each other and Gospel values.

-Parents have a responsibility to work closely with school staff and to closely monitor their children's behavior and wellbeing (particularly their children's use of the internet and social media).
-The Police Liaison Officer and other outside agencies will work with school when needed.

Others involved include:
-Social Work
-Guidance
-Student Leadership Team
-Pastor and Youth Minister
-TPH

**Resources**

The following resources will be utilized to support these initiatives/strategies/practices:

Board-wide resources
-Fully Alive and Religion Program
-Resource teachers
-Student Leadership Team
-Safe Schools Department

Community resources
-Police Liaison Officer
-TPH Nurse
-Presentations

**Measurement of Progress**

The following metrics will be used to measure progress in achieving the Goal:

-Teachers are proactive in intervening and dealing with situations in an appropriate and timely manner
-Students are comfortable reporting inappropriate behaviour
-Students express feeling that they're in a warm, welcoming and inclusive environment
-Positive parent feedback
-Decrease in the amount of Progressive Discipline forms
-Increase in the proactive efforts of students to identify and stop bullying
-School Climate survery

## 2. Progressive Discipline Plan

Progressive discipline is a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive student behaviours. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, disciplinary measures should be applied within a framework that shifts the focus from one that is solely punitive to one that is both corrective and supportive. Schools should utilize a range of interventions, supports and consequences that include learning opportunities focused on reinforcing positive behaviour and helping students make good choices. PPM 145

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| **School Vision** | Divine Mercy endeavours to create a school environment which promotes positive behavior based on gospel values, heightened self-esteem and a sense of well-being. |
| **Goal #1** | At Divine Mercy, our approach to discipline will foster the development of the whole child by promoting self-regulation, self-esteem, and a strong sense of well-being. A positive and inclusive school culture, supported by clear structures and restorative practices, will encourage respectful relationships and empower students to make responsible choices. |

### Initiatives/Strategies/Practices

-Progressive Discipline model will be used and will give opportunities for students to improve behaviour.
-Ongoing discussions with staff about different strategies that can be employed to meet student needs.
-Ask for support from resource teachers when required.
-Teachers will communicate frequently with parents through student agendas.
-Case Conferences where applicable
-Staff visibility, particularly when on duty
-create a simple reflection sheet that goes home and gets signed by a parent or guardian. It's not a "think paper" or a "responsible solution form" it's more of a conversation starter that keeps the focus on reflection and growth. Students could have it scribed for them if needed.
The Restorative 5 Questions
What happened?
What were you thinking at the time?
Who has been affected by what you did?
What do you need to do to make things right?
How can we make sure this doesn't happen again?

As a staff initiative, we plan could also keep a copy of the book in the staff room and create a short Google Form for teachers to share any "lessons learned" or strategies.

### Responsibility

-All staff are responsible for maintaining a positive climate in the school which recognizes the value which all students bring to the school community, and conveys confidence that they can behave appropriately.
-Teachers will communicate regularly with parents.
-Students will do their best to behave appropriately.

**Resources** The following resources will be utilized to support these initiatives/strategies/practices:

-Fully Alive and Religion programs
-School Resource Teachers
-Resources sent from TCDSB
-Newly created Restorative 5 Questions

**Measurement of Progress** The following metrics will be used to measure progress in achieving the Goal:

-Positive feedback from Student Leadership Team (student voice)
-Positive feedback from parents and wider community
-Decrease in the number of disciplinary incidents

## 3. Positive School Climate

A school should be a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable and accepted. The Safe Schools Action Team and student leadership groups can play key roles in supporting learning and practices that educate students and staff members about safety concerns. Those practices used for very challenging situations that can jeopardize the safety and well being of others include, but not limited to: Threat Assessment, Restorative Conference and Mediation Circles.

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| **School Vision** | Divine Mercy will be a community whose culture promotes the spiritual development, the happiness and the well being of all its members. Students will come to school with a positive attitude, which is reflected in a commitment to always put forth their best effort and to engage in healthy peer interactions. |
| **Goal #1** | Divine Mercy will provide a wide range of inclusive and engaging activities that allow all students to explore their diverse talents, interests, and strengths. Equity and inclusion will be at the heart of our school community, ensuring that every student feels valued, respected, and supported. Through faith-based programs, leadership opportunities, and initiatives that promote positive behaviour and attitudes, students will develop a strong sense of belonging, purpose, and well-being. |

### Initiatives/Strategies/Practices

All initiatives will be guided by the TCDSB Catholic Graduate Expectations, fostering students who are discerning believers, effective communicators, reflective, creative and holistic thinkers, self-directed lifelong learners, collaborative contributors, caring family members, and responsible citizens rooted in faith.

The students at Divine Mercy celebrate Jesus through the support of St. Timothy Church. The Rosary Apostolates visits the school each month. The Youth Minister from St. Timothy Church visits the school twice a month. Other initiatives will include:

-Participation in leadership opportunities offered by the TCDSB
-Participation in the Gr. 7&8 leadership program organized by TPH nurse
-Participation in school activities and lunchtime programs
-Mindfulness Messengers (Mental Health & Wellbeing)
-Sensory Buckets (Mental Health & Well-Being): School-wide access to sensory regulation tools that support student well-being, self-regulation, focus, and inclusion.
-Weekly announcements will focus on one of the 7 Habits, promoting leadership, responsibility, empathy, collaboration, and goal setting. Students will be encouraged to apply the habit through daily actions that contribute to a safe, inclusive, and positive school environment.

### Responsibility

-Principal
-Teachers
-Students
-Support staff
-Pastor and Youth Minister

**Resources**

The following resources will be utilized to support these initiatives/strategies/practices:

-Fully Alive and Religion programs

-Student Nutrition Program

-Board Resources

-Community Resources

**Measurement of Progress**

The following metrics will be used to measure progress in achieving the Goal:

-Student feedback
-Teacher feedback
-Parent feedback

# TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL

## Safe Schools Plan

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|---|---|
| **School Vision** | Divine Mercy will be a community whose culture promotes the spiritual development, the happiness and the well being of all its members. Students will come to school with a positive attitude, which is reflected in a commitment to always put forth their best effort and to engage in healthy peer interactions. |
| **Goal #SVP 1** | Students will recognize their role as active citizens in nurturing a caring, respectful, and inclusive school community. They will develop the confidence to express their ideas and concerns respectfully while valuing and listening to the diverse voices of others. |

**Initiatives/Strategies/Practices**

Divine Mercy School Safety Survey data TBD.

**Responsibility**

Principal
Staff
Student Leadership (student voice)
NCC
Equity Resource Team
Community Relations
Parents
Divine Mercy wider community

**Resources** The following resources will be utilized to support these initiatives/strategies/practices:

Principal
Staff
Equity team
NCC team

**Measurement of Progress** The following metrics will be used to measure progress in achieving the Goal:

Safe and Caring School Survey results
Student Leadership (student voice)
Anecdotal data from students, staff and families
CSPC
Improved academic achievement

## 4. Emergency Response Plan

The Toronto Catholic District School Board has a primary responsibility to ensure the safety of students and staff inside Board buildings and on Board property. Central policies and procedures, developed in collaboration with the Toronto Police Service, provide direct support to school administrators in the management of crisis situations, including a lockdown response. It is the responsibility of each school to develop local procedures specific to that school, including a process by which all regular staff members, itinerant and specialist teachers and support staff, facility workers and visitors are informed of local considerations in the event of a threat to school safety. MOE Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol

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| **School Vision** | All students, staff members and visitors will become knowledgeable about emergency procedures for threats to the safety and well-being of all persons at school, and will be able to appropriately respond according to the guidelines established by TCDSB. |
| **Goal #1** | To plan, practice and evaluate a minimum of 4 lockdown Drills in this school year. |

**Initiatives/Strategies/Practices**

The Lockdown, Fire and Bomb Threat procedures are discussed with staff and practiced regularly. Emergency Procedure Folder in every classroom.

** Teachers will describe and discuss each of the Emergency Procedures during the week of September
** TCDSB Emergency Response Plan poster visible in every class
3 Frill Drills will be conducted in the first semester and 3 Fire Drills will be conducted in the second semester.

**Responsibility**

-All Staff
-Students
-Principal

**Resources** The following resources will be utilized to support these initiatives/strategies/practices:

-TCDSB Threats to School Safety Response Procedure
-All classrooms have been equipped with the Emergency Response Protocols

**Measurement of Progress** The following metrics will be used to measure progress in achieving the Goal:

-Procedure for Fire Drill and Lockdown drills are understood and followed by both staff and students.