

Bullying in Steiner Schools: Prevention, Response, and Partnership

Bullying Policy Explainer

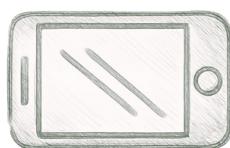
Introduction and Alignment with School Policies

Our approach to bullying reflects our commitment to a safe, caring, and inclusive learning environment. It aligns with the Student Bullying Policy, Social Health and Wellbeing Policy, and Child Protection Policy. At Samford Valley Steiner School, bullying is never tolerated. We act promptly and compassionately, working to protect, support, and restore relationships through both accountability and care.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is a systematic and repeated abuse of power that causes physical, emotional, or social harm.

It can be:



Cyber:
Using technology to
bully or harass others



Verbal:
Name-calling, teasing,
or verbal abuse



Physical:
Hitting, tripping, or
damaging property



Psychological:
Manipulation, intimidation,
or threats



Social or Covert:
Exclusion, spreading
rumours, or humiliation

Not all conflict is bullying. Mutual arguments, single acts of meanness, or social disagreements are not bullying, though they are still addressed through relational and restorative processes to prevent escalation.

Our Approach to Preventing and Responding to Bullying

Steiner education emphasises relationships as the foundation for learning and wellbeing.

Our preventative work focuses on:

- Building empathy, inclusion, and respect through rhythm, story, and social learning
- Teaching conflict resolution and bystander responsibility
- Raising awareness among students, parents, and staff about what bullying is and how to respond
- Providing clear reporting mechanisms for students and families

Resolution Process

When bullying is identified, the school follows a structured process:



The situation is monitored until resolved. All reports are investigated and acted upon, and parents are kept informed throughout the process. All actions are recorded in the school's Teacher Kiosk system.

How Parents Can Support a Safe School

Parents are vital partners in prevention. You can help by:

- Encouraging kindness and inclusion in your child's friendships.
- Modelling calm and respectful communication.
- Taking concerns to teachers or Faculty Directors rather than approaching other parents or students directly.
- Supporting restorative conversations and agreed strategies.
- Watching for signs of distress and staying engaged with your child's social world.

When Restorative Practice Isn't Enough

While restorative processes are often the first response, serious or repeated bullying may require disciplinary measures. These may include suspension, exclusion from certain areas of the school, or, in extreme cases, permanent exclusion. The goal remains the same: to protect all students' safety and wellbeing while fostering accountability and growth.

Bullying in Teacher–Student Relationships

Students sometimes feel “picked on” when expectations are upheld or boundaries are reinforced. This does not always constitute bullying. However, if a student feels a teacher’s actions are unfair or harmful, they should speak to a trusted adult, Faculty Director, or Wellbeing Officer, who will investigate and support resolution using procedural fairness.

Research and Best Practice

Evidence from the Bullying. No Way! initiative and the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework shows that schools using proactive, whole-community approaches have:

- Fewer bullying incidents
- Higher student wellbeing and belonging
- More positive teacher–student relationships
- Stronger partnerships with parents

These outcomes reflect the holistic goals of Steiner education: nurturing head, heart, and hands to cultivate empathy, courage, and moral imagination.

Bullying in Steiner Schools: FAQs and Myth-Busting

Q: Isn’t bullying just part of growing up?

No. While conflict is normal, bullying is repeated and harmful. It must always be addressed.

Q: Does the school downplay bullying because it uses restorative practices?

No. Restorative work is a structured, accountable process. Consequences are always applied when needed.

Q: What if my child says nothing is being done?

Contact your child’s teacher or Faculty Director. All reports are investigated and followed up. Sometimes work occurs quietly to protect student privacy.

Q: Are suspensions used in a Steiner school?

Yes, when safety or ongoing harm requires it. Restorative and disciplinary approaches work together to protect students.

Q: Can parents be part of the solution?

Always. Healing relationships and creating safety depend on strong collaboration between home and school.