

# Bí Cineálta Policy



## *St. Brigid's Senior Girls National School*

### **Introductory Statement:**

The Board of Management of St. Brigid's Senior Girls' School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

We confirm that we will take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated.

Catholic schools have a distinctive understanding of the human person, recognising that every person is created in God's image and likeness and has inherent dignity as a child of God. This is the basis for ensuring that each person in our school is treated with respect and care, in accordance with the Catholic Schedule.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to respecting the dignity of every individual. No human person is to be devalued, and all have an indispensable part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

## **Definition of bullying:**

### **Definition of bullying behaviour as outlined in Cineáltas, Action Plan on Bullying Core:**

Bullying Behaviour; Bullying is targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures. Each school is required to develop and implement a Bí Cineálta policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

### **Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:**

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.

Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups.

Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control.

Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying.

These behaviours, while not defined as bullying can be distressing. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. The teacher fills in a code of behaviour document for reporting and recording the said behaviour.

A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. Schools are required to give support to the students involved if it is having an impact on school.

## Section A/ Appendix A: Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

*All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.*

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School staff	12 <sup>th</sup> of March Date in May	Half day training Read, review & give feedback on draft policy
Students	13 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> of March 10 <sup>th</sup> of April	Student survey Meeting with Focus Group
Parents	Date in late April Date in May/ June	Meeting with Focus Group Email to Parents/ Attachment on Aladdin
Board of Management	16/06/2025	BOM Meeting
Wider School Community as appropriate for agencies involved e.g. Bus Driver etc.		Published on Website

Date policy was ratified: 16 June 2025

Date policy will be reviewed next: June 2026

**Section B/ Appendix B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school.**

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by this school to address all forms of bullying behaviour, in whatever form and however motivated, including online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.

In developing preventative strategies which this school will use to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour, we come from the context of our Catholic ethos where inclusivity permeates the school in a real way.

This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference, by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at board of management and staff meetings.

The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence.

In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies.

#### Policy and Planning:

- Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> of March- Staff planning
- Curriculum Planning
- Survey/ Focus groups
- Current policies in place:
- Bí Cineálta policy
- Code of behaviour
- Child safeguarding statement
- Acceptable use policy
- Supervision
- RSE Policy
- SEN policy

#### Curriculum:

- Friends for life
- Stay Safe Programme
- SPHE lessons
- Talk about programme
- Key work programme
- Seasons for Growth
- Nurture
- Restorative Practice
- RSE/ Accord programme
- Fuse Programme
- Breakfast club
- CPD training
- Web wise – Cyberbullying week
- Kindness week
- Student Council
- Bullying lessons- covered termly by teachers
- Home school Liaison

#### Culture and Environment:

- Positive relationships
- Effective leadership
- Positive culture and environment
- A telling environment
- A trusted adult
- Safe physical access
- Supervision
- Positive and inclusive school culture
- Concern box/ worry boxes in classrooms
- Opportunities to participate in class and whole school activities to raise self – esteem

Relationships and partnerships:

- Strong interpersonal connections
- Bullying awareness initiatives
- Student and parent participation
- CPD (Teacher Professional Learning)
- Critical thinking Skills
- Promoting peer support
- Supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

**Addressing Bullying Behaviour** The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is (are) as follows:

The class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour using the 'on Aladdin.

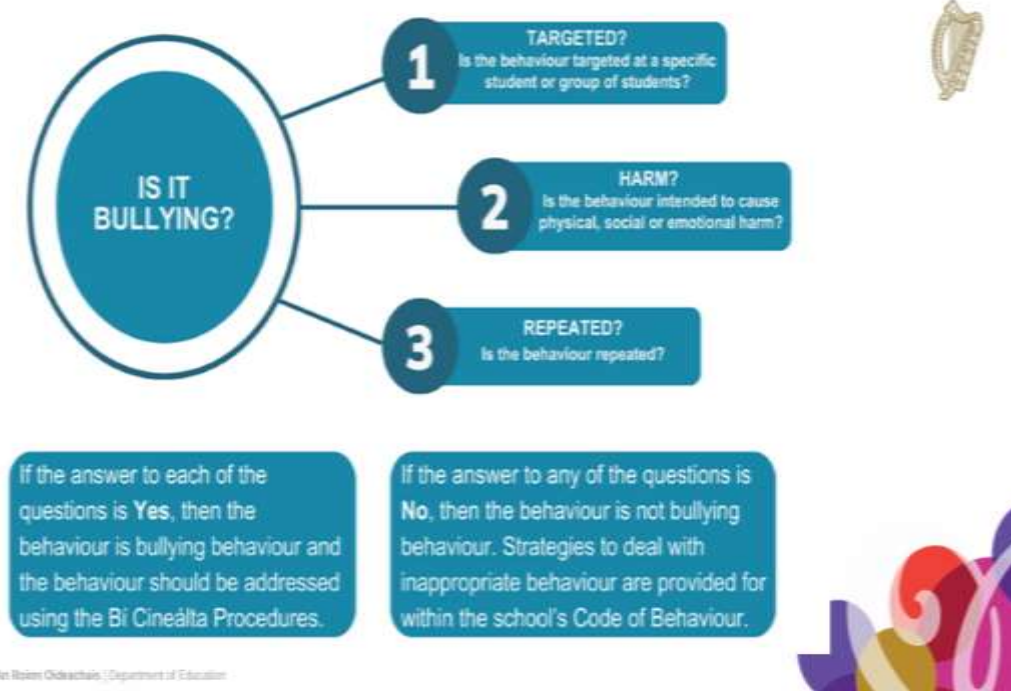
The DDLP will follow up after **twenty days** to investigate if bullying has ceased. A All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.

Principal will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.

Deputy principal /SENCO

When observing bullying behaviour, the staff member will be referring to the following three questions:

1. *Is it targeted?*
2. *Is it harmful?*
3. *Is it repeated?*



An Roinn Oideachais | Department of Education

***When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:***

- ensure that the students involved are heard
- seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- consider the age and ability of those involved
- listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour, and the student who is engaging in the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- consider **the roll of the bystanders in the bullying behaviour and engage with them in discussions.**
- act in a timely manner
- restorative practice will be used when engaging in conversations/ meetings to resolve the ongoing bullying issue
- inform parents of those involved
- fill in the bullying recording document
- monitor the situation for a period of 20 days initially and notify teachers (if yard surveillance required)
- report to the board of management - to include number of incidents, bullying recording document, strategies being used to address the bullying
- After 20 days review the situation, if unresolved continue with the above strategies.



## Section D Recording of bullying:

*Bullying will be recorded in St. Brigid's S.G.N.S using the following document by all teachers and staff members presented below and uploaded to Aladdin*

### Record of Bullying Behaviour

Date:

Names of who is involved:

Form of bullying	Type of bullying behaviour
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical bullying behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal bullying behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Written bullying behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Extortion <input type="checkbox"/> Exclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Relational	<input type="checkbox"/> Disablist bullying behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptionally able bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Gender identity bullying <input type="checkbox"/> homophobic / transphobic (LGBTQ+) <input type="checkbox"/> Physical appearance bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Racist bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Poverty bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Religious identity bullying <input type="checkbox"/> Sexist bullying Sexual harassment
Did it occur online <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Where it took place	
When it took place	
Actions students would like taken	

Actions parents would like taken
External services/supports engaged
<input type="checkbox"/> NEPS <input type="checkbox"/> NCSE <input type="checkbox"/> Play Therapist <input type="checkbox"/> Barnardos <input type="checkbox"/> DYP <input type="checkbox"/> Gardaí <input type="checkbox"/> Tusla <input type="checkbox"/> Ombudsman for children <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Details of other

Review with students and their parents

Has the bullying behaviour ceased

☐ Yes

**Review Date:**

☐ No

Views on this

--

## **Section E: Oversight**

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on our website and in hard copy on request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed: Mairead Shiel  
(Chairperson of the BOM)

Date: 16 June 2025

Signed: Siobhan Loughman  
(School Principal)

Date: 16 June 2025