

Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy No:	4 (2.2)	Version:	3 (August 2021)
Responsibility:	School Chair	Scheduled Review Date:	August 2023

1.0 Purpose

This policy aims to outline a whole school approach to bullying in the school environment, providing effective and consistent responses and recognising the shared responsibility of us all to deal with it.

2.0 Policy Statement

At Tarremah Steiner School we expect and encourage everyone to be sensitive to the needs of others. We are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment, which promotes growth, personal achievement and positive relationships for all students and staff. We believe effective responses to bullying are a shared responsibility and not an individual predicament.

- All teachers are firmly committed to minimizing acts of bullying.
- Guidelines are provided for students, teachers and parents on what to do in bullying situations.
- Targets of bullying will be supported. Everyone has a right to be free of bullying.
- Children who engage in bullying behaviour will be offered help and support.
- All members of the school community are expected and encouraged to be sensitive to the needs of others and demonstrate caring, considerate behaviour and to actively discourage bullying should it occur.
- It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to abstain from bullying others and to respond to any bullying of which they are aware.

This policy is to work alongside the Positive Behaviours Policies, as well as the Minor and Serious Breach to Positive Behaviours Policy Procedures. It is expected that the Minor and Serious Breach to Positive Behaviours Policy Procedures would still be followed. This policy is to provide additional steps and support for dealing with instances of bullying on top of the concerning behaviours.

3.0 Policy Elements

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is a pattern of behaviour by one person or a group of people towards another, which is designed to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset, or discomfort that person. It may be open, or covert in nature.

Bullying behaviour has these key features:

- It is deliberate.
- It causes distress.
- It is repeated.
- It is unreasonable and unjustifiable.
- It is directed at a specific person or group.
- There is an asymmetry of power between the perpetrator and the recipient of the bullying.

Sphere of Influence	What is Bullying?	What is not Bullying?
Social/Relational	Multiple incidents of any of the following: ostracising, making up or spreading rumours, social exclusion, rejection, purposeful misleading/lying to, sharing others personal information. Orchestrating and organising instances of bullying that others will carry out	Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance).
Physical	Multiple incidents of any of the following: hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, tripping, 'ganging up', unwanted physical or sexual touching, personal property damage and assault using objects	Isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation, or violence.
Emotional/Psychological	Multiple incidents of any of the following: stalking, threats or implied threats, unwanted email or text messaging, nasty practical jokes, threatening gestures, manipulation, damage to/theft of/ hiding of one's property	One-off acts of meanness or spite.
Verbal	Multiple incidents of put downs, name-calling, swearing, nasty notes and negative remarks about race, culture, family, circumstances, gender, sexuality, disability, appearance, medical conditions, etc.	Not liking someone or a single act of social rejection.
Digital/Cyber bullying	Bullying through information and communication technologies, including malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones and other IT devices, inappropriate messages, comments, or photographs on social media sites (e.g. Instagram)	Thoughtless, or tactless one-off comments. Although, the potential for single comments to escalate to a campaign of bullying online is greater due to the lack of face-to-face consequences/anonymity aspects of online interaction.

Agreed Terminology

- The terms *recipient* or *target* are preferable to the term *victim* as they do not imply powerlessness or weakness.

- The term *the student involved in bullying* or *bullying student* is preferable to *the bully*, which may demonise individual students.
- The term *in a less powerful (or more vulnerable) position* is preferable to *weaker* when talking about a student who has been the target of a bullying student.

Harassment

Harassment contains many of the same key features as bullying. As such it will be addressed in the same manner as bullying below:

Bullying Prevention and Early Intervention

Features of Tarremah Steiner School that deter bullying:

- School policy outlining firm action and appropriate consequences.
- A school ethos that emphasizes respect for others and us.
- Class Teacher (Primary) and Class Guardian (High School) ongoing pastoral relationship with students.
- Regular Faculty meetings to discuss the welfare of students.
- Liaison with other schools through the enrolment process to identify high risk students.
- Active supervision of students during lessons, excursions, sporting activities and breaks by staff.
- Communication of policy and incidents (when appropriate) with staff, students, parents, other agencies.
- Values-based learning experiences built into the curriculum.
- Expectation of respectful interactions between staff and students.

Expectations and guidelines

Teachers: shall focus on encouraging positive, inclusive behaviours where students are sensitive to the needs of others and confident in their non-acceptance of bullying behaviour. At the same time, teachers are to set a firm example of not accepting bullying behaviour should it occur.

General - The Steiner Curriculum and philosophy from Kindergarten to Secondary School allows for on-going and age-appropriate opportunities for teachers to demonstrate and discuss attitudes, inclusive behaviours and acceptable responses to bullying behaviour. For example:

- Values Education
- Peer leadership & ‘Buddy’ programmes
- Therapeutic stories
- Main lesson stories and activities
- Class Teacher cycle and Class Guardian role

As well as the above, teachers undertake regular professional development on bullying issues, conduct child studies, and support each other through mentoring.

Other avenues that teachers use for countering bullying include: -

- Clearly stated and maintained classroom expectations and consequences
- Pro-active and effective supervision in class and playground
- Consistent responses by all staff
- Effective recording and discussion by teaching staff of on-going incidents of bullying
- Parent education through meetings and publications
- Reflective teacher practice

- Faculty discussions concerning student behaviour and the maintenance of harmonious and inclusive school culture.

Specific - Following the observation or reporting by a teacher, student or parent of bullying behaviour, teachers will provide support using one or more of the following strategies:

- Follow up as soon as possible by investigating the report
- Consult and discuss the action with the offender/s, reinforcing that the behaviour is not acceptable
- Report incident/s to the class teacher/guardian
- Provide opportunities and strategies for bullying student/s to modify their behaviour
- Time out and /or isolation from the situation
- Restrict privileges
- Contact parents
- Document meeting between parent, pupil and teachers
- Behaviour card (Upper primary & Secondary)

Students: During their education at Tarremah, all students shall be involved in age-appropriate programmes and activities which include developing an awareness of what bullying behaviour is and the consequences of such behaviour and the development of strategies for dealing with bullying behaviour.

General - Students are involved in programmes and activities which develop social skills, inclusivity, respect and empathy for others. For example.

- Kindergarten – imitation (modelling and guidance by teacher)
- Class 1 to 4 - cooperative games, therapeutic stories, main lesson activities, Buddy Programme
- Class 5 & 6 - Peer Leadership Programme/Camp and Buddy Programme, main lesson stories and activities, Outdoor Education Programme
- Class 7 to 10 - Health for Life Curriculum, Main Lessons (in particular Physiology & Birthing), Outdoor Education programme

Specific - If students observe, or are involved in a bullying situation, they are encouraged to use one or more of the following strategies:

- Tell the bullying student/s that their behaviour is not fair to the recipient
- Use statements such as: 'I don't like that.' or 'Please stop it.'
- Not to retaliate or respond to the situation and to walk away
- Report the incident to the nearest teacher
- Talk to the bullying student/s with a teacher present, telling them what it feels like

Parents: can work together with the school to reduce bullying behaviour by encouraging and promoting positive behaviours and setting a firm example of not accepting bullying toward or by their own child/children.

General - Parents can provide positive examples to their children at home and school. Parents can work in partnership with the school to educate and support their child in positive, inclusive behaviours.

Specific - If parents observe or become aware of bullying behaviour, they should use one or more of the following strategies:

- Contact their child's class teacher/guardian and discuss their concerns
- Encourage and support their child to use the options above
- Tell their own child that bullying behaviour is not acceptable
- Listen carefully to their child and respond calmly and positively.

4.0 Procedure

Tarremah Steiner School's procedures for handling bullying complaints are based on the Restorative Justice approach described by the Australian Institute of Criminology. This approach makes it clear to the perpetrator that their behaviour is not condoned within the school community and at the same time provides respectful support for the individuals involved. There are five principles that underpin this approach:

- Students who bully can change their behaviour.
- Bullying behaviour is the problem, not the person.
- Harm caused must be acknowledged.
- Reparation is essential.
- People engaged in bullying behaviour and the targets of bullying behaviour require support and care.

Handling Bullying Complaints

Step 1: First Suspicion/Report/Instance - Suspected Bullying can begin in one of three ways:

First Suspicion of Bullying

If a teacher has a suspicion of covert bullying, has witnessed minor behaviours that they suspect could be part of a campaign of bullying (e.g., eye rolls and other forms of non-verbal put-downs that may exist on a level difficult to justify a Behaviour Report) occurring in a class then they should complete an Incident Report Statement stating their concerns and give that to the Class Teacher.

Or

First Report of Bullying

If the first instance of bullying is not an incident witnessed by a teacher, but rather a student, parent or community member, or the targeted student themselves coming forth to give a report of bullying; that person will be asked to fill out an Incident Report Statement which will be given to the Class Teacher.

Enquiries will be made as to whether there are other witnesses of this behaviour, and they too will be asked to fill out an Incident Report Statement, which will also go to the Class Teacher.

Or

First Instance of Breach in the Positive Behaviour Policy

The first incident is to be treated as any breach of the Positive Behaviours Policies.

By filling out either a Minor or Serious Breach of Positive Behaviour Report the target and bullying student(s) will be identified, and this report will be shared with the Class Teacher. Consequences for the student(s) engaged in Bullying behaviour will occur (if age appropriate)

According to the Breach of Positive Behaviour Policies Procedure, any witnesses need to fill out an Incident Report Statement which will accompany the Teacher's report and will further inform the Class Teacher of the situation.

If the teacher witnessing the incident suspects bullying, this needs to be reported to the Class Teacher as soon as possible.

Step 2: Notification of Suspected Bullying

The Class Teacher, having been told of suspected bullying will notify both the targeted student, and the student engaged in suspected bullying behaviours. The Class Teacher will notify both parties that there is a suspicion of bullying. This talk can take place together or apart depending on the age/personal circumstances surrounding the incidences. **This talk must begin by** reiterating that bullying behaviour is not tolerated at Tarremah Steiner school. During this talk the following practices could be utilised by the teacher:

- Identify safe havens for the targeted student during non-class time before, during and after school.
- Indicate that subsequent meetings will occur until the bullying behaviour has stopped.
- Brainstorm, with the targeted student, possible responses to bullying and to whom they can report should any further incidents of bullying occur.
- Determine through discussion with mentors/ parents/ student (varies according to age and need) whether the student would benefit from counselling sessions to assist with resilience, conflict management, friendship-making skills, etc.
- Decide if the student would benefit from a peer support relationship or teacher/ staff member as a "secret support".

Step 3: Parental and Staff Notification of suspected bullying

Both the parents of the targeted student, and the bullying student will be notified of the suspicion, and request reinforcement from home that bullying is unacceptable, or to provide support for the targeted student, or to provide further context or hidden factors that the Class Teacher can take into consideration. This will be done in the spirit of clear communication, to allow all parties to work together to intervene early.

The Class Teacher must notify the staff during Faculty Meetings of the bullying/suspected bullying, so that all staff can closely monitor the situation and provide support when needed. All instances of bullying behaviour need to be immediately shared with the Class Teacher from this point on.

If the bullying behaviour continues, the following steps are to be taken:

Step 4: Notification of Confirmed Bullying is done in one of two ways:

1. For instances which are not threatening or immediately dangerous to the targeted student: -

- The Teacher is to inform the student engaged in bullying behaviours that what they are doing is now identified as confirmed bullying and/or harassment which is considered a Serious Breach of the Positive Behaviours Policies and will result in suspension.
- Utilise assertive communication of zero tolerance of bullying and reminder of School expectations – student told to stop the behaviour and reminded of the Behaviour Procedure.
- Allow for self-correction.
- Inform Class Teacher who will in turn inform the faculty and the parents.

- If bullying behaviours continue, they are to be treated as a Serious breach of the Positive Behaviours Policy, *even if the behaviours evidenced would alone be considered minor*, as a campaign of bullying inherently is damaging to the targets' wellbeing, and sense of safety.

2. For instances which are threatening/aggressive immediately dangerous to the targeted student

- The Teacher is to treat the incident as they would a Serious Breach to the Positive Behaviours Policy.
- Inform the student engaged in bullying behaviours that what they are doing is now identified as confirmed bullying and/or harassment which is considered a Serious Breach of the Positive Behaviours Policies and any continuation of such behaviour is likely to end in suspension, expulsion and/or notification to the police.

Step 5:

Parental and Staff Notification

Both the parents of the targeted student, and the bullying student will be notified of the confirmation that bullying is taking place, and request reinforcement from home that bullying is unacceptable, or to provide support for the targeted student, or to provide further context or hidden factors that the Class Teacher can take into consideration. This will be done in the spirit of clear communication, to allow all parties to work together to intervene early. Parents of the student engaged in bullying behaviours are to be notified that incidents that continue in their manner, are likely to result in suspensions/expulsion/and/or the police being notified.

The Class Teacher must notify the staff during faculty meetings of the bullying, so that all staff can closely monitor the situation and provide support when needed. All instances of bullying behaviour need to be immediately shared with the Class Teacher from this point on.

Step 6:

Sustained Bullying

If the student engaging in bullying behaviours refuses to stop their bullying behaviours, the Behaviour Committee created (due to the implementation of the Serious Breach of the Positive Behaviour Policy) may request that the student be suspended/expelled/ and or have the police notified as another student's wellbeing is in jeopardy.

Class Teacher Anti-Bullying Practices

While the Behaviour Committee deals with individual instances of bullying, the Class Teacher/Guardian can utilise a variety of practices to provide extra support to the targeted student, and to the student attempting to modify their behaviour.

Such practices include, but are not limited to:

Focusing on encouraging positive, inclusive behaviours where students are sensitive to the needs of others and confident in their non-acceptance of bullying behaviour. At the same time, teachers are to set a firm example of not accepting bullying behaviour should it occur. The Steiner Curriculum and philosophy from Kindergarten to Secondary School allows for on-going and age-appropriate opportunities for teachers to demonstrate and discuss attitudes, inclusive behaviours, and acceptable responses to bullying behaviour.

- Values Education
- Peer leadership & 'Buddy' programmes
- Therapeutic stories
- Time out and /or isolation from the situation

- Encouraging others to respond to bullying situations by using statements like:
 - 'I don't like that.'
 - 'Please stop it.'
 - 'What you're doing is bullying, and that's not ok.'
- Encouraging the targeted person to not retaliate or respond, but to walk away.
- Encouraging the targeted person to report the incident to the nearest teacher.

Parents' Anti-Bullying Practices

Parents can work together with the school to reduce bullying behaviour by encouraging and promoting positive behaviours and setting a firm example of not accepting bullying toward or by their own child/children.

Parents can provide positive examples to their children at home and school. Parents can work in partnership with the school to educate and support their child in positive, inclusive behaviours.

If parents observe or become aware of bullying behaviour, they should use one or more of the following strategies:

- Contact their child's class teacher/guardian and discuss their concerns
- Encourage and support their child to use the strategies suggested in their Behaviour Plan.
- Tell their own child that bullying behaviour is not acceptable
- Listen carefully to their child and respond calmly and positively.

5.0 Responsibilities

- School Executive
- School Council

6.0 Related Documents

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Parent Community Code of Conduct Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Tarremah Community Framework

7.0 Reference/Legislation

8.0 Contact Point

- School Chair
- Education Administrator/Facilitator
- School Executive

9.0 Authorization

Executive:

Council:

Name:

Date: