

Bullying Intervention and Prevention Policy



Learning is at the **heart** of everything we do!

Bullying Intervention and Prevention Policy

Glossary of Terms

Victim is used when referring to the student who has been bullied.
Bully is used to refer to the student who is responsible for bullying.

Abbreviations

Approaches to Learning (ATL)
Council of International Schools (CIS)
Head of Campus (HoC)
International Baccalaureate (IB)
Personal Health Education (PHE)
Personal, Social and Physical Health Education (PSPHE)
Student Support Team (SST)

Policy Philosophy Statement

At Amsterdam International Community School (AICS), we are committed to providing our students with a safe, compassionate learning environment where students can learn, grow and develop free from fear, intimidation or harassment of any kind. As an international community school, we develop and promote a learning community and positive school culture based on our values of inquiry, integrity, diversity, community. We are an inclusive school where positive relationships, intercultural understanding and respect for each other are central to building and developing a positive school culture and community and a safe, supportive learning environment.

Bullying, harassment or intimidation threatens the safety of our students and damages the safety and security of our learning environment. We consider that bullying is a form of peer on peer abuse and that bullying can have long term, negative effects on a student's academic development and wellbeing. In the AICS school community, bullying in any form is unacceptable. All incidents of bullying, including suspected bullying, are investigated, dealt with promptly, and recorded. We are conscious of utilising an Anti-Blaming the Victim approach. (The subtle art of blaming the victim - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-refugee-experience/202103/the-subtle-art-blaming-the-victim> March 22nd 2021 - accessed October 4th 2021)

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This policy is the framework for the AICS school community which provides

- a common understanding and language about bullying.
- A definition of the roles and responsibilities we have in identifying and reporting incidents of bullying.
- the strategies we use to prevent bullying.
- Guidance on how we manage incidents of alleged bullying.

This policy applies to all members of the school community:

- Teachers and Teaching Assistants
- Students
- Support staff
- Volunteers
- Families
- Visitors

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Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is:

- To communicate to the school community what bullying is and that any form of bullying, harassment or intimidation is unacceptable
- To ensure that we have a common understanding of what bullying is and what bullying is not
- To ensure that all members of the school community are aware of and alert to, the signs and signals that a person is being bullied
 - To provide procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour
 - To provide procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour;
- To ensure that all members of the school community understand that they have a responsibility to report any concerns they have about bullying or incidents they see to the appropriate person at school. This includes whether the person is an observer or is a victim of bullying.
- To ensure that all reports of bullying are investigated and followed up promptly and appropriately and that the victim, the bullies and bystanders receive appropriate support.
 - To communicate to the school community how we work to prevent bullying
 - To ensure that we work together with students and parents/caregivers to provide develop and maintain a safe, supportive learning environment

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Defining Peer Conflict

At AICS we recognise that disagreements, arguments and conflicts are part of normal social interaction. Through conflict situations that arise in everyday life, children and young people learn to understand and manage their emotions and develop their social skills.

“There are some distinct differences between peer conflict and bullying. Being able to identify these differences is important for knowing how to respond. Peer conflict is when everyone involved has equal power in the relationship. Both individuals might be emotional and upset, but neither is seeking control or attention” How to Tell the Difference Between Conflict and Bullying - Very Well Family

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/conflict-and-bullying-difference-460495> June 2020 Accessed September 2021.

We support the well researched process of students being empowered, educated and trained in safe conflict resolution. We see this as an important preventative step which helps to maintain a healthy learning environment, infused with strong values and protected from the early stages of bullying. This prosocial method begins in Group 1. “This approach is taken away from the heat of the conflict, helping children and young people to think through their actions, emphasizing the consequences for others” Why you should let kids fight—Michelle Woo <https://www.lifehacker.com.au/2018/01/why-you-should-let-kids-fight/> February 2018 Accessed September 2021 It is through this approach that children and young people are able to shift their behaviors to an intrinsic understanding of the impact on others.

For more information see: [Safe Conflict Resolution](#) and [Conflict Resolution](#)

Defining Bullying

Bullying happens when an individual or a group intentionally and systematically uses their strength or power to hurt another student or students. These actions may be social, group/relational, familial, socio-economic, religious, sexist, disabilist, homophobic, bi-phobic, trans-phobic, CIS and/or racist in nature. They are always rooted in an imbalance in power. According to UNESCO, bullying is characterised by aggressive behaviour that involves unwanted negative actions, is repeated over time, and where there is an imbalance of power or strength between the bully or bullies and the victim. (ref needed)

Please see the table below indicating the differences between peer conflict and bullying:

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Peer Conflict	Bullying
Equal power in relationship	Imbalance of power
Both Children Upset	Victim upset, bully is not
Feel Remorse	Bully has no remorse
Want to solve problem and restore relationship	Bully does not see need for resolution
Happens occasionally	Is ongoing
Usually not emotionally damaging	Can be serious emotional or physical threat

How to Tell the Difference Between Conflict and Bullying - Very Well Family
<https://www.verywellfamily.com/conflict-and-bullying-difference-460495>

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Types of Bullying

Types of bullying include:

- physical bullying - includes repeated aggression such as being hit, hurt, kicked, pushed, shoved around or locked indoors, having things stolen, having personal belongings taken away or destroyed, or being forced to do things.
- psychological bullying - includes verbal abuse, emotional abuse and social exclusion and includes being called names, producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours, being left out of activities on purpose, excluded or completely ignored, being the subject of lies or rumours.
- sexual bullying - refers to being made fun of with sexual jokes, comments, gestures or innuendo, sexualised name calling, sexual insults.
- Identity based bullying- is when students are bullied “related to characteristics considered part of a person’s identity or perceived identity group, such as race, religion, disability, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical appearance” What Is Identity-Based Bullying—and How Can I Stop It? Edutopia <https://www.edutopia.org/article/what-is-identity-based-bullying-jinnie-spiegler>

Examples of Identity based bullying include;

- Stigmatizing a student with a disability.
- Teasing an overweight student about their body.
- Using homophobic language toward students who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, non binary, transgender.
- Identity based name calling
- Excluding a young person because they don’t conform to gender norms.
- Trying to pull off a Muslim student’s hijab.
- Using racial slurs, racist jokes about race, nationality and culture, name calling based on racial stereotypes,
- Slut-shaming a young woman What Is Identity-Based Bullying—and How Can I Stop It? Edutopia <https://www.edutopia.org/article/what-is-identity-based-bullying-jinnie-spiegler>
October 2016 Accessed June 2021
- Cyberbullying - refers to when bullying occurs on digital devices. Cyberbullying

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may occur at school or outside school and may involve the use of the school internet system (School accounts, school digital appliances) and /or students personal digital devices such as smartphones, digital cameras and personal computers. Cyberbullying takes place using “SMS, Text, and apps, or online in social media, forums, or online gaming where people can view, participate in, create or share content.” “What is Cyberbullying?” *Stop Bullying* <https://www.stopbullying.gov>

Cyberbullying:

Examples of cyberbullying include:

- Sending threatening, abusive messages on instant messaging apps, through text messaging and through social media platforms, for example, on WhatsApp, Tik Tok, SnapChat or Instagram.
- Trolling - posting messages in online social communities with the intention of causing conflict and argument.
- Excluding - leaving a member or members of online social groups such as the class WhatsApp group, out of message strings, or invitations where the othermembers of the group are invited, or excluding fellow students from online activities such as online gaming.
- Sharing photos, films and /or personal information about a student in instant messaging apps or on social media without the person’s permission with the intention of embarrassing them or humiliating them.
- Creating and/or sharing embarrassing or degrading photos, images or videos about a student.
- Catfishing - luring someone into a relationship online
- Using a student’s social media accounts to post inappropriate messages/images/photos/videos in their name with the intention of harming the students’ reputation.
- Spreading hurtful information or spreading rumours about a student on social media and/or in instant messaging apps in private and public posts, with the intention of harming their reputation and their friendships and relationships.
- Creating false accounts in a student’s name and/or hijacking their identity with the intention of humiliating and embarrassing the student, getting them into trouble or with the intention of bullying them.
- Sexting- sending explicit messages, photos/films to another student • Coercing another student into sharing explicit photos or films of themselves.
- Sharing explicit messages, photos or films on instant messaging apps and on social media. (“Cyberbullying: What is it” and how to stop it.10 things teens want to know about cyberbullying. *Unicef* [Cyberbullying: What is it and how to stop it](#) Accessed June 2021)

For further information about the stages of bullying, see Appendix 1.

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Roles and Responsibilities

In order to support the development of our students, our staff, parent and student community all play an important role.

School Principal and Senior Leadership Team

- Ensures the safety, well being, protection and safeguarding of all students
- Ensures that the school complies with all legal and statutory requirements about school and student safety, child protection and safeguarding, and bullying prevention.
- Ensures that the school meets the requirements for child protection and safeguarding and child safety, of the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the International Baccalaureate (IB)

Head of Campus Primary & Secondary

- Ensures that all teaching and support staff are informed about the Bullying Intervention and Prevention Policy.
- Role model school values and respectful behaviour in all their interactions with staff and with students.
- Initiates and manages the school process for investigating suspected bullying.
- incidents in collaboration with the class teacher/mentor, year heads and student care coordinator.
- Informs parents/families.
- Liaises with Student Care Coordinator to provide support .
- Ensures that all investigated incidents are recorded in iSams.

Head of Well-being Primary & Secondary

- Ensure that all teaching and support staff receive training about peer conflict and how to support this
- Ensure that all teaching and support staff receive training on how to recognise all forms of bullying and how to prevent bullying
- Ensure that all teaching and support staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in preventing, responding to, reporting and recording bullying incidents.
- Support Heads of Campus, Student Care Coordinators, class teachers and mentors in the support of student well-being.
- Collaborate with the Head of Campus to investigate suspected incidents of bullying.

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Student Support Coordinator

- Supports mentor and class teachers.
- Offers support to individuals, victims and bullies.
- Offers social emotional support training to individuals and/or groups when needed.
- Liaises with parents/caregivers.
- Liaises with appropriate external partners and local agencies to manage bullying incidents which happen on school-related activities which happen off-site, such as on school outings or school trips.
- Liaises with external support partners for example, parent-child adviser, local health services, police when necessary .
- Role models school values and respectful behaviour in all their interactions with staff and with students.
- Contributes to building and maintaining an inclusive and supportive school ethos and community.

Primary: class teachers and teaching assistants

- Contribute to building and maintaining a positive, open school culture through the implementation of a Personal Social Physical and Health Education programme.
- Understand the contents of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy, are aware of the the stages of escalation, and what to do in the event of escalation at each stages (see Appendix 1)
- Ensure that students are aware of the contents of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and where to find it.
- Investigate all reports of suspected bullying or bullying.

Secondary: Year Level Heads and class mentors

- Contribute to building and maintaining a positive, open school culture.
- Ensure that the mentor programme is implemented.
- Ensure that students are aware of the contents of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and where to find it.
- Investigate all reports of suspected bullying or bullying in liaison with the Head of Campus and class mentor.
- Provide support to the class mentor.

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Teaching and Support Staff

- Contribute to building and maintaining an inclusive and supportive school ethos and community.
- Actively support and challenge students to develop the IB Learner Profile Characteristics.
- Observe and implement the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy.
- Ensure they know what their responsibilities are in preventing, reporting and recording any bullying incidents.
- Treat all students fairly and with respect.

AICS Parent community are responsible for:

- Contributing to building and maintaining a positive, open school culture.
- Being aware of and understanding the AICS approach to bullying prevention within the school.
- Reporting any suspected bullying to the class teacher in primary and class mentor in secondary.

AICS Students are responsible for:

- Contributing to building and maintaining a positive, open school culture.
- Being aware of and understanding the AICS approach to bullying prevention.
- Reporting situations where it is perceived that another student is being unfairly treated by an individual or group.
- Developing their the IB Learner Profile attributes
- Taking responsibility for actions and behaviour.

Conflict Resolution

At AICS we work towards resolving disagreements and conflicts within the context of the class. In primary, this refers to the students' base class with their class teacher. In secondary, this refers to the mentor class or the subject teacher in liaison with the class mentor.

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In-class conflict resolution:

1. If an issue takes place in class*, the classroom teacher or class mentor talks separately

with the victim (first) and then the bully (later). The talks are to:

- address and confirm issues/actions.
- find possible underlying problems.

*The teacher records the interview in iSams.

2. The classroom teacher or class mentor organizes a meeting, together with the students

involved, and tries to find agreements to solve the issues. There is a focus in this discussion on the impact of choices on all people involved. The class teacher or class mentor also clarifies the next steps if the issue is repeated.

3. The class teacher or class mentor meets with the whole class to restore the group atmosphere, emphasizing the responsibility of each group member (if required). Each class teacher and/or mentor is responsible for ensuring that all students have the opportunity to safely share concerns.

When we as a school require more support:

4. If the problem persists, the Student Support Coordinator checks whether there are additional social-emotional concerns with the students involved and shares this with the classroom teacher or class mentor and Head of Well-being. The parents are invited to speak with the class teacher or class mentor and Head of Campus; the Head of Well-being is also made aware and offers support/guidance where needed. Agreements are made to solve the issues. These agreements may involve support from external support agencies for both the victim and/or bully and/or class group.

5. If the problem continues to persist, the Head of Campus and Head of Well-being communicates the issue to the Vice Principal or Principal. The next steps may involve a

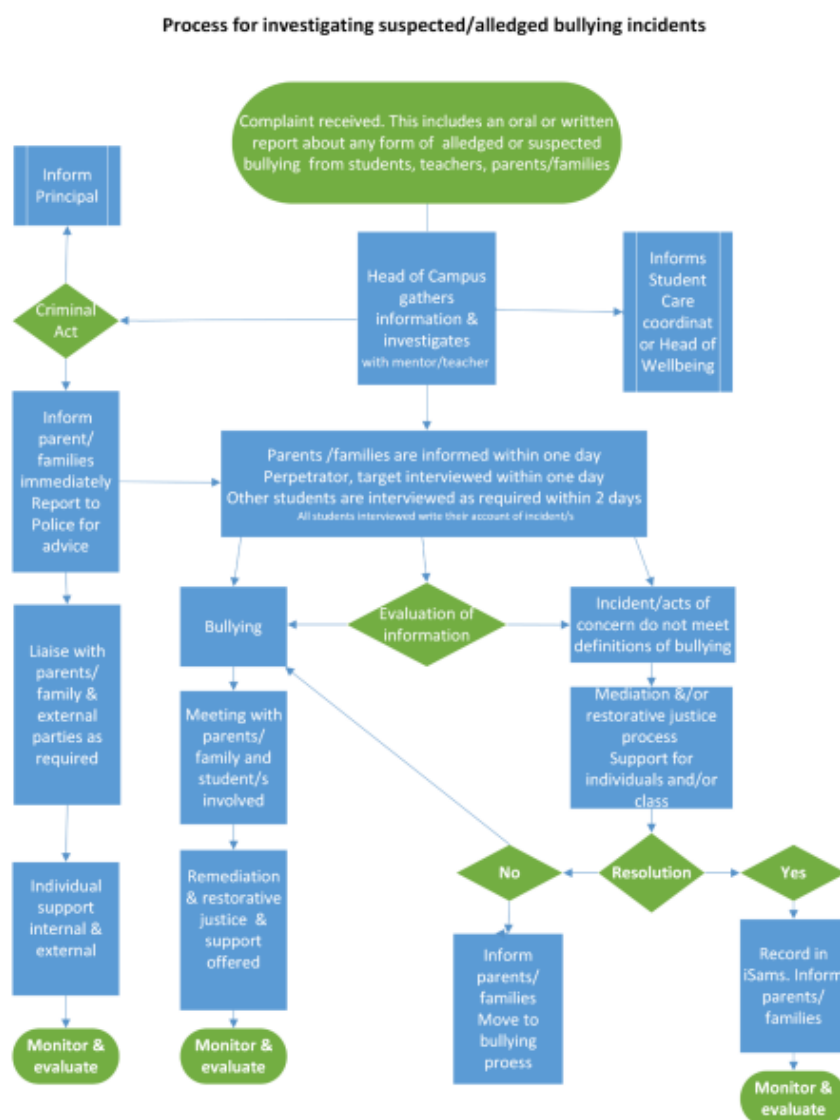
- i) temporary suspension from school
- ii) exclusion from school

*The school and family will continue to work to ensure appropriate support is provided to address the ongoing concerns.

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Complaint of alleged or suspected bullying

When a complaint of suspected bullying is made by a student, family, member of the team or member of the community we follow the process outlined in the chart below.



Where a student/students have been involved in physical fighting , the Head of Campus may suspend the student/s for a maximum of 3 days .

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Support for students

When a student has been involved in a bullying incident either as the victim, the bully or as a bystander, we recognise that the school in partnership with parents/families have an important role in supporting the student.

At AICS, we provide support in school through the following pathways;

- Class teacher or class mentor
- Student Support Team
- Parent-Child Advisor
- Parent Child team
- Youth Doctor

We also work in collaboration with a number of external agencies who support students and their families.

List of other relevant policies

AICS Inclusion Policy
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
Digital Citizenship Policy- in development
Code of Conduct
Esprit Schools Student Charter
Esprit Integrity Policy

Areas for Further Development

The Policy Review

- The policy was reviewed between April - June 2021.
- Second review will take place in April 2023.
- Representatives of all stakeholders will be included in the review committee.
- The Participation and Student Councils will be consulted.

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“Cyberbullying: What is it” and how to stop it. 10 things teens want to know about cyberbullying. *Unicef* [Cyberbullying: What is it and how to stop it](#) Accessed June 2021

UNESCO “Behind the numbers: Ending school violence and bullying” UNESCO 2018 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000366483> Overview School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report 2017 Accessed February 2021

“What Is Identity-Based Bullying—and How Can I Stop It?” *Edutopia* [What Is Identity-Based Bullying—and How Can I Stop It?](#) October 2016 Accessed June 2021

Geeks, Boffins, Swots and Nerds: A Social Constructivist Analysis of Gifted and Talented Identities in Post 16 Education. Denise Jackson P.235- 237 Institute of Education University of London [Geeks , Boffins, Swots and Nerds](#) Chapter 7: 7.4

How to Tell the Difference Between Conflict and Bullying - Very Well Family <https://www.verywellfamily.com/conflict-and-bullying-difference-460495> June 2020 Accessed September 2021

“What is Cyberbullying?” *Stop Bullying* <https://www.stopbullying.gov> July 2020 Accessed June 2021

Why you should let kids fight—Michelle Woo <https://www.verywellfamily.com/conflict-and-bullying-difference-460495> February 2018 Accessed September 2021

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Appendix 1

The Four Stages of Bullying

Stage 1 - Compassionate Learning Environment (Prevention) Regular pulse checks and maintenance of value systems

Indicators	Intervention	Actions
Developing Social emotional intelligence	Relationship building	PSPE Programme
Positive interpersonal relationships and collaboration skills	Celebrations & Raising of self-esteem	ATL Programme, passports, assemblies
Positive Dialogue	Training in dialogue Valuing of voice Valuing Caring	Group Work, Team building internal and external training, PHE
All students feel valued	Community building through collaboration	Class agreements, team building, PHE, in class
Trust & agency	Training in conflict resolution Development of Self Efficacy	Circle time, internal and external training, focus on voice, choice and ownership (Council, policy review) Online media safety training
Academic self-efficacy	Positive interpersonal relationships	Self-assessment, portfolios, Student Council

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Stage 2 : Dysfunctional Relationships and Communications (Intervention) Core Action : Restorative Justice with Education into our personal roles and impacts upon compassionate cultures.

Indicators	Interventions	Actions (Report to HOS)
Competitive Conflicts e.g.around relationships, around work	Who is being competitive? Why are they being competitive?	Value a culture of non competitive activities and behaviours Identify anyone with low self esteem - support intervention
Increase in disrespectful communications e.g. about appearance or ability	Value System Positive Relationships Model Expectations in all communications	Show high value for the students who connect with the compassionate culture Empathy Training
Personal Items of an individual going missing/ getting hidden/being damaged	Value Integrity and honesty Reflect on impact of personal violations	How to take responsibility and apologise. Identify individual and support with home involved
Frequent Friendship breakdowns and students taking sides	Neutral and non judgemental listening Open Door to talk Accountable communications Open forums to dialogue safely	Restorative Justice Individuals taking responsibility Understanding why the relationships are breaking down and how to restore them
Projection on to an individual	Stand up for the person being Projected on. Value Integrity	Identify individual who is projecting , reflect with them and support with home involved
Student withdrawing/becoming withdrawn	Safe Place reporting Communications box with accountability Teachers trained to recognise indicators, acknowledge stress, flush it out into the open	Students have a safe forum to express their concerns Culture of transparency

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Stage 3: Systematic Spotlighting ,victiming and Outgrouping of an Individual
Core Action: Naming it , Going after it , De- valuing bullying (Intervention)

Indicators	Interventions	Action (Principal Aware)
Increase in conflict	Identifying the student(s) that is hurting others Listening neutrally and objectively * Identifying the source of the bullies low self esteem.	Teachers need to inform HOS & Principal Systematic monitoring of class by team Parents of child (victim) and of students identified as leading the bullying, meet with head of school map out and develop contracts to monitor and eliminate the problems
Repetition	Protect and support the student who is the victim Maintain dignity and self esteem	Parents of the student and SST evaluate the support that may be required. Personal mentor /guardian
Excluding of an individual (Outgrouping) Individual is used as the class scapegoat	Bringing the individual back into the Group as an equal and valued member	Teacher celebrates verbally/non verbally support for individual Raises profile of victim
Sense of injustice	Support the whole class - a reinstatement of the value system, class agreements.	Restorative justice for the Class External Intervention
Clubs & clique Formation of Clubs that exclude individuals Formation of social media groups that block individuals	Identification of the clubs and cliques and closing them down Valuing Inclusion , diversity and community	Whole of parent community is involved/aware of what to watch out for and report to HOS and class teacher Online media safety training: reminders
Often takes place in less-structured contexts (including online)	Guardian Angel Scheme: Adult observers reporting incidents and maintaining expectations and values	Whole of school community is involved/aware of what to watch out for and report to HOS and class teacher Regular Team meetings to monitor and regulate the behaviours as a collective

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*Neutral Listening and Objective Mediation: this ensures that the victim does not get 'framed' by the group. It signals to the group that all communications are accountable, open and truth seeking.

Stage 4: Mob Culture: An institutionalised culture of accepted intimidation and elimination of any individuals viewed as competitors.

Core Action: Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Healing of the collective with professional external support

Indicators	Interventions	Action (Board Informed)
Tension, fear, defensiveness and frequent conflict coming from a victimised individual. Intimidation in the form of: Slander, Gas Lighting, Dehumanisation. Projection Scape Goating Changing the positive profile/strengths of an individual into a negative profile	Listen Compassionately to victim Listen critically to complaints - accountable communications Believe in the individual Train teachers and key adults to role model values, to challenge anti social behaviours, to work as a collective in this	Identify ring leaders - work with parents , the identified students and external agencies Begin program of cognitive behaviour reform Continued victimised behaviours may result in temporary or permanent exclusion
Students withdrawing from free expression and self expression	Encourage to communicate Encourage continuity of their strengths Deliberate celebration by critical mass of role models (teachers ,students)	Guardian in place Safe house in place Buddy System High focus on Values and expectations
Academic performance undermined: individually and collectively	Extra support Catch up support Acknowledgement	Zero tolerance of plagiarism, Competitive behaviours and 'Boffin' syndrome Geeks, Boffins, Swots and Nerds 7.4 Page 235 -237 IBO may be informed of students involved in plagiarism
Organised and Conscious isolation and exclusion of victimised individuals Punishment of students who stand up for the victim	Value System reinstated Student Voice Working on the values of the Bystanders Celebration of students who stand up for justice	Education of the bystanders: understanding their role in the perpetuation of mobbing High visibility and celebration by teachers of students upholding the community values.
Group Intimidation: Physical, Psychological and Sexual victiming of individual characteristics e.g. race, gender,	Principal gives a formal written warning Values of Diversity made highly visible Truth and Justice statement for the victim.	Board is informed: meets with student/s being warned Age dependent: social services, police, legal action Close monitoring of students

academic ability, learning diversity		engaging in intimidation-weekly meetings to view progress
Exhaustion and Increase in sickness and absence of an individual	Students are given full support and protection.	Training in how to re-frame via Counselling Adaptation of learning environment e.g Interim Home Tutoring