**NB** This policy remains in draft format and has been adapted from the Queensland Government’s *Working Together: A toolkit for effective school based action against bullying* which can be found on Education Queensland’s website at http://education.qld.gov.au/studentservices/behaviour/qsaav/school-resource.html. As Burpengary State Secondary College is a new school, this policy will require feedback and comment from staff, students, parents and community members and subsequent revision before it is published. BSSC acknowledges that preventing and responding to bullying is an ongoing process and as such, the BSSC Anti-bullying Policy will be a ‘living’ document, subject to regular updates in line with research and best practice. As a new parent to the school, you are strongly encouraged to provide feedback on this policy.

**Rationale**

All schools in Queensland are committed to taking action to protect students from bullying and to respond appropriately when bullying does occur.

**School Community Beliefs about Bullying**

It is important that students, staff and parents/carers have a shared understanding of what bullying is, how it impacts on people and how bullying is responded to at Burpengary State Secondary College (BSSC). Respect and courage, two of our three school values are particularly important when discussing anti-bullying. Respecting people and property, and having the courage to act against bullying are at the core of our anti-bullying philosophy and policy at BSSC.

**Definition of Bullying**

At Burpengary State Secondary College, we define bullying as a deliberate, repeated, unfair or hurtful behaviour that involves a power imbalance. The National Centre Against Bullying identifies five kinds of bullying:

1. **Physical bullying**
   This is when a person (or group of people) uses physical actions to bully, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing. Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings is also physical bullying.

2. **Verbal bullying**
   Repeated or systematic name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks and verbal abuse.

3. **Covert bullying**
   Such as lying about someone, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke that makes the person feel humiliated or powerless, mimicking or deliberately excluding someone.

4. **Psychological bullying**
   For example, threatening, manipulating or stalking someone.

5. **Cyber bullying**
   Using technology, such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms, social networking sites to bully verbally, socially or psychologically.
In alignment with The National Centre Against Bullying’s statement about the topic, BSSC acknowledges that while the following behaviours are often upsetting to those involved, they do not constitute bullying:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single acts of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

While these behaviours would not be considered bullying (because they do not involve deliberate and repeated harm and a power imbalance), at BSSC, they will be addressed in the same way as other inappropriate student behaviours.

Burpengary State Secondary School College Whole School Approach to Bullying

Our school-wide approach to bullying will be based on the ten elements that have been recognised by national and international research and program reviews as elements of effective school based action against bullying. The ten elements are as follows:

1. Create a caring, respectful, inclusive and supportive school culture.
2. Establish a clear whole school definition of bullying.
3. Establish a clear anti-bullying policy developed in collaboration with staff, students and parents/carers, which addresses all forms of bullying (including cyber bullying).
4. Collaboratively develop procedural steps to respond appropriately to bullying incidents that are clearly documented and define the roles and responsibilities of staff, students and parents/carers.
5. Establish teaching and learning programs that promote personal development and address all forms of bullying through the teaching of language skills, social-cognitive abilities, social skills, assertiveness, coping strategies, group mechanisms, motives for bullying and being effective bystanders.
6. Provide professional development to assist school staff to understand the anti-bullying policy, implement teaching and learning programs, and to provide support for students at high risk times and in high risk settings.
7. Consult students regularly to monitor and determine the types of bullying behaviour and in what school and social contexts bullying (including cyber bullying) occurs.
8. Create physical environments in the school and staff supervision practices that limit the incidences of bullying (including cyber bullying).
9. Support and engage families by maintaining regular, clear communication and through systematic parent awareness raising and skill building.
10. Establish a process for regularly reviewing and celebrating the effectiveness of school policies, programs and procedures.
Educational Programs and Communication with Community
It is important that students, staff and parents/carers understand what bullying is, how it impacts on people and how bullying is responded to at Burpengary State Secondary College. We use the following educational strategies to communicate information about bullying to our school community:

- Parents/guardians and community members:
  - School newsletters, delivered electronically to parents who have provided email addresses and available on the school’s website, will contain regular information about the anti-bullying policy and programs used at BSSC (Element 9).
  - The school’s website will host the most up-to-date version of the BSSC Anti-bullying Policy. (Element 9).
  - The BSSC Anti-bullying Reference Group comprises key school staff members as well as parents, community members and students. The group meets once per term to discuss and make revisions to the school’s anti-bullying policy as necessary and to provide input as to the effectiveness of the educational and prevention programs the school is running (Elements 3, 7, 9 & 10).
  - Directions for how to use the Stymie tool (see below for explanation) will be placed on the school’s website and regularly communicated in the newsletter (Elements 4, 5, 8 &9).

- Students:
  - Students will undertake formal lessons adapted from the Bullying and Harassment Prevention in Positive Behaviour Support: Expect Respect curriculum developed by Stiller, Nese, Tomlanovich, Horner, and Ross. The effectiveness of these lessons will be evaluated so that they can be revised as appropriate. Other curriculum programs may also be used as is necessary (Elements 1 & 5).
  - Students will be trained in how to use the Stymie tool so that they clearly understand how to anonymously report the bullying of others to school administration (Elements 4 &5).

- Staff:
  - Staff will be trained in the delivery of the anti-bullying curriculum (Element 6).
  - All staff will engage with the anti-bullying policy (Element 3).
  - Staff will be trained in how the Stymie system works and encourage its use with students (Element 6).
  - Key staff members will collate and analyse data on bullying (garnered from school surveys etc.) and report the results back to the BSSC Anti-bullying Reference Group (Elements 7, 9 & 10).
Prevention Strategies

Effective social skills and positive relationships act to prevent bullying. At BSSC we promote effective social skills and positive relationships by:

- **Primary Prevention:**
  - Ensuring the genuine implementation of our chosen resilience program, *The Resilience Doughnut*. Created by a clinical psychologist, the resilience doughnut teaches students about awareness of: who supports them, how they view themselves, and the degree of confidence they have in their own abilities. It also promotes growth in areas that have the potential to enhance positive beliefs within the person and thus helps the individual to develop resilience. More information can be found at [www.theresiliencedoughnut.com.au](http://www.theresiliencedoughnut.com.au) (Elements 1 & 5).
  - Ensuring our school values of respect, courage and perseverance are modelled and regularly referred to by school staff in the classroom and across the playground (Elements 1 & 5).
  - Supporting students in form class and house groups (Element 1).
  - Access to support staff such as the Guidance Officer and College Nurse (Element 1).
  - Developing Leadership and Peer Support Programs (Element 1).
  - Ensuring that a number of teacher or peer-led, organised activities take place during breaks (Element 8).
  - Accessing appropriate guest speakers to discuss anti-bullying (e.g., a member of the police force to speak about cyberbullying; Element 5).

- **Secondary Prevention:**
  - As needed, small groups of students who are at risk of demonstrating challenging behaviours will be chosen to undertake additional programs. Programs similar to the ones listed below may be used depending on students' needs:
    - Rock and Water: designed to help young people interact and communicate more confidently with others. It makes use of physical exercises that are constantly linked to the acquisition of mental and physical skills.
    - Team Up: designed to help young people build confidence and leadership skills (Elements 1 & 5).

- **Tertiary Prevention:**
  - Individual students who are demonstrating challenging behaviours will be offered an assessment of their needs by key staff members. These students may be placed on Individual Responsible Behaviour Plans. These students are likely to require significant support outside of school as well as within (Elements 1 & 5).
Responses to Bullying
Reports of bullying will be investigated and acted upon. Responses to bullying might include support for targets of bullying and perpetrators and/or disciplinary measures. At Burpengary State Secondary College, we support targets and perpetrators by:

- Using one, or a combination of the following six research-based responses to bullying:

  1. **The traditional disciplinary approach**
     Using disciplinary measures (e.g. detentions, suspensions and exclusions) so that perpetrators understand that their behaviour is unacceptable, and as a deterrent to them and to others.

  2. **Strengthening the target**
     Helping those who have been bullied to become less vulnerable by learning to act more assertively.

  3. **Mediation**
     In situations where both the perpetrator and the person who has been bullied are genuinely interested in seeking a solution to their issues, mediation by a key staff member may be undertaken.

  4. **Restorative practice**
     Working with the students involved (and often their carers) in a process where the student responsible for causing the harm accepts responsibility for that harm, and those involved agree to a range of actions to repair the harm.

  5. **The support group method**
     The perpetrators of the bullying go to a group meeting with a key staff member and friends of the target of the bullies (the bullying target is not present). The perpetrators are required to work with the group to say what they will do to improve the situation.

  6. **The method of shared concern**
     This involves working with the suspected bullies and with the target in one-to-one meetings. When progress has been made, a meeting is held with the suspected bullies and the target to plan on how to resolve the problem (Element 4).

- Offering appointments with key staff members (e.g. Guidance Officer, School-based Health Nurse, Year Coordinator etc.) for all students who bully, or are affected by bullying (Element 1).
Reporting and Monitoring Bullying
At Burpengary State Secondary College, reports of bullying are taken seriously. Students and parents/carers may report bullying in the following ways:

- Using Stymie. Stymie (see stymie.com.au) is a tool for schools that students can use to anonymously identify another student who is being bullied or harmed. The notification interface allows bystanders to upload evidence like screen shots of FB discussions, Snapchats, text messages or instant message conversations and an outline of the incident(s). The notifications are encrypted, anonymous and confidential. Stymie does not store any information; it is merely the road upon which it travels. Stymie was built in consideration of the Australian Safe Schools Framework and the recommendations from the Australian Covert Bullying Prevalence Study (Elements 4 & 5).
- Contacting a teacher, Year Level Coordinator or member of support staff (Element 4).

Reports of bullying will be dealt with following the principles in the school’s Responsible Behaviour Plan. Reports will be collated and monitored to inform the school community about the extent of bullying and to identify particular areas of concern for future action (Element 10).

Related Resources
School Wide Positive Behaviour Support

Alannah and Madeline Foundation
http://www.amf.org.au/AboutUs/

BOUNCE BACK!

FRIENDS for Life
www.friendsinfo.net/index.html

Friendly Schools and Families Program

Kids Helpline

KidsMatter
http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au

MindMatters

ReachOut
http://au.reachout.com

National Centre Against Bullying
http://www.ncab.org.au/about/

National Safe Schools Framework

You Can Do It!
www.youcandoit.com.au
## School self evaluation checklist

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<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Not implemented</th>
<th>Being developed</th>
<th>Partially implemented</th>
<th>Fully implemented</th>
<th>Action required</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>4. Procedural steps to appropriately respond to bullying incidents (for both the target and the bully) are clearly documented and clearly define the roles and responsibilities of staff, students and parents/careers.</td>
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<td>5. Teaching and learning programs promote Health and Physical Education and personal development and address all forms of bullying through the teaching of language skills, social skills, assertiveness, coping strategies, group mechanisms, roles for bullying and being effective bystanders.</td>
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<td>6. Professional development to assist school staff to understand the anti-bullying policy, implement teaching and learning programs, and to provide support for students.</td>
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<td>9. Families supported and engaged through regular, clear communication and systematic parent awareness raising and skill building.</td>
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<td>10. Processes regularly reviewed and effectiveness of school policies, programs and procedures celebrated.</td>
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Bullying: An Information Sheet for Students at BSSC

What is bullying?
Bullying is when someone feels hurt or upset because of the things another person or group is doing to them over and over again.

Bullying is not when one person calls another person a name once, or hits a person once. It is when that behaviour happens a number of times.

Bullying can happen anywhere and can involve both staff and students. It can happen at school, in the community and online.

What should you do if you are being bullied?
If you are being bullied, stay calm, and use the “Stop, Walk, Talk” strategy:

- tell the bully to stop
- move away from situation
- talk to someone you trust about what has happened, for example a parent/carer, teacher or friend, and get them to help you to take the right steps to stop the bullying

When talking about what has happened, make sure you tell them:
- What the person/s has been doing?
- Who has been involved?
- Where have the incident/s occurred?
- Who else has seen the bullying behaviour?
- How often has it happened?
- What have you already done about it?

Keep on talking until someone listens to you and the bullying stops

Don’t blame yourself for what is happening.

What should I do if I see someone being bullied?
If you see someone being bullied (or witness it online), keep safe and choose your response to match the situation:

- speak up and let the person doing the bullying know that what they are doing is bullying
- refuse to join in with the bullying and walk away
- help the student who is being bullied to ask for help
- ask a teacher or support person for help
- report what happened to a school staff member or on Stymie, if you wish to remain anonymous
- use some of the links on the next page to help you find more information about bullying.
When bullying occurs, staff at the school may:

- teach students how to cooperate and “get on” with others
- work out a behaviour plan or playground plan for some students, to keep everyone safe
- teach students about conflict and bullying
- run programs that help students become more confident
- run anti-bullying workshops
- have special meetings to work things out with the involved students
- have students complete classroom tasks about bullying in school subjects.
- give detentions, suspensions or exclusions to students who bully others.

What can I do if I feel the school is not dealing with the bullying?

- talk to your parents/carers
- make an appointment to meet with a teacher, Guidance Officer or school Deputy Principal
- ask a parent to email or phone a teacher
- ask a parent to contact your local district or regional office. They will try to work with you and the school to try and solve the problem.

Where can I get more information about bullying?


- **KidsMatter**: a school based framework that aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children. [http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/](http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/)

- **ReachOut**: an online resource that assists young people by providing information to improve understanding of the issues that relate to mental health and wellbeing. Reach Out also has information on how young people can get the best help from services, as well as opportunities to connect with other young people. [http://au.reachout.com](http://au.reachout.com)

- **National Centre Against Bullying**: a peak body working to advise and inform the Australian community on the issue of childhood bullying and the creation of safe schools and communities, including the issue of cyber safety. [http://www.ncab.org.au/](http://www.ncab.org.au/)

Berpengary State Secondary College does not tolerate bullying.
Bullying: An Information Sheet for Parents/Carers of Students at BSSC

What is bullying?
Bullying is when a child, or a group of children, deliberately and repeatedly upset or hurt another child.

The person/people doing the bullying will have some form of power over the target.

Bullying is not one-off incidents of name calling or physical abuse, it is only bullying when it is repeated, deliberate and there is an imbalance of power involved.

Bullying can happen anywhere and can involve both staff and students. It can happen at school, in the community and online.

How can I tell if my child is being bullied?
Sometimes children who are bullied do not talk about it with parents/carers or teachers. They are concerned that “telling” will make matters worse. Some signs that a child may be experiencing bullying may include:

- loss of confidence, fearfulness or anxiety
- changes in eating or sleeping habits, bedwetting
- health problems, vague headaches or stomach aches
- unhappiness, tearfulness or mood swings, sudden temper tantrums
- reluctance to go to school, changes in academic performance
- lack of friends
- missing belongings or torn clothing.

What should I do if my child tells me they are being bullied?

- Help your child to identify the bullying behaviour and ask them:
  - What has been happening?
  - Where have the incidents occurred?
  - Who has been involved?
  - Has anyone else seen the bullying behaviour?
- Discuss with your child some immediate strategies. Make a plan to deal with the bullying. Encourage them to:
  - firmly say “Stop!”
  - walk away
  - talk with the teacher
  - use other strategies to diffuse the situation
- Become familiar with the school’s anti-bullying policy. Copies can be obtained from the school or school website.
- Contact the school to check that your child has spoken to someone about the problem and arrange a meeting to find out what the school will do to address the situation.
- Be clear about what you expect the school to do to help your child.
- Use some of the additional internet resources listed below to assist you and your child to learn more about bullying and prevention.
What will the school do?  
In situations where bullying occurs, staff at the school may:

- apply disciplinary consequences
- assist students to develop more appropriate social skills
- implement a behaviour management plan or playground plan for individual students
- explicitly teach about conflict and bullying
- implement resilience and anti-bullying programs
- conduct mediation sessions
- address bullying in their curriculum.

The school will not give you any of the personal details of other students involved. They will not give you any details of consequences given to other students involved because of privacy requirements.

What can I do if I feel the school is not addressing the bullying appropriately?

- make an appointment to meet with the school Deputy Principal
- contact your local district office or regional office who will endeavour to work with you and the school to try and solve the problem.

Where can I get more information about bullying?


**KidsMatter**: a school based framework that aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children. [http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/](http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/)

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