

Appendix F

Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management of *Straffan National School* confirms that the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of *12/6/25* [date].

This review was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education's *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

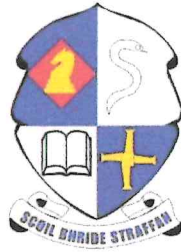
Signed: *P. O'Brien*
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: *Caroline Kellner*
(Principal)

Date: *12/6/25*

Date: *12/6/25*

Date of next review: *June 2026*



Scoil Bhríde, Straffan

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde, Straffan 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, as a school community, all 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 pupils who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our pupils is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our pupils and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will take all steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent all 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 everybody 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 everybody has a part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

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 pupils 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.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as 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.

Section 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	8 th Nov, 2024 2 nd May, 2025 23 rd Mar, 2025	Professional Leader's Day Training attended Bí Cineálta staff training day where staff were provided with the opportunity to discuss the new Bí Cineálta Action Plan. The staff discussed how the school deals with bullying incidences or reports of bullying. Staff were given time to discuss and relay back feedback which formed our Plan for moving forward. All relevant information for staff will be on display in the staff room as well as resources and record forms. Sharing of the draft policy with staff to discuss/ consult and make any amendments
Pupils	May 2025	Pupils will be given a survey to seek their input in developing an Bí Cineálta policy in a child friendly format- their words, their examples and suggestions were taken into account when drafting this policy This policy will be distributed to all households and children given homework of reading through the policy with their parents.
Parents	May 2025	Feedback sought from parents and children in the formation of a Child Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy. Parental survey completed. Policy created with this information and sent out to parents/ children to review together with information on the same in terms of how to contact the school if needed. Attention drawn to our policy and Child Friendly Policy, resources and initiatives in the school during our Bí

		Cinéalta Day via the school website and Aladdin. Bí Cineálta draft policy shared with the Parents Association for feedback.
Board of Management	May/ June 2025	Review new Policy draft leading to consultation and final ratification after amendments made where necessary
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	May 2025	Bí Cineálta draft policy shared with the Bus drivers, ancillary staff, local Crèches, GAA coaches and external instructors for feedback.
Date policy was approved: 12/6/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: N/A.		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

In developing the 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 our 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 our 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 further 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.

At Scoil Bhríde, Straffan, we strive to:

- Create a school culture where bullying behavior is unacceptable and as a Care School we use a consistent restorative approach to addressing bullying behavior school wide.
- Involve parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying behavior is not tolerated.
- Support the idea that the school is a “telling environment”
- Promote the concept of a “trusted adult”- stay safe linkage-”who to tell”
- Create safe spaces in our school building and yards- visibility
- Encourage a sense of belonging with ownership over their space through art and creativity
- Create a positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity
- Encourage pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behavior in a non threatening and safe environment
- Promote respectful relationships across the school community

Creating a culture of telling:

- The staff of Scoil Bhríde, Straffan repeatedly reinforces the message that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported. Reassurance is given that all incidents of bullying will be dealt with in a safe manner. Pupils will gain confidence in telling, which is of vital importance.
- Bystanders can be the key to resolving bullying. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be “telling tales” but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know “who to tell” and “how to tell”, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to the teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Write in their Care Journal
 - Morning Circles
 - Ask a parent(s)/guardian(s) to tell on your behalf.
 - Ask a friend/ peer to tell on your behalf.
 - Administer a confidential questionnaire.

- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

Professional Development:

- Whole staff professional development on our 3 R's (Report, Review and Repair) Programme and bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to its prevention and intervention.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s).
- Newly appointed staff are upskilled on the 3 R's (Report, Review and Repair) Programme as part of their school induction at the beginning of the school year.

Raising the awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour by:

- Morning Circles from 1st to 6th
- 3 R's training with the children as part of our school policy with regular check-ins with the children
- The development of dedicated display boards and posters in the school promoting friendship and bullying prevention.
- Holding a competition in which pupils create a Bí Cineálta slogan for our school. This will be displayed around the school.
- Displaying the school's Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy in classrooms and common areas of the school
- The Bí Cineálta policy is discussed with pupils and is also available on the school's website.
- Sanctions will be imposed in line with the school's behaviour policy but there may be some variation on the sanctions imposed depending on where the incident took place,

Promoting a positive sense of self-worth and building empathy and resilience in pupils:

- Regular assemblies with a focus on the Care School Values.
- Rewarding incidents of good and improved behaviour at a whole school level
- Extracurricular activities available for all pupils.
- Formal and informal interactions.
- Celebration of Bí Cineálta Week
- Celebration of Friendship Week
- Development of Peer Buddy Programme with the senior classes in order to help support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.

- Development of the use of a Friendship/ Buddy Bench on each yard

Curriculum

We strive to:

- Provide teaching and promote learning which is collaborative and respectful, fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Display a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.
- Teachers influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner through a range of curricular initiatives. There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness.
- SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the interrelated areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
- The Stay Safe programme is a personal safety skills programme which seeks to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. A schedule of delivery of the Stay Safe programme is clearly outlined in the school calendar and teachers provide all copies of the parent sheets signed for storing in the Principal's Office when completed. This content is also noted in Cuntas Míosúil.
- RSE aims to provide opportunities for children to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral, caring and responsible way.
- Other resources and programmes include: Restorative Practice using Restorative questions and restorative circles, The Three R's (Record, Review, Repair) Intervention Programme, Friends for Life, Zippy's Friends, Weaving Wellbeing, Stay Safe, SPHE Curriculum, ABI Programme, Morning Circles, Webwise Cyberbullying Pack, Webwise My Selfie Lessons, Fun Friends, Walk Tall, Grow in Love Programme.

Links to other policies:

The school policies which support the Bí Cineálta policy are:

- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Supervision of pupils Policy
- Acceptable Use policy
- RSE Policy
- SPHE Policy

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Supervision and monitoring:

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies

and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behavior and to facilitate early intervention where possible. The school has an up to date Supervision Policy and is satisfied with the amount of staff on supervision duty each day during break times.

Cyber bullying:

- Promoting awareness of Scoil Bhríde, Straffan Acceptable Use Policy and ensuring that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- Communicating the message that unlike other forms of bullying, a once-off posting can constitute bullying.
- Advice will be communicated to help pupils protect themselves from being involved in bullying and to advise them on reporting any incidents. A telling atmosphere is created, so that pupils will report cyber bullying where they see it.
- Publicising ways of dealing with cyber bullying in the school.
- Don't reply.
- Keep the message/ screenshot the message
- Block the sender.
- Tell someone you trust.
- Promoting 'Internet Safety Day' annually and activities to celebrate this awareness.
- Teaching of lessons to deal with the issues of cyber bullying and internet safety.
- Community Gardaí will visit the school to talk about cyber bullying.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) of children from 5th and 6th classes receive the link to '*A Parents' Guide to a Better Internet*', published by Webwise through Aladdin.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are advised that it is illegal for a child under 13 to register with and use many social media networks.

Our school's approach to tackling and preventing bullying takes particular account of the needs of pupils with SEN. This links in with other relevant school policies and supports and will ensure that all services and supports that provide for such pupils work together. Approaches to decreasing the likelihood of bullying for pupils with SEN include improving inclusion, focusing on developing social skills, paying attention to key moments such as transitioning from primary to post-primary and cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.

Initiatives and programmes focused on developing pupils' awareness and understanding, including its causes and effects, will deal explicitly with the issue of identity-based bullying. Where issues of identity based bullying arise, the school will deal with them at an individual,

group, class, or whole school context in consultation with the parents/guardians of the children involved. The ethos of the school and the age and stage of the children's development will be taken into consideration.

The School's Acceptable Use Policy includes the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones. Our Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy has been updated in line with this policy so smart watches, electronic devices and mobile phones are prohibited in Scoil Bhríde, Straffan.

Section C: 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 pupils in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the School Bí Cineálta Recording Form.

Parents along with their child are also required to complete a “Three R’s Information Sheet” for the school in line with our policy.

- The DLP will follow up with the Relevant Teacher after twenty school days to check in if bullying has ceased.
- All staff including ancillary staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.
- Principal will inform the Board of Management of incidents of Bullying.
- Deputy Principal / Assistant Principal 1 and Assistant Principal 2 Wellbeing Co-Ordinator are available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist class teacher in addressing concern

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- ensure that the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour is listened to and reassured
- seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- conduct all conversations with sensitivity using Restorative Questions as laid out in the school Three R’s
- consider the age and ability of those involved
- listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- take action in a timely manner

- inform parents of those involved

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Scoil Bhríde, Straffan will work in partnership with our patron, board of management, staff, pupils and their parents to develop and implement their Bí Cineálta policy using Restorative Practices.

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame). The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behavior and The Three R's (Report, Review, Repair) Programme used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behavior are outlined in the flowchart below. Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardians) understand this approach from the outset.

Steps for dealing with incidents of Bullying Type Behaviour in the Junior Classes (JI-SI)

1. **Report and Record:** Any reports of Bullying Type Behaviours are recorded in the School Bí Cineálta Record Form
2. **Review:** When incidents of bullying type behaviours are reported in the Junior Classes, teachers use restorative questioning to seek the children's voice to ascertain what happened. Parents will be notified by the class teacher and issues are discussed with them.
3. **Repair:** As part of the classroom intervention programme, Zippy's Friends/ Friends for Life and Weaving Wellbeing is used in both the Junior and Senior Classes. The Weaving Wellbeing Programme are school-based anxiety prevention and resilience building programmes which help pupils to develop resilience by teaching them effective strategies to cope with, problem solve and manage all kinds of emotional distress, including worry, stress, change and anxiety.

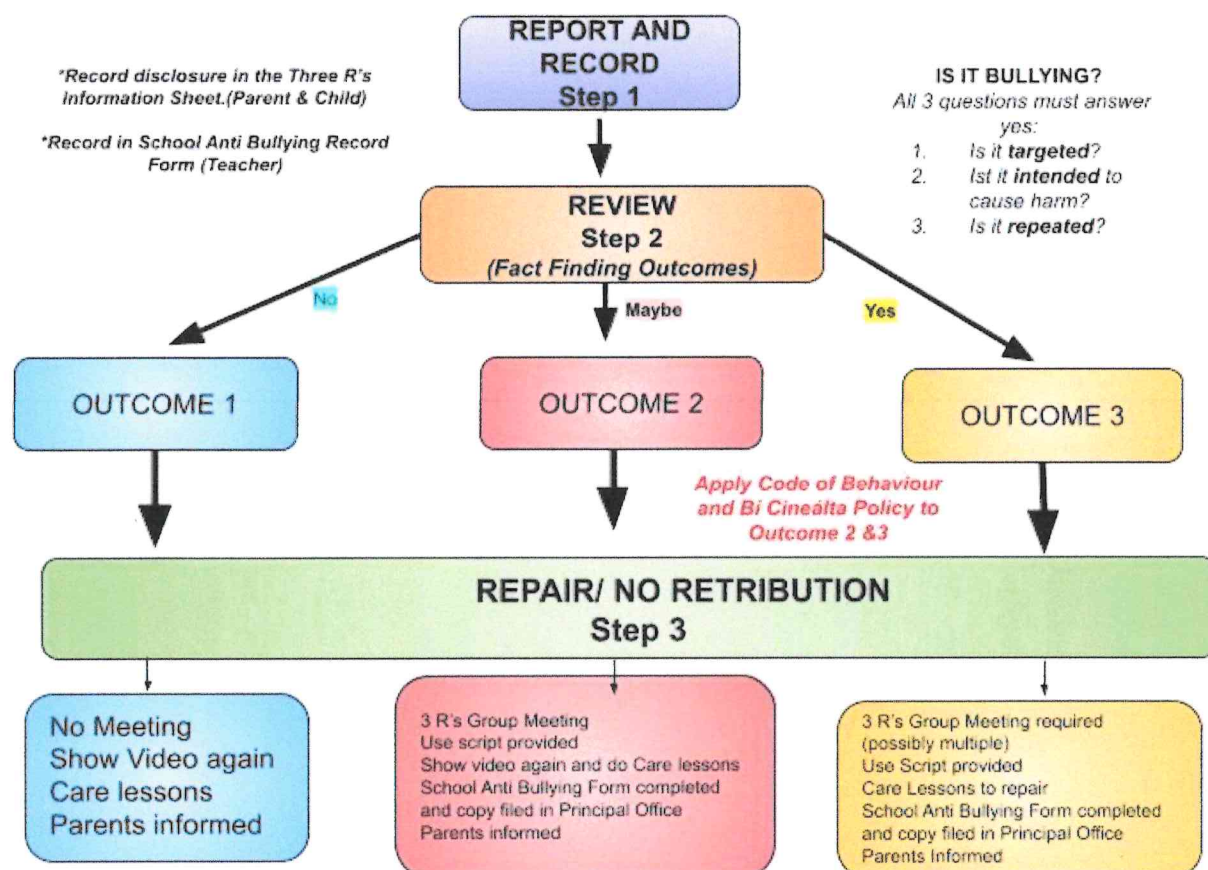
Steps for dealing with incidents of Bullying Behaviour in the 1st-6th Classes

Steps for dealing with incidents of Bullying Behaviour in the 1st-6th Classes Using The Three R's (Report, Review, Repair) Programme as outlined in the flow diagram below.

1. **Report and Record:** Any reports of Bullying Behaviours are recorded in the School Bí Cineálta Record Form and both the Parents and child complete a Three R's Information Sheet.

2. **Review:** When incidents of bullying behaviours are reported in the 1st -6th Classes, teachers use restorative questioning to seek the children's voice to ascertain what happened. Parents will be notified of the Fact Finding Outcomes by the class teacher.

3. **Repair:** As part of the Repair/ Retribution Phase, teachers will follow Step 3 depending on the outcome from the Review Stage.



To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behavior, the following questions will be asked in line with the Bí Cineálta procedures:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of pupils?
2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
3. Is the behaviour repeated?

If the answer to each of the questions above is Yes, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour will be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures and flow chart above.

Note: One off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

1. While all reports including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the Relevant Teacher (class teacher), this teacher will keep records of the report, all the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding the same on the school management system.
2. If it is established by the Relevant Teacher that bullying has occurred, the Relevant Teacher must keep appropriate records which will assist them in their efforts to resolve the issue and restore in so far as is practicable the relationship between the parties involved.
3. The Relevant Teacher must record the bullying incident on the school information management system Aladdin by adding the School Bí Cineálta information Form to the relevant pupil file. The Relevant teacher must inform the Principal and hard copies of all paperwork are stored in the Principal's Office following investigation. Parents must also be notified in writing the outcome of the investigation. The investigation should be completed within 20 school days after the initial reporting of the behaviours.
4. If a pupil chooses to continue the bullying behavior this can no longer be considered a once off occurrence. In this event parents/ guardians will be contacted and the Code of Behaviour will be applied. The school should give parents an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the support for the pupil.
5. It must be made clear to all involved (pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required that this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.
6. Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent must be referred to the school's parental complaints procedure.
7. In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's parental complaints procedure and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their rights to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
8. The school will support all children involved in the bullying cycle.. This will be done by the relevant person speaking to the child no more than 20 school days after the incident to check on their continuing welfare. The child's parents will also be consulted to bring the investigation to a conclusion.

9. If a child makes a report of bullying but asks that nothing is done about it, the relevant teacher will support the child appropriately to explore how it is handled sensitively and how parents may be notified. If a parent does so they must submit in writing that they require no further action to be taken but even so the school may deem it necessary to be investigated and handled appropriately.

Please note:

In accordance with the Bí Cineálta procedures, the school is **not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when pupils are not under the care or responsibility of the school.**

However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the pupils involved.

Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach using The Three R's (Report, Review, Repair) Programme. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.

Supporting the pupil being bullied:

- Ending the bullying behaviour,
- Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils,
- Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils,
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through regular awareness-raising programmes,
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations,
- Making adequate counselling facilities available to pupils who need it in a timely manner (subject to available funding)
- Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

Supporting the Alleged Perpetrator:

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet,' We use a "No Blame-No Shame Approach"
- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honorable thing and giving them praise for this,
- Making adequate counseling facilities available to help those who need it learn other ways

of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others,

- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school),
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth,
- In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child,
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame/ no shame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) of the Department of Education provides a comprehensive; school based psychological service to all primary and post primary schools to support the wellbeing, academic, social and emotional development of all pupils.

NEPS staff can support schools with issues around bullying through this direct or indirect case work service. In relation to bullying, NEPS psychologists often advise schools on best practice to prevent and address bullying when issues arise in schools and/or provide training in preventative initiatives, such as developing social and emotion skills, social skills, executive function skills, promoting resilience and skills in relationship repair between peers as appropriate.

Webwise

Webwise is the online safety initiative of the Department of Education. Webwise promotes safer, better internet use through awareness raising and education initiatives targeting teachers, pupils and parents. Webwise develops and disseminates resources that help teachers integrate digital citizenship and online safety into teaching and learning in their schools. Webwise also provides information, advice, and tools to parents to support their engagement in their children's online lives

National Parents Council

The NPC delivers online and in person courses to support parents of both primary and post primary pupils to prevent and address bullying behavior.

Dublin City University (DCU) AntiBullying Centre

The DCU AntiBullying Centre is a university designated research centre located in DCU's Institute of Education. The centre is known globally for its research in bullying and online safety. The AntiBullying Centre offers a range of modules as part of its FUSE programme for the entire school community that can be used to help to promote a positive school culture and assist in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours.

Tusla

Schools should contact Tusla directly for advice in cases where it is considered that bullying behaviour is a child protection concern


All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with pupils and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.


Section D: 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:  Date: 12th June 2025
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed:  Date: 12th June 2025
(Principal)