

STU004 - BULLYING & HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

POLICY CONTEXT

Willunga Waldorf School is a co-educational and gender-inclusive school. The School's mission is to provide Steiner education from early childhood to year 12, based on the work of Rudolf Steiner. This education is driven by a deep understanding and respect for the developing and unfolding human being.

The School seeks to be a safe, just, compassionate, responsive and inclusive place for all and will not tolerate bullying and harassment.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Bullying can occur among children and young people of any age, sex, gender or background. Willunga Waldorf School aims to ensure a safe, nurturing educational environment, which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all by enforcing a culture that does not tolerate bullying, harassment or any other unfair treatment.

This policy provides information for students, parents/legal guardians and staff (including volunteers, contractors and visiting specialists) from Early Childhood to Year 12 in relation to students about the expectations of them and the process to follow in the event that they witness or experience bullying and harassment at school or school-related events (e.g. camps, excursions etc.). This policy also extends to social media where students interact with peers or people outside the school and their actions may affect them either directly or indirectly.

It does not extend to bullying and harassment of employees by employees – staff should refer to the Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy for this.

VISION STATEMENT

All students have the right to feel safe, respected and included. Our School's vision is to educate and enable individuals to become socially responsible contributors to the ongoing health of the community. We foster a culture of healthy and respectful relationships that is free from bullying and harassment. We will create this with our students, families and the wider school community to promote learning success and wellbeing.

We will model behaviours that:

- Show respect;
- Value diversity; and
- Promote belonging and wellbeing.

DEFINITIONS

What is bullying?

Bullying is a repetitive act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another:

- It can take a number of forms- physical, verbal, emotional, gesture, extortion and exclusion.
- It is an abuse of power.
- It can be planned and organised or it may be unintentional.
- Individuals or groups may be involved.

Some examples of bullying include:

- Any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting on others
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it
- Using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families
- Using put-downs, belittling others' abilities and achievements
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others
- Making degrading comments about another's gender, culture, religious or social background
- Hurtfully excluding others from a group
- Making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse
- Ridiculing another's appearance
- Forcing others to act against their will

If we are bullied:

- We may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated.
- Our work, sleep and ability to concentrate may suffer.
- Our relationships with our family and friends may deteriorate.
- We may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem.

POLICY STATEMENT

Bullying, harassment and sexual harassment are not tolerated at Willunga Waldorf School in any form or to any degree. The School recognises its responsibility to provide a safe and supportive educational and working environment and it sustains a culture where such behaviour is completely antithetical to its value base.

The School is committed to respond with speed, compassion, respect, integrity and legal compliance to any incident of bullying, harassment or sexual harassment.

WHAT WE DO TO PREVENT BULLYING AND HARASSMENT AT OUR SCHOOL

The School's Health and Social Education curriculum is designed to educate students about age appropriate and responsible stewardship of self and the social environment.

Willunga Waldorf School is a student-centred school with a commitment to working out of a profound understanding of child development. A focus exists on strong relationships of trust and respect between the teacher and students, excellent interpersonal communication

within the school community and a recognition of the individuality of each child and young person.

As a school community we encourage speaking up and reporting on any cases of bullying and harassment. We discourage secrecy and collusion through silence.

THIS REQUIRES STAFF TO:

- Be role models in word and action at all times
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying or harassment
- Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by vigilant observations during supervision duty
- Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons
- Encourage the victim to speak up; listen to the victim with concern and without judgement; let the student know that telling you about the bullying is the right thing to do; take the time to follow up reports.
- Take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk
- Report suspected incidents to the appropriate staff member such as Class Teacher/Guardian, Learning Support teacher, parent etc.

THIS REQUIRES STUDENTS TO:

- Refuse to be involved in any bullying or harassment situation.
- If appropriate, take some form of preventative action if they witness any incident of bullying or harassment.
- Report the incident or suspected incident and help break down the code of secrecy.

If students who are bullied or harassed have the courage to speak out, they may help to reduce pain for themselves and other potential victims.

THE TEACHERS RECOMMEND THAT PARENTS/LEGAL GUARDIANS:

- Watch for signs of distress in their child or young person, e.g. an unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothing or bruising;
- Take an active interest in your child or young person's social life and acquaintances;
- Advise your child or young person to tell a staff member about the incident. If possible allow them to report it and deal with the problem themselves. They can gain much respect through taking the initiative and dealing without parental involvement.
- Inform the relevant staff if bullying or harassment is suspected;
- Keep a written record (who, what, where, when, why, how);
- Do not encourage your child or young person to retaliate;
- Communicate to your child or young person that parental involvement, if necessary, will be appropriate for the situation;
- Be willing to attend interviews at the school if your child or young person is involved in any bullying or harassment incident;
- Be willing to inform the School of any cases of suspected bullying or harassment, even if your own child or young person is not directly affected

When staff, students and parents/guardians work together we create a positive, mutually supportive and cohesive environment.

ABUSIVE LANGUAGE – REGARDED SIMILARLY TO VIOLENT / AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

We believe that it is extremely important to help students become aware and mindful of the language that they use.

We recognise the power of abusive language when it is directed with intent to injure.

Students who continually use abusive language with fellow students or staff will be responded to in the same manner as that enacted for violent or aggressive behaviour.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment and sexual assault are not tolerated at Willunga Waldorf School in any form or to any degree. Please refer to *HS033 – Sexual Harassment Policy* for further details.

REPORTING BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Students and parents/legal guardians should report incidents of bullying or harassment in the first instance to their Class Teacher or Class Guardian.

If they do not feel comfortable to do so, they can report the incident to any other trusted staff member, including Wellbeing Officers, Class Assistants, Grounds and Administration staff.

Staff who witness or suspect bullying should speak to the appropriate staff member, such as Class Teacher/Guardian or their Faculty Leader.

Reports can be made verbally or in writing.

Provide as much information as possible. This may include:

- Who was involved, including who engaged in the bullying behaviour, who the behaviour was directed at and witnesses;
- When the incident happened;
- Where the incident took place, for example at recess, on social media etc.;
- The behaviour;
- If anyone stopped or tried to stop the behaviour;
- What led up to the incident; and
- What happened after the incident.

RECOMMENDATIONS IF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT OCCURS

WHAT THE SCHOOL WILL DO:

With abusive behaviour (verbal, emotional or physical), the following procedure will apply

- Immediate follow up:
 - Ensure that the victim and the bully are removed from danger, are safe and receive the appropriate care/attention

- Follow up the incident with all parties concerned
- If possible, have written statements from those involved and witnesses
- If violence is extreme, parents/legal guardians will be contacted immediately and the student will be sent home for the rest of the day.
- Document the incident on an Incident/Injury Report form; a copy is provided to parents/legal guardians, Class Teacher/Class Guardian and Front Office staff for the student's file (on the day of the incident where practicable)
- Direct communication made from the school to the parents/legal guardians

ASSESSMENT OF THE NEED FOR FURTHER COUNSELLING OR EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

- Follow-up meetings with staff, student and parents/legal guardians to establish clear behaviour goals and expectations.
- Implementation and monitoring of relevant programs /counselling / contracts
- Further aggressive or violent behaviour may result in suspension or expulsion
- Re-entry will be dependent on an interview and contractual agreement which identifies the desired behaviour and the support strategies for the student.

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTS

Related school Policies, Procedures and Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STU001 – Child Safe Environments Policy • STU002 – Mandatory Notification Policy and Procedures • SF001 – Staff Code of Conduct • SF004 – Volunteer Policy • GOV001 – Grievance Policy and Procedures (Parents) • GOV003 – a Grievance Policy and Procedures (Students) • GOV005 – Privacy Policy • STU003 – Personal Responsibility Policy (Behaviour Education and Support) • Cyber Safety Policy and Guidelines • STU008 – Mobile Devices Policy • STU010 – Drug and Alcohol Policy (Students) • Social Media Policy • Pastoral Care Policy (Students) • WHS005 – Sexual Harassment Policy • OE004 – Camps and Excursion Policy • SF003 – Recruitment and Selection Policy • EM001 – Critical Incident Management Policy and Procedure • Student Exchange Policy (Safety of Students)
Related Legislation and Regulatory Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Conventions of the Rights of the Child • National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (2019) • Statutes Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse) Act 2021 • Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 • Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 • Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA) • Teacher Registration and Standards Act 2004 (SA) • Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 • Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 • Australian Student Wellbeing Framework
Early Childhood Legislative requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Quality Standards (NQS)



Cross sector Guidelines (SA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DHS – National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people Keeping-Safe Child Protection Curriculum (KS:CPC)
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VARIATION AND REVIEW

The School reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time. Unless altered earlier, this policy will be reviewed every three (3) years.

Responsible Person	Head of School		
Policy Approver	Leadership – approved 19/06/2023		
Version	1.2		
Publication Date	2015 (version 1.0) 26/02/2019 (Version 1.1) 26/06/2023 (Version 1.2)	Effective Date:	2015 26/02/2019
Review Date	May 2023	Effective Date:	27/06/2023
Next Review Date	May 2026		
Revision Record	<p>Felicity Hickman, 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of policy <p>Katrina Kytka, 26/02/2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction amended to reflect growth of school. - Gendered language amended. - Updated to include any changes to practice. <p>Antje Guenther (HR), May 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusion of "prevention" in policy title - Updated language to reflect current legislation - Reformatted document - Added Policy Context, Purpose and Scope, Policy Statement and Sexual Harassment sections/paragraph - Added Expulsion as possible outcome for repeated bullying behaviour - Updated Related Policies, Legislation and Regulatory Requirements - At AISSA's recommendation, added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Vision Statement o Reporting Bullying and Harassment <p>July 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changed category to Student-specific Policies (STU) 		