



**Silver Tree**  
STEINER SCHOOL

# Behaviour Management: Dealing with Bullying Behaviour Policy

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2020

This procedure is applicable to: Teachers, Staff and Students

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## POLICY

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.

Employees of Silver Tree Steiner School owe a duty of care to 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.

This policy applies to all student bullying behaviour where there is a clear and close relationship between the School and the conduct of the student. Bullying behaviour may occur on or off School premises and outside of school hours and includes cyber bullying.

*Silver Tree Steiner School explicitly forbids the use of any form of child abuse, corporal punishment or other degrading punishment.' Please see below for a description of these terms, as defined in the Guide:*

### **Child abuse:**

Four forms of child abuse are covered by WA law:

1. Physical abuse occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or a child's caregiver.
2. Sexual abuse, in relation to a child, includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:
  - a. the child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence;
  - b. the child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
  - c. there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.
3. Emotional abuse includes:
  - a. psychological abuse; and
  - b. being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.
4. Neglect includes failure by a child's parents to provide, arrange or allow the provision of:
  - a. adequate care for the child; or
  - b. effective medical, therapeutic or remedial treatment for the child.

### **Corporal punishment:**

Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm. *(From UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8 (2006), paragraphs 11 and 15: CRC/C/GC/8, 2 March 2007.)*

### **Degrading punishment:**

Any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child. *(From UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8 (2006), paragraphs 11 and 16: CRC/C/GC/8, 2 March 2007.)*

## AIMS

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

Members of the School community are expected to 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 (WA)
- School Education Act 1999 (WA)
- School Education Act Regulations 2000 (WA)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)
- State Records Act 2000 (WA)

## RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following -

- Behaviour Management: Violent and Aggressive Behaviour Policy
- Concern and Grievance Procedure
- Student Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Safeguard of Students Policy
- Critical Incident and Emergency Management Procedures
- Child Protection Policy

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools says:

*“Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*

*Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).*

*Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.”*

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:**

- 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
- Behavioural: 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.

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

(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 after 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

## 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 Head of School 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 Head of School 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

#### Stage 1: Interview

Interview pupils with bullying behaviour. 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.

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 Behaviour and Discipline Procedure.

### **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.

### **SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR & NON-SUICIDAL SELF-INJURY**

Suicidal behaviour includes suicidal ideation, suicide attempts and suicide. Most people considering suicide give signs that they are not coping. Staff may observe behaviours or sudden changes in a student that may indicate they are stressed or distressed. If staff have concerns regarding a student, it is important to consult with the Head of School to ascertain if further actions need to be taken to support the student. The Head of School may wish to contact the AISWA School Psychology Service for guidance. Refer to the '*School response to student suicidal behaviour and non-suicidal self-injury flow chart*' for more information.

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Behaviour Management policies and procedures will be reviewed at least every 2 years and include consultation with staff and consideration of input from the school community. Regular monitoring of the effectiveness of behaviour management procedures and review of data will be included in the review process.

## 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.

Schools can refer to the AISWA School Psychology team for further information on the following programs frequently used in Western Australian Schools:

- Friendly Schools Plus
- PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)
- Aussie Optimism
- Keeping Safe

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

Available: <https://emergingminds.com.au/resources/kidsmatter-families/>

**Be You** is the new national framework that builds on the success and learnings from five existing programs. These programs are aimed at promoting social and emotional health and wellbeing for children and young people in the education space: KidsMatter Early Childhood, KidsMatter Primary, MindMatters, Response Ability and Headspace School Support.

Available: <https://beyou.edu.au/>

**CASEL** (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning)

Available: [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)

**Bullying NO Way!** has developed a decision-making tool *STEPS (Steps to Examine Programs and approaches in Schools)*, to help schools select appropriate and evidence-based bullying prevention programs and approaches.

The **STEPS** decisions-making framework gives schools a robust and comprehensive approach to examining programs, using the research combined with local school information to select evidence-based programs that are appropriate for their school.

Available: [www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://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](http://www.kenrigby.net)

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](http://www.andrewfuller.com.au)

### Cyber Bullying resources

The **Office of the eSafety Commissioner** co-ordinates and leads the online safety efforts of government, industry and the not-for profit community.

It has a broad remit, which includes providing:

- a complaints service for young Australians who experience serious cyberbullying
- identifying and removing illegal online content
- tackling image-based abuse.

It also offers a range of school based educational resources and programs to assist teachers to guide students in becoming responsible digital citizens. The Office also provides audience-specific content to help educate all Australians about online safety including young people, women, teachers, parents, seniors and community groups. [Cyberbullying resources](#)

[Stay Smart Online](#) provides simple, easy to understand advice on how to protect yourself online as well as up to date information on the latest online threats and how to respond.

[ThinkUKnow](#) is a free, evidence-based cyber safety program that provides presentations to Australian parents, carers, teachers and students. It provides information on the technologies young people use, the challenges they may face, and importantly, how they can be overcome. This Website is run by the Federal Police.

### Cyber Savvy

Professor Donna Cross (ECU) and her team created this web resource to help young people prevent and address problems associated with online behaviour, particularly image-sharing. It is based on over 10 years of research with over 40,000 Australian young people. It provides new insights on what young people, families and other adults can do to prevent problems that may arise from risky image-sharing.

### Mental Health resources

The following websites offer a range of resources:

[www.moodgym.anu.edu.au](http://www.moodgym.anu.edu.au)

[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

[www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au) and also Kids Help Line: 1800 551 800

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](http://www.bullybeware.com)

**Bullying Online** from the United Kingdom [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

**Anti-Bullying Network** from Scotland [www.antibullying.net](http://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>