



Bullying Policy

2017

This procedure is applicable to: Teachers, Staff and Students

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DEALING WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOUR POLICY

BETWEEN PUPILS IN PRIMARY

Silver Tree Steiner School works with the indications given by Rudolf Steiner aiming to create a safe and caring environment which promotes personal growth and positive self esteem for all. Bullying behaviour in any form does not belong in such an environment where positive assertive communication is promoted and differences are valued.

All persons whom work at the School owe a duty of care to our students. This duty arises from the nature of the relationship and exists whenever and wherever the student is in their care.

The notion of reasonable care extends to ensuring that the school provides a safe, non-violent environment for all students and includes the development of processes for the effective management of student behaviour.

All forms of negative behaviour, including bullying, are not condoned (also see "Behaviour Management - Violent and Aggressive Behaviour Policy" in cases where physical bullying may be the issue). The school will act promptly to manage any instances of bullying to ensure that this behaviour discontinues.

The policy applies to all student bullying behaviour, including cyber bullying, which occurs in and off School's premises and outside of school hours where there is a clear and close relationship between the School and the conduct of the student.

AIMS

- * to ensure the protection and support of the child who is feeling victimised by assisting them to explore strategies of response towards harassment
- * to change the behaviour of the bully; both for the sake of future victims and for the bully's own positive development
- * to deter or dissuade other students from engaging in bullying
- * to be aware of the age and maturity of those concerned and respond accordingly

All members of the School community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

LEGISLATION

The list below are some of the wide range of legislation that impose duties and obligations upon a School.

- Criminal Code 1913
- School Education Act 1999
- School Education Act Regulations 2000
- Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 and Regulations 1996
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984

RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following -

- Concern and Grievance Procedure
- Student Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Safeguard of Students Policy
- Emergency Management Procedures

DEFINITION

What is bullying?

1. "Bullying is a behaviour which can be defined as the repeated attack, physical, psychological, social or verbal, which is formally or situationally defined, on those who are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or gratification." *Besag (1989)*
2. Bullying involves a desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + an unjust use of power + (typically) repetition + evident enjoyment by the aggressor and generally a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim. *Ken Rigby (2002)*
3. What is Bullying?
 - Repeated and unjustifiable behaviour
 - Intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm
 - Physical, verbal, psychological, relational
 - By a more powerful individual or group
 - Against a less powerful individual unable to effectively resist

Source: Child Health Promotion Research Centre – ECU (2005)

All three definitions of bullying contain the same three main parameters of bullying. These are:

- Repetitive behaviour – prolonged over time;
- Involves an imbalance of power; and
- May be verbal, physical, emotional or psychological

Bullying takes many forms, but can be best categorised under the following headings:

Emotional bullying includes:

- being excluded from group conversations and activities
- making up or spreading rumours to facilitate dislike for someone
- being ignored repeatedly
- purposeful misleading or being lied to
- making stories up to get others into trouble

Physical bullying:

- hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, bumping, shoving, scratching, slapping, biting, punching or tripping someone repeatedly
- unwanted physical or sexual touching
- throwing objects with the intent to injure or annoy

Threatening/Psychological bullying:

- stalking, threats or implied threats
- dirty looks
- manipulation – pressuring others to do things they don't want to do
- intimidation – forcing students to do demeaning or embarrassing acts
- extortion – forcing someone to give you money or material items

Verbal bullying:

- constant teasing in a sarcastic and offensive manner
- name-calling and offensive nicknames
- swearing to unsettle or upset others
- homophobic comments to cause distress
- racist or sexist comments

Property Abuse:

- Stealing money repeatedly
- Interfering with someone's belongings
- Damaging other personal items
- Repeatedly hiding someone's possessions

Cyber bullying (See page 6 for further information):

- Spreading gossip and rumours through email, phone and internet
- Sending offensive text/phone and email messages
- Abusive phone calls
- Posting personal information on internet sites without permission to cause distress and humiliate

Other forms of conflict, including teasing and fighting amongst peers are not necessarily bullying. These may represent the normal dynamics of a particular friendship and children need to have the skills to deal with these situations. Conflict between students of roughly equal physical strength and/or social status may require implementation of the school's Student Code of Behaviour and Discipline policy.

It is necessary to distinguish between the main forms of bullying pertinent to the primary school situation being *malign* and *non-malign*. Different approaches may be adopted depending on the type of bullying, which is occurring.

Malign bullying is that which seeks consciously to do harm to someone.

Non-malign bullying -is a form of "non conscious" bullying which is less obvious and often of longer duration. There can be more than one "victim" involved.

Teasing -when younger pupils are involved it may be advisable to use the term teasing.

Incidents of bullying can be reported in various ways including: the victim reports to teacher/parents, parents report to teachers, teacher observations or bystander pupils report their observations to teachers.

Bystanders to Bullying - A bystander is someone who sees the bullying or knows that it is happening to someone else. Bystanders can be identified as:

- Supporters – support the person engaged in the bullying by helping or encouraging the person bullying.
- Spectators – Gather or deliberately stay to watch the incident (out of concern or for enjoyment).
- Witnesses – Are aware that the incident is occurring (knows about the bullying or sees it from the distance)

Within each group there may be potential victims who are afraid they may be bullied next and this may influence their decision-making.

Bystanders can also passively or actively prevent or stop bullying. The role of the bystander is becoming increasingly prominent as an effective means to counter bullying. This demonstrates the need to continuous education for students about bullying and its effects.

CYBER BULLYING

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying that can have an impact on children who use email, text messaging, chat rooms, mobile phones, mobile phone cameras, discussion groups or web pages. Cyber bullying is covert psychological bullying as it involves repeated hostile behaviour that is intended to cause harm and distress.

Methods of cyber bullying include:

- Texting derogatory messages on mobile phones
- Sending threatening emails
- Forwarding a confidential email on to several other people
- Ganging up on one student and bombarding him/her with emails
- Setting up a derogatory web site dedicated to a targeted student and inviting others to comment
- Participants in a chat room saying derogatory comments about or excluding someone.

With other forms of bullying that take place at school, children receive some respite from it when they leave the school grounds and enter the safety of their own home. Cyber bullying is far more invasive than other forms of bullying as victims can be exposed to it whenever they have their mobile phone on or are using the Internet. This can potentially expose children to cyber bullying 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Cyber bullying can also be done anonymously and it is thought that while most children would not bully someone face to face, they are more likely to cyber bully someone where they can send the message without the person knowing it was them or without seeing the impact it has on the person. The impact of the written word that can be read over and over again can also be very powerful.

While a majority of mobile phone and computer usage is done outside of school hours, it can still have a huge impact on school life.

What are the effects of bullying?

Regardless of the type of bullying involved, the results for the victim are similar. They can include:

- * Emotional: mood swings, sleep disturbance, depression
- * Psychosomatic -negative body language
- * Social -withdrawal, increase sibling rivalry
- * Behavioral- outbursts of temper, problematic behaviour, decline in work standards, truancy

Below is a profile of students who are bullied frequently and students who bully frequently.

Students who <u>are</u> bullied frequently	Students who bully frequently
<p>Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Depression ○ Anxiety ○ Suicide ideation ○ Low self esteem 	<p>Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Depression ○ Anxiety ○ Suicide ideation
<p>Social effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lonely ○ Fewer friends ○ Feel rejected by peers 	<p>Social effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lonely ○ Feel rejected by peers
<p>Physical Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Somatic complaints ○ Poorer health ○ Physical harm 	<p>Physical Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Somatic complaints ○ Poorer health ○ Physical harm
<p>Other effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dislike of school ○ Unhappy at school ○ Fear going to school ○ Higher absenteeism ○ Lower academic competence 	<p>Other effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dislike of school ○ Unhappy at school ○ Fear going to school ○ Higher absenteeism ○ Lower academic competence

(Source: CHPRC, 2005)

What can we do to prevent bullying?

Teachers can endeavor to:

- * help create a climate which changes from ""don't do it" to ""it's OK to tell"
- * involve students in using problem solving for conflict situations
- * teach students methods for challenging bullying, if they happen to be bystanders to an incident

RIGHTS

Children -have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, to feel safe at school.

Teachers –have a right to be supported in all areas of behaviour management.

Parents –have a right to expect that something will immediately be done about incidents of bullying once they are identified.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Children

- * to respect others in speech and deed
- * nice touching only (no hitting, punching, kicking, only touch if the other person wants you to)
- * to work out problems in a fair manner
- * to refuse involvement in any bullying situations
- * to support one another by speaking up

Class teacher

- * to arrive at class on time after breaks and adhere to arrival and departure times as per job contract
- * to foster appropriate cooperative learning approaches which can promote positive self esteem and fruitful peer relations
- * to be thoughtful, courteous, and respectful of children at all times
- * to demonstrate by their behaviour, the values that are expected of pupils

Teachers

- * to be thoughtful, courteous, and respectful of children at all times
- * to reflect in their behaviour, the values that are expected of students
- * to make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling before, during and after school (ie between 8.15am – 8:30am, breaks, and 3.15pm - 3.30pm)
- * to be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- * to take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing victim at further risk
- * be aware of the age and maturity of those involved and respond accordingly

Parents

- * be supportive of teachers in their endeavours to improve student relations and welfare by being aware of signs of distress in their child
- * check with teachers to clarify the situation
- * take an active interest in their child's social life
- * advise their child to talk with their class teacher or other staff members immediately a bullying incidents occurs
- * encourage their child not to retaliate
- * be willing to attend interviews and cooperate with Faculty if their child is involved in any bullying incident
- * do not reinforce victim behaviour in the child

D) Steps to initiate the process of addressing bullying behaviour

Follow the "Concerns and Grievance Procedure".

"Step 1: Your teacher is the first "port of call" for concerns. Arrange a meeting, sooner rather than later, so concerns can be worked on to the satisfaction of all. This may take several consecutive conversations. The problem will normally be solved at this level, and generally is in most cases.

At each meeting or during each conversation, the teacher may ask the parent if they are 'comfortable with them taking some short notes on the discussion'. It is recommended that at the end of each meeting there is agreement that the notes reflect the meeting content by reading the notes to all present and inviting all to sign.

Step 2: If not resolved by Step 1, lodge the concern with the Administrator who will hear your concerns and either suggest ways that the matter can be handled or direct your concern to the appropriate body. At the request of the parent or the teacher directly involved; the Administrator can attend a further meeting between the teacher and parent. If the parent wishes to have another person present for moral support this is acceptable.

INTERNAL GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS

STSS explicitly forbids the use of any form of child abuse, corporal punishment or other degrading punishment.

Guidelines for teachers. It is suggested to now proceed through the following 4 stages. Interviews must be conducted with at least one teacher and another staff member and ensure Procedural Fairness is followed.

Steps for Procedural Fairness:

During the interview -

Outline the alleged behaviour.

- Allow the student to respond.
- Consider the response.
- Indicate the school's view and likely action to the student and parents/guardians.
- Consider any further comment or appeal particularly in relation to suspension, expulsion or exclusion.
- Make a final decision.

Stage 1: Interview

Interviews with pupils with bullying behaviour

The teacher should be calm, empathic, never angry or indignant. The teacher needs to be ever attentive to what each student is saying or suggesting by non verbal messages. Throughout the interview there must be continued acceptance and respect shown for the student as a person.

Each member of the group suspected of being involved in the bullying of a fellow pupil, is interviewed alone. Normally the interviewer will take them from the classroom to a comfortable room where they will not be interrupted.

If the pupil is to be interviewed by someone other than his/her class teacher then the class teacher will need first to be informed. It is customary to begin with the group leader (if known) and to see each student in turn.

Interviews should clearly be non confrontational and non adversarial. There should be a clear invitation for the student to talk.

Sometimes the bully will remain silent, uncommunicative; in which case a suggestion may be made that he or she might not like to talk today and can go back to class. This may motivate them to speak.

In some cases the victim may be blamed (perhaps with some justice) and accused of provoking the negative treatment. Whatever is said by the bully, it is important not to get into any argument, to interrogate or to blame. The teacher's role at this stage is to emphasize the concern that is felt for the person who is being hurt.

Normally, there will be some reciprocated concern expressed by the bully and some acknowledgment of involvement in the situation either directly or indirectly. As soon as this happens, the interviewer turns to the question of what can be done to help the victim.

Once a suggestion has been made that is at all constructive and realistic, the interviewer acknowledges and comments favourably. Sometimes it is left to the teacher to make a suggestion that the student will find acceptable.

When each group member, one after another, has expressed concern and indicated steps that he or she will take to help the victim, each has begun to act as a responsible individual.

The meeting closes with an agreement that they will meet again at a designated time to review progress.

Stage 2: Meeting with the victim

After speaking with each pupil who is suspected of bullying, the victim may now be interviewed. The interview can start with an open-ended question: "How are things going?" The victim will quickly recognise the purpose of the meeting and is generally prepared to discuss the circumstances of the bullying.

In listening to the victim, the teacher will need to decide whether the victim is a classical, passive, non-provocative victim, or alternatively has played some role in provoking the bullying. Explore ways as to how matters can be improved.

The matter needs to be treated as a problem involving some responsibility on the part of the victim. Generally the victim feels grateful for having been able to talk to someone sympathetic and supportive, and may be prepared to accept some responsibility for developing better relations.

Stage 3: Preparation for a joint meeting with the victim and the group

First it is necessary to briefly see individuals again, to check on progress and motivate them further. If all goes well, plans can be made for a meeting between the group of bullies and the victim. There may sometimes be repeated meetings with an individual student and/or the entire group without the victim being present. At these meetings the teacher may note the progress that has been made.

At some point it will become evident (ideally at the suggestion of a group member) that the victim will be welcome at the group meeting. It is important that the group and the victim are adequately prepared for this event. It may be agreed that each member of the group will make a positive and sincere comment about the victim with him/her present. Next, the victim must be contacted and assured that s/he will be welcome and that indeed positive things will be said about him or her.

Stage 4: Group meeting

If the group members have been well prepared the teacher can sometimes act primarily as a facilitator, enabling pupils to indicate their goodwill and acceptance of the victim. For this to be done publicly by group members will greatly strengthen any individual commitments that have been made. But in cases in which victims have been seen as provocative, a different scenario can be expected.

The group members will then require some assurance regarding a change in the behaviour of the victim. The teacher seeks from both side's suggestions and proposals that are acceptable to the other. The meeting may then conclude with an agreement as to how the victim, as well as the bullies, will behave in future.

NOTE: If bullying behaviour has reached Level 3 in Discipline Policy, a "*Behaviour Plan*" form may be filled in, see Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedure.

Possible ways of providing practical support for victimised children:

Child who is frequently victimised by others can be helped in different contexts and each has advantages and disadvantages.

What kind of support is needed?

It may not be immediately evident whether the problem is due to a lack of appropriate assertiveness skills in a child's behavioural repertoire or due to a pervading state of anxiety or poor self esteem that prevents a child from using the skills s/he might actually possess. Age and maturity may also be a factor.

To some extent helping non assertive children to help themselves more effectively by learning more positive ways of responding to teasing and harassment can be a highly effective anti-bullying measure.

Support can be offered in two ways; moral or psychological. This is provided when we listen sympathetically to a child's problems. We have seen that this can have an important effect of acting, at least partially, as a buffer between the stress of victimisation and consequent health problems.

The second kind is more active. It may include giving moral support but also seeking to help the victimised child to acquire new skills (or practice old ones that have fallen into disuse) that could prevent the child from being bullied. Vulnerable children can learn better ways to protect themselves.

WHERE TO GO FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Student Bullying

There is a vast range of information available on the internet from all around the world. The selection listed below mainly concentrates on material produced in Australia, however, some excellent sites from around the world are also listed.

Child Health Promotion Research Centre at Edith Cowan University – Friendly School Plus

Available: <http://chprc.ecu.edu.au>

AISWA for information on how to obtain the Friendly Schools Plus Program information

MindMatters - a resource for secondary schools

Available: <http://www.mindmatters.edu.au/default.asp>

Kids Matter – a mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative for primary schools

Available: <http://caef.flinders.edu.au/kidsmatter>

Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) – provides teachers with information to prevent or reduce behavioural and emotional problems. See Wayne Revitt at AISWA for further information.

Aussie Optimism – provides practical strategies to help children during times of stress and transitions.

Available: <http://psych.curtin.edu.au/research/aussieoptimism/>

CASEL – Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning

Available: www.casel.org

Bullying NO Way! website contains a wide range of information including ideas and school examples, and a database of resources addressing bullying and harassment.

Available: www.bullyingnoway.com.au

A website by Dr Ken Rigby with a wide range of information, including:

- Information on Bystander Intervention
- Finding out about bullying in your school: questionnaires
- How cases of bullying are being handled by schools
- What schools and parents can do to reduce bullying

Available: www.kenrigby.net

The website for Michael Carr-Gregg, an Australian psychologist.

“The Princess Bitchface Syndrome” is his book on surviving adolescent girls. “Real Wired Child” is a recent publication covering what parents need to know about kids online.

Available: <http://www.michaelcarr-gregg.com.au/>

Andrew Fuller works with many schools and communities in Australia and internationally, specialising in the wellbeing of young people and their families. He specialises in counselling and intervention strategies for a range of problems faced by children and adolescents including anger and aggression management, bullying, self-harm, suicide prevention and intervention.

Available: www.andrewfuller.com.au

“Destroying Avalon” by Kate McCaffrey, a Western Australian author, is a wonderful book that can be used as part of the curriculum when discussing cyber bullying. It offers an insight into the world of cyber bullying, covering blogging, cyber stalking, masquerading and text messaging. This book is suitable for year 9 and above and is available through Fremantle Press.

https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/discipline/stu_discip_gov/PD20060316.shtml is from the NSW Department of Education and Training and sets out the requirements for dealing with bullying through a Student Discipline policy.

<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/> is an Australian Government initiative provided through the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). It is part of the cybersafety program.

www.netsafe.org.nz is the website NetSafe, New Zealand’s Internet Safety Group. This website contains a vast range of material for schools on cyber bullying and cyber predators.

Mental health sites offering a range of resources:

www.reachoutpro.com.au

www.moodgym.anu.edu.au

www.reachoutcentral.com.au

www.reachout.com.au

www.beyondblue.org.au

Kids Help Line 1800 55 1800

There are also many international websites with a range of information on bullying for schools, including:

Bully B'ware Productions in Canada www.bullybeware.com

Bullying Online from the United Kingdom www.bullying.co.uk

Anti-Bullying Network from Scotland www.antibullying.net

Childnet International from the United Kingdom <http://www.childnet-int.org/>

REFERENCES

AISWA Behaviour Management Guidelines

Available: <https://www.ais.wa.edu.au/>

AISWA Bullying Prevention Policy and Procedure Guidelines

Available: <https://www.ais.wa.edu.au>

School Education Act (WA) 1999 and Regulations 2000 (WA)

Available: <http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes>

Workplace Relations Act 1996

Available: <http://www.slp.wa.gov.au>