BRIGIDINE COLLEGE

FORTITER ET SUAVITER

Positive Relationships:
Bullying Prevention and Response

A Policy for Students

College Statement	*Brigidine College Indooroopilly is a Kildare Ministries Independent Catholic Girls Secondary College for students from Year 7 to Year 12. The College is committed to the Brigidine vision of transformation of society through faith and education. It has a proven record of providing quality and affordable education for the empowerment of young women. The College strives, in the spirit of Brigid, to build a true community of students, parents and teachers, reflecting gospel values. The College motto, Fortiter et Suaviter (Strength and Gentleness) is lived daily in all interactions. There is an emphasis on the individual and the common good in all aspects of College life.*		
Date Approved	February 2021	Policy Owner	Principal
Next Review Due	February 2023	Author	Melinda Egan/Jackie Wood
Scope	This policy and procedure applies to all Brigidine College students, parents/guardians and workers. This document supersedes in its entirety all previous student-related bullying and harassment policies and procedures.		
References	Related Documents • Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy • Behaviour Management Policy (Students) • Behaviour Management Procedures (Students) • STAR -Stand-up And Report (online reporting tool) • Complaints Policy – Students, Parents/Carers • Complaints Procedure – Students, Parents/Carers • Codes of Conduct (various refer intranet/internet) • Grievance Policy and Procedure • Privacy Policy • Student Protection Guidelines and Processes • Whistleblower Policy • *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld) • *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Qld) • Enterprise Bargaining		
Contact	office@brigidine.qld.edu.au		

Policy Statement

Brigidine College Indooroopilly (the College) aims to be a community characterised by tolerance, respect, and acceptance.

The College aims to proactively educate students about bullying in order to prevent it from occurring. Where bullying does occur, support will be provided to the person/s who has been bullied and to the person/s who have carried out the bullying. Those who bully may be subject to consequences as outlined in the College's Behaviour Management Policy.

The College has developed this policy to ensure that there is a consistent approach across the College when addressing bullying.

Guiding Principles

The College recognises that positive relationships are vital and it is expected that all students will show respect to others. Bullying behaviour contravenes this expectation and may interfere with a student's right to strive for excellence in all dimensions of life.

- The College adopts an holistic approach when addressing issues of bullying and the associated impacts.
- The best interests of students are paramount.
- Each student will be treated in a way that supports the principles of privacy, ensures and maintains confidentiality, respect and dignity
- A partnership between the College, students and parents/guardians is essential when maintaining healthy relationships.
- The principles of natural justice will apply to decisions made under this policy.

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.

https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/understanding-bullying (accessed 23/11/2020)

Types of Bullying

Verbal

Name calling, teasing, putting someone down, threatening to cause someone harm, negative comments about someone's appearance – looks, weight, clothes etc

Physical

Poking, hitting, punching, kicking, spitting, tripping, pushing, causing damage to someone's things, pulling faces, making rude hand gestures etc

Social

Lying, spreading rumours, playing horrible jokes, leaving someone out on purpose, embarrassing someone in public, revealing sensitive information, treating someone badly because of their family circumstances, their financial position, their race or their gender identity, their sexuality, where they live or disability

Cyberbullying

Using technology - computer, laptop, mobile phone etc – to hurt someone else by sending hurtful messages, images, video, or comments

This includes using public or private social media sites/apps to post words, video, images etc that could cause another person to be harmed, self-harm or suffer distress. Sites include, but are not limited to: SnapChat, Twitter, Instagram, What's App, Facebook, TikTok, Messenger etc

Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behaviour

What is NOT Bullying?

Behaviours that *do not* constitute bullying include:

- single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online
- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

Such occurrences may still be serious and require intervention or management, however they do not (as single incidents) meet the threshold of a behaviour that can be described as bullying. Refer to the Behaviour Management Policy for such occurrences.

Bullying can occur between adults, between students as well as between students and adults in the setting of a school. If a College worker believes that they are being bullied by another person (student/parent/another worker), they should refer to the Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy, the Grievance Policy, the Enterprise Bargaining document, Human Resources or the Principal.

Consequences of Bullying

The consequences of bullying may be far-reaching and may have long-term effects on many individuals; not only the complainant and the respondent.

- The safety and wellbeing of students may be at risk in an environment where bullying occurs
- Student engagement, learning and attendance may be impacted for the students involved
- The emotional impact on students can be ongoing
- Physical health may be jeopardised
- Bullying may also affect other members of the student's family and the broader community
- An individual may have their reputation tarnished which may be difficult to repair
- The College prides itself on its reputation and having a culture of bullying would jeopardise this

Bullying Awareness

The College uses a range of methods to raise awareness around bullying.

- Promoting a bully-free environment through awareness days, Formation classes, Home Rooms, House Assemblies, Middle School and Senior School Assemblies and College Assemblies
- Providing students with a toolkit of skills:
  - having difficult discussions with people
  - to address others if they feel behaviours towards them are inappropriate
  - self-awareness – 'Could my behaviours be thought of as bullying? How can I stop this?'
- Ensuring and encouraging open communication between students, their Home Room teacher and Pastoral Leaders in order to access support
- Using a variety of communication channels to provide awareness to students. For example: visual signage around the College, on-line reminders on the SEQTA student page and information in the Student Planner. Content includes promoting a bully-free environment and what to do if students are experiencing or witnessing bullying behaviours
- Instructing students not to use their mobile phones during school hours. Providing education to students around appropriate communication methods
- Employing a suitable range of consequences to deal with and discourage bullying. Refer to the Behaviour Management Policy for additional information
- Allowing students to report bullying behaviours anonymously through a confidential, online reporting system (STAR)
- Maintaining firewalls on College IT equipment to prevent students from accessing social media sites
- Educating parents/guardians and students about responsible use of the internet and on-line forums
- Training Peer Mentor students in coaching and supporting other students

Responsibilities – Students, College Employees, Parents/Guardians

Staff, students and parents/guardians all have a role to play in preventing and managing incidents of known or suspected bullying.

Student Responsibilities

Students are required to:

- be respectful toward each other, members of staff and the broader school community
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- be an effective bystander, so that bullying and harassment are discouraged through peer influence
- disengage from online or in person incidents rather than engage and contribute to the situation
- report all incidents of discrimination, harassment and bullying to a teacher or Pastoral Leader
- record incidences of bullying in a factual manner in written and/or visual form
- actively demonstrate and abide by College behavioural standards

Support resources for students/parents/guardians

https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens

Bullying No Way! Student Information Poster

Staff Responsibilities

Staff are required to:

- be positive role models
- work with students on understanding what bullying is and is not and how to address it
- engage in professional learning
- observe and report to Pastoral Leaders signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- make efforts to minimise opportunities for bullying by active classroom, playground, gate and other supervisions

Support resources for College staff

- Contact your Manager or the Principal for advice
- Access EAP provides counselling support

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians are encouraged to:

- remain calm and wait for all information to become available
- watch for signs of distress in students eg: school refusal, a pattern of illness, becoming withdrawn, change in academic performance or engagement in cocurricular activities, trouble sleeping etc
- inform the school via the students' Home Room teacher or Pastoral Leader if bullying is suspected
- suggest the student tell a teacher or Pastoral Leader about the problem so that it can be addressed
- work with students to build skills to manage difficult situations. Contact the College for assistance in this regard
- disengage from communication with other parents or students regarding suspected bullying
- discourage retaliation
- allow the College to investigate allegations and follow the processes and procedures outlined in this Policy or other processes which may be relevant to the situation
- understand that the parents/guardians of students involved will be informed at the College's discretion. Information about other students may not be disclosed
- seek assistance from the Pastoral Leader to devise strategies to support the student

Support resources for parents/guardians

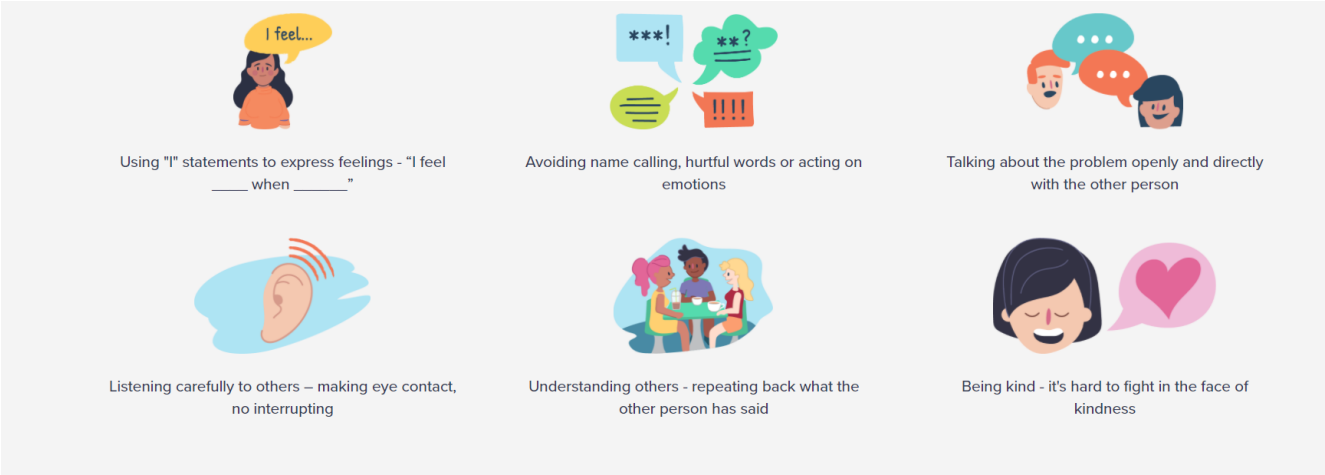
https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/support-and-advice/for-families

Managing Conflict – Information for Students

Conflict occurs throughout life and learning to effectively manage conflict from an early age will provide students with valuable life skills. The College aims to provide students with a toolkit of skills which will enable them to better understand, accept and manage conflict in their lives. Conflicts include arguing with another person and/or having disagreements with others.

Conflict is not necessarily bullying.

Conflict management strategies include:



Source: kidshelpline.com.au, 13/7/2018, accessed 5/10/20

Student Actions

What can I do if I think I am being bullied?

- Seek help from a trusted adult or support service
- Do not to retaliate
- Report it to teacher or through the College's online reporting tool (STAR)
- If it is safe to do so, tell the person to stop (consider using the above 'I feel…' statement)
- Walk away
- Keep your distance from the person and seek advice from an adult about how to do this

What can I do if I see someone being bullied?

- Seek help from a trusted adult or support service
- Try to comfort and/or include the person who has been targeted
- Report it to a teacher or through the College's online reporting tool (STAR)
- If it is safe to do so, tell the person who is bullying to stop, distract the bully so that they stop
- Do not be encouraged to bully by others
- Do not encourage the person who is carrying out the bullying behaviour to continue bullying by laughing or giving positive reinforcement

Recognising that some of my behaviours may be bullying

Being self-aware and recognising that your behaviours have not been ideal and may be thought of as bullying could be uncomfortable for you. Recognising these behaviours puts you on the right path. There are several things you can do to change your behaviours. If you don't feel that you have the skills to do some of these things, please see a trusted adult who can guide you through this.

- Apologise to the person/people who you think you have bullied. 'I am sorry that I said/did this to you, I will try not to do it again'
- If you don't feel comfortable apologising in person, you may consider writing the person a short apology
- Think more closely about what you say and do before acting
- Choose positive friendship groups
- A simple thing to remember is to be kind to others in all that you do and say

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices.

The most common places where cyberbullying occurs are:

- social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and Tik Tok
- text messaging and messaging apps on mobile or tablet devices
- instant messaging, direct messaging, and online chatting over the internet
- online forums, chat rooms, and message boards
- email
- online gaming communities

Cyberbullying behaviour might include:

- abusive texts and emails
- hurtful messages, images or videos
- imitating or satirising others online
- excluding others online
- humiliating others online
- spreading nasty online gossip and chat
- creating fake accounts to trick someone or anonymous accounts to intimidate, humiliate or hurt others
- Sharing private or personal information about someone

Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behaviour.

Sources, accessed 6/10/2020:
https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/cyberbullying
https://www.stopbullying.gov/cyberbullying/what-is-it

Student Actions - Cyberbullying

- Do not engage or respond
- Keep evidence – take screen shots or take a photo of the screen using another device
- Do not forward or share with others
- Use privacy settings to block the person from making contact with you
- Report the post or images to the service provider eg Facebook
- Report the post or images to the College's online reporting tool (STAR)
- Seriously threatening, intimidating, harassing or humiliating online behaviour should be reported to the eSafety Commissioner
- Seek help from a trusted adult or support service
- Switch off devices and do something that you enjoy
- Ask the person targeted if they are okay
- Contact Triple Zero (000) if you believe that you or someone else is in immediate harm

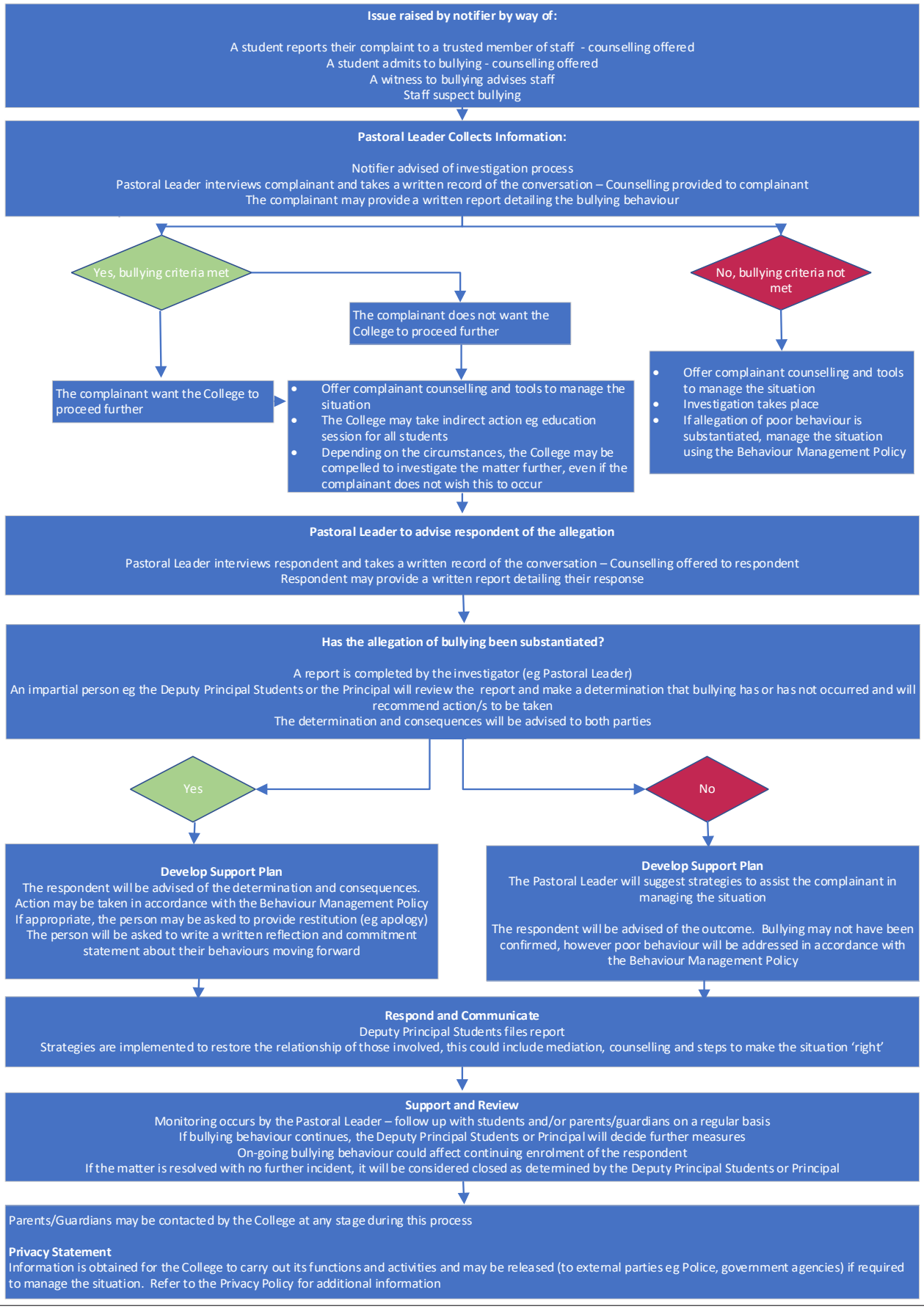
College Contacts

Deputy Principal Students E: dp.pastoral@brigidine.qld.edu.au P: 3870 7225	Chanel Pastoral Leader E: chanel.pastoral@brigidine.qld.edu.au P: 3002 0640
Damien Pastoral Leader E: damien.pastoral@brigidine.qld.edu.au P: 3002 0605	Delany Pastoral Leader E: delany.pastoral@brigidine.qld.edu.au P: 3002 0606
DePorres Pastoral Leader E: deporres.pastoral@brigidine.qld.edu.au P: 3002 0604	Foley Pastoral Leader E: foley.pastoral@brigidine.qld.edu.au P: 3002 0683
MacKillop Pastoral Leader E: mackillop.pastoral@brigidine.qld.edu.au P: 3002 0641	STAR – Stand-up And Report (online reporting tool)

Useful Websites

National Centre Against Bullying	Bullying. No Way!
Cybersafety Counselling Support Services	Kids Helpline
Reach Out	Office of the eSafety Commissioner How to Make a Cyberbullying Complaint
Beyond Blue	Report cyberbullying (eSafety Commissioner)

Bullying Investigation Process – Reference for Adults



Quick Reference for Students

Help!

- I've been bullied
- I saw/heard someone being bullied
- A friend told me that they or someone else was bullied/is being bullied

What Can I Do?

- Trusted adults can help - speak to them
- Provide comfort where you can
- Report to a teacher or report via STAR (on-line reporting tool)
- Keep your distance from the person - this may be challenging in the classroom, co-curricular group or House/Home Room group - see teacher support
- Block them on social media
- Do not give positive reinforcement by encouraging the bully
- Tell the person to stop

The College Will

- Take your complaint seriously
- Look into the complaint
- Have consequences for poor behaviour
- Support you through the process

Glossary

Term	Examples
Aggression	Feelings of anger or antipathy resulting in hostile or violent behaviour
Bullying	See above
Complainant	The person who has made the allegation of bullying
Confidentiality	Information regarding a bullying matter will only be disclosed within the College as required to address the issue or as required by law eg if a matter is investigated by the police or another government authority
Conflict	Disagreement or argument; not seeing eye to eye
Covert Bullying	Covert bullying is a type of subtle social or verbal bullying, hidden from those not directly involved. It harms another's social reputation, relationships and self-esteem
Cyberbullying	Using technology - computer, laptop, mobile phone etc – to hurt someone else by sending hurtful messages, images, video, or comments
Discrimination	Discrimination is the outcome of less favourable treatment because of identity, race, culture, ethnicity, religion, physical characteristics, gender or sexual orientation.
Harassment	Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity; race; culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation
Harm	Harm is physical or psychological damage or injury; something that causes someone or something to be hurt, broken, made less valuable, reputable or successful, etc.
Natural Justice	This policy should be implemented in accordance with the following principles of natural justice and procedural fairness: • Giving those against whom an allegation has been made appropriate opportunity to respond to issues • Enabling students to have a support person • Treating students with respect • Not treating a student differently • Unbiased decisions based on evidence • Providing an opportunity to restore matters
Other	• Bullying also includes sexual, racist, gender or disability harassment • Bullying may also refer to a pattern of victimising behaviour on the part of an individual
Overt Bullying	Bullying done or shown publicly or in an obvious way and not secret
Physical Bullying	Physical contact (hitting, pinching, tripping), property damage, pulling faces, rude hand gestures etc
Respondent	The person against whom the allegation of bullying has been made
Sexual Harassment	Any unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviour where a reasonable person would have anticipated the possibility that the person harassed would feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It has nothing to do with mutual attraction or consensual behaviour.
Social (relational) Bullying	Lying, spreading rumours, nasty jokes, deliberately leaving a person out, public embarrassment, encouraging others to ostracise a person etc
Verbal Bullying	Name calling, teasing, putting someone down, threatening harm etc
Violence	Behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something

Revision History

Document Number	Date	Revision Description	Principal Approval
Version 1		Original Version	
Version 2	February 2021	Re-write	4 February 2021

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