



York Steiner School Bullying-Prevention Policy **Keeping our children happy and safe**

Bullying of any nature is not acceptable at York Steiner School.

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Our Approach

In choosing Waldorf Education, a parent at York Steiner School is subscribing to a way of educating children that is markedly different from the prevailing orthodoxy.

York Steiner School has a zero tolerance to bullying.

In the course of normal child development we may sometimes observe characteristics which, if not properly addressed, would develop into entrenched negative behaviour. Bullying would be an example of this. We see the curriculum as supporting and enabling the children to progress through their childhood in a balanced way.

Sometimes a teacher may need to give a particular child or situation increased focus. This might include the use of pedagogical stories, talking to the group or child involved, consulting with the whole teaching body in a child study, and meeting with parents.

We aim to maintain open channels of communication with parents who in some cases may be in a better position to pick up subtle signs that the teacher may not have been aware of. We therefore value open and clear communication.

We aim to encourage and promote good behaviour. We give positive reinforcement for effort and good behaviour within the classroom.

Definitions

Bullying may be defined as any physical or verbal action which is:

- deliberately hurtful
- repeated over time
- hard to defend oneself against

Bullying may take the form of racist, sexist or homophobic behaviour. Bullying may also be based on differences in religious or cultural background, on any form of disability or on any Special Educational Needs.

This includes all forms of cyber-bullying.

Procedures

We will consider each alleged case of bullying individually, noting that the school includes children from early years to adolescence. We remain sensitive to the fact that younger children who are learning to manage their behaviour may misinterpret one off incidents as bullying and are aware that relationships are fluid at this age.

When a child reports an incident

When we have concerns, or an incident is reported to us, we will listen and gather evidence. This will usually be dealt with immediately bringing the children involved plus witnesses together to discover what has happened with the intention it can be resolved with an apology and a hand shake.

In the case of ongoing incidents / behaviours we would gather evidence and observations to establish:

1. The nature of incident
2. The frequency of incidents
3. The severity of the problem

We will then:

1. Devise an appropriate strategy, with reconciliation as the ultimate aim.
2. We will make a record of the actions and outcomes, which will be kept centrally.

Where it is appropriate we will initially contact parents within three working days, following this up within three working weeks with a report on further progress.

Consequences

In most cases we will seek to assist children who have not been getting along well together to resolve their differences. How this is managed will depend on the ages of the children and will be different in every case.

The perpetrator of bullying is also a victim of his or her own actions and will be offered support.

However, in more serious cases, where we have been unable to promote positive behaviour changes, we will consider the following sanctions:

- Temporary removal of a child from a group
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Detention
- Withholding treats such as lunchtime activities, participation in trips.
- Temporary exclusion from school
- Permanent exclusion from school
- For rare and serious violent behaviour it might be necessary to involve the police and/or other agencies

Staff Awareness

We take seriously the need for staff to be actively aware of the vigilance and understanding required to ensure the safety of our children from all aspects of bullying, and of the steps necessary for prevention and resolution.

To this end we take seriously the regular training of staff and their understanding and implementation of our Anti-bullying Policy.

The Anti-bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy

Approval & Review

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on:

3rd March 2016

Policy review date:

February 2017