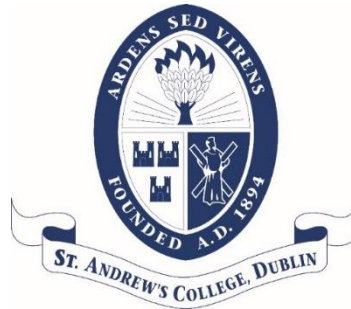


ST ANDREW'S COLLEGE



BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY

MAY 2025

Introduction

The Bí Cineálta Policy is adopted under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and aligns with the Code of Behaviour from the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB). It is in full compliance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post- Primary Schools (June 2024).

St Andrew's College is committed to creating a positive learning environment where all our students are respected, included, valued, feel safe and have a sense of belonging. Every member of the College community shares the responsibility to prevent and report bullying, whether acting alone or as a group and in doing so, cultivating a learning environment that respects dignity, safety, inclusion and is supportive. The College emphasises the importance of promoting and supporting a 'telling' environment in the College in its effort to ensure that all incidents of bullying behaviour/suspected bullying behaviour can be investigated and acted on in a caring and supportive approach. The Board of Management recognizes the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students and is therefore committed to ensuring that policy, practice and procedures in the College are guided by the four principles of Cineáltas:

- Prevention
- Support
- Oversight
- Community

Commitment to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of St Andrew's 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. Bullying is a children's rights issue. Bullying interferes with the following rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child.

- The right to freedom of expression (Article 13)
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)
- The right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 15)
- The right to privacy (Article 16)
- The right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect (Article 19)
- The right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health (Article 24)
- The right to education (Article 28)
- The right to enjoy their own culture, religion or language (Article 30)

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 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 for discrimination specified under the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018; gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the traveller community.

1. Scope of the Policy

The College Bí Cineálta Policy (“the Policy”) relates to measures to prevent and address bullying behaviour that occurs between students. This policy applies to the behaviour of students both at the College and at College-related events.

- 1.1 Allegations of bullying behaviour by students towards school staff may be addressed through the College’s Code of Behaviour.
- 1.2 The College reserves the right to investigate incidents which have taken place off campus of which they have been informed. The College reserves the right to intervene if such incidents are deemed to have affected a student’s well-being while at the College or their attendance at the College.
- 1.3 Allegations of bullying behaviour by school staff towards students may be addressed by the principal or chairperson of the Board of Management through disciplinary procedures for staff.

2. Application

The Policy applies to the following:

- 2.1 Inside the school (e.g. – classroom, corridors, toilets, canteen, changing rooms).
- 2.2 Outside in the school grounds.
- 2.3 Students travelling to and from school.
- 2.4 Students on school tours and trips.
- 2.5 Students participating in school related extra-curricular activities.
- 2.6 Any bullying behaviour that occurs outside school which negatively impacts on a student’s school experience and participation in school.
- 2.7 Online bullying that occurs in school.
- 2.8 Any bullying behaviour that adversely affects the College’s reputation or the educational experience of any student in the College.

3. Definition of Bullying

- 3.1 *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*

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.

3.2 The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures. The harm can be:

3.2.1 Physical (e.g. personal injury, damage to or loss of property)

3.2.2 Social (e.g. withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion)

3.2.3 Emotional (e.g. low self-esteem, depression, anxiety)

4. Types of bullying behaviour that are deemed to be inappropriate:

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

<p>General behaviours which apply to all Including: written, verbal, physical exclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression – (e.g. pushing, shoving, poking, punching, tripping “mess fights”) • Damage to property • Name calling, slagging which hurts, insults or humiliates student • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion - something is obtained through force or threats. • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any types listed • Exclusion - a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.
<p>Cyber/Online</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation • Harassment: continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name/ creating fake profiles to humiliate others • Flaming: using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images without consent • Exclusion: purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber Stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for their safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g., Facebook/Instagram/TikTok/Be Real/X/You Tube/Snapchat etc. or on game consoles • Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology • Creating fake profiles to humiliate someone
Identity Based Behaviours	Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender, including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community). (Equal Status Acts 2000- 2018)
Homophobic, biphobic, gender identity and transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g., gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation and exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone’s friends away • “bitching” • Spreading rumours

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The “look” • Silent treatment • Non-verbal gesturing • Use of terminology such as “nerd” in a derogatory way
Sexual Harassment/Sexist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment • Sexting – i.e., the sharing of explicit text and images about or of students or other without their permission. • Sexist -behaviour and language that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex
Additional Educational Needs, Disability- learning difficulties and Gifted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some students’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognize and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some students’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues • Mimicking a person’s disability • Setting others up for ridicule
Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour and language that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources

Note:

Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student, it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated. Cyberbullying can occur at any time and often connects to an “offline” experience with someone known to the student. This type of bullying may involve forms of sexual exploitation including but not limited to, sextortion and the nonconsensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence.

5. Bullying as Criminal Behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years. Some online behaviour may be illegal and students need to be aware of far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, **criminalises the nonconsensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images.**

If bullying behaviour involves **physical violence or threats of violence**, it may be considered assault. If bullying behaviour involves **discrimination or hate speech** targeting a student based on their race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the traveller community, it may be **considered a hate crime** under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989, and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges.

If bullying behaviour involves **sexual harassment or sexual assault**, this may also be **considered criminal behaviour**. An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour.

6. Behaviour That is Not Bullying Behaviour

6.1 One-Off Incidents

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. A single act of aggression, exclusion or unkindness is not considered bullying, though it still requires appropriate response under the school's Code of Behaviour.

6.2 Friendship Issues

Disagreements, fallouts, or not wanting to be friends with someone is not bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

6.3 Special Educational Needs

Some students with social communication difficulties 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.

6.4 Intent and Harm

Bullying is not accidental or reckless. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying. However, it still must be addressed under the School's Code of Behaviour.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

6.5

Personnel

The Relevant Teacher(s) for investigating alleged bullying behaviour are as follows:

Senior School

For the purpose of this policy, Year Team refers to Year Heads, TY Coordinator, IB Coordinator.

Year Team, Deputy Principal

Junior School

For the purpose of this policy, Class Teacher refers to Junior School Class Teacher.

Class Teacher, Deputy Principal

“Trusted Adult”

If there is a concern about alleged bullying, this may be brought to the attention of any teacher/non teacher staff member (trusted adult) in the College. Staff members will then report this to the Relevant Teacher and Year Team, who will investigate and address with the matter in accordance with the College’s BÍ Cineálta Policy. The concept of a “trusted adult” can be an effective strategy to encourage students to report if they or another student is experiencing bullying behaviour. Staff should support this strategy by letting students know they can talk to them.

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	27 March 27 March 09 May 23 May 2025	Staff meeting – school closure- Overview of Bí Cineálta Procedures Staff survey Sharing of draft policy with staff for observation/comment/amendment
Students	20 March 27 March 08 May 15/16 May	Consultation with student council Student survey. Student council and anti-bullying committee students consulted on the child friendly version of Bí Cineálta Policy Consultation with junior school students on junior school child friendly Bí Cineálta Policy
Parents	27 March 19 May	Parent survey Bí Cineálta draft policy shared with Parent Teacher Association for feedback
Board of Management	23 May 2025	
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved: 27 May 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

7. Supervision and Monitoring

The College has the following supervision and monitoring practice and procedures in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (See Chapter 5 Bí Cineálta procedures). The College takes all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of students and to supervise students when students are attending school or attending school activities.

7.1 Early Morning/Break and Lunch Supervision

7.1.1 A weekly schedule of student supervision on corridors and outside on campus is developed at the beginning of the academic year to monitor student behaviour and wellbeing. Any causes for concern are dealt with and reported to year teams.

7.2 All staff are watchful and mindful of observing student relationships between students in class, note absence patterns and inform the relevant year team when concerned. Students are reminded at registration with their form teachers and in their weekly assemblies with their year group of high standards of expectations in regard to student behaviour at all times.

7.3 There is a corridor supervisor who monitors the corridors throughout the school day.

7.4 There is a teacher on duty in the library after school between 4.00 and 6.00pm.

7.5 Afterschool study is supervised by teaching staff.

7.6 Early morning supervision and afterschool club in the junior school is supervised by College staff.

8. Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the education and prevention strategies that will be used by the College. 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).

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice provides the following four key areas that are essential for a holistic, whole school approach to wellbeing promotion:

- Culture and Environment
- Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)
- Policy and Planning
- Relationships and Partnerships

These four areas were considered by the College when developing measures to prevent bullying behaviour.

8.1 Culture and Environment

- 8.1.1** Core values of responsibility, resilience and respect are encouraged and promoted throughout the College.
- 8.1.2** College leadership sets standards and expectations through assemblies, parent/guardian and student information evenings and all interactions with students.
- 8.1.3** Bullying awareness is regularly addressed at assemblies and staff meetings to maintain visibility and shared responsibility.
- 8.1.4** Visual awareness of College expectations and core values is displayed through posters, student artwork.
- 8.1.5** Bí Cineálta student friendly poster displayed in classrooms and social areas.
- 8.1.6** Students actively promote kindness, respect, and inclusion through daily interactions.
- 8.1.7** A strong culture of Upstanding encourages and teaches students how to stand up to bullying behaviour.
- 8.1.8** Student Spirit Awards recognise positive contributions students make to school culture.
- 8.1.9** College events such as House Cup, Sports Days and Intercultural Week foster belonging, school community and inclusivity.
- 8.1.10** Break and lunchtime activities (e.g., tea and chats, chess, robotics, book club) create positive peer engagement.
- 8.1.11** Safe physical spaces are provided throughout the College campus with active supervision during break and lunchtime, extra-curricular activities, school trips and tours and all school organised events.
- 8.1.12** Class seating plans to support positive social dynamics and reduce risk of isolation.
- 8.1.13** Mobile phone policy supports respectful communication and reduces screentime and misuse of technology.
- 8.1.14** Staff support a “telling environment”, where students feel safe and supported in reporting concerns about bullying.

- 8.1.15** Junior School and year teams maintain an open-door policy, offering accessible support for students.
- 8.1.16** Student Support Teams provide targeted interventions and emotional support.
- 8.1.17** Open teacher-parent communication fosters a united front in addressing student needs.
- 8.1.18** Anonymous student and community surveys collect feedback on attitudes, behaviour and the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies.
- 8.1.19** Parents and guardians reinforce core values by promoting empathy, respect and inclusion at home.

8.2 Curriculum – Teaching and Learning

We promote a culture of teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful. Students are given opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy among students. Students are encouraged and given opportunities to develop their self-esteem and sense of self-worth in a holistic manner through both curricular and extra-curricular programmes. Our wellbeing programme enables students to develop a framework for responsible decision-making and to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion in a safe, nurturing and caring environment.

8.2.1 Primary Curriculum

Social Personal Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) provides opportunities to promote:

8.2.1.1 Student wellbeing, self-confidence and belongings.

8.2.1.2 Personal responsibility for behaviour and actions.

8.2.1.3 Development of social and emotional learning (SEL) skills.

8.2.2 Post Primary Curriculum

8.2.2.1 SPHE Curriculum

8.2.2.1.1 Helps students to feel empowered to create, nurture and maintain respectful and healthy relationships with themselves and others.

8.2.2.1.2 Promotes physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

8.2.2.1.3 The RSE strand of the specification provides opportunities for students to foster an

understanding of sexuality and respect for sexual orientation which may help to reduce identity-based bullying, sexism and sexual harassment.

8.2.2.2 Religious Studies Curriculum

8.2.2.2.1 Promotes inclusion and an understanding of diverse Beliefs.

8.2.2.2.2 Encourages respect and understanding of different perspectives and ways of living.

8.2.2.3 Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE)

8.2.2.3.1 Provides students with opportunities to understand and consider the interdependence of people in local, national and global communities.

8.2.2.4 History and Politics and Society (Senior Cycle) aims

8.2.2.4.1 To raise awareness of racism and colonialism.

8.2.2.4.2 To promote understanding of prejudice, discrimination and historical injustice.

8.2.2.5 Digital Literacy Programme

8.2.2.5.1 Students learn how to safeguard their own and others wellbeing when online.

8.2.2.5.2 Students learn to show respect, care and empathy for others online.

8.2.2.6 Subject Department Plans

8.2.2.6.1 Wellbeing is at the centre of all subject plans.

8.2.2.6.2 Wellbeing indicators are addressed in all areas of teaching and learning.

8.3 Policy and Planning

The wellbeing of the College community is central to our policies and planning. All College policies are reviewed regularly and made accessible to stakeholders via the College website.

8.3.1 Staff Engagement

8.3.1.1 Staff are consulted and actively encouraged to contribute to the development and review of policies.

8.3.1.2 Drafts of policies under review are shared with staff on a regular basis to invite feedback and input.

8.3.2 Student Voice

8.3.2.1 Students are involved in the development and implementation of policies through consultation with the senior school Whole School Council and the junior school Student Council.

8.3.3 Parents and Guardians

8.3.3.1 Parents and Guardians are engaged in policy and planning through regular surveys and focus groups conducted in collaboration with the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA).

8.3.4 Professional Learning

8.3.4.1 College personnel are encouraged to engage in appropriate professional learning courses that support the College in the prevention and addressing of bullying behaviour.

8.3.4.2 Staff are also encouraged to share experiences and examples of best practice to foster collaborative and professional environment.

8.3.4.3 Staff are aware that they are mandated persons and an annual completion of Children's First E-Learning is undertaken.

8.3.4.4 College Principals and Deputy Principal complete DLP/DDLP training and refresher courses.

8.3.5 Supporting Policies

The implementation of the College's Bí Cineálta is supported by a range of related policies including:

8.3.5.1 Additional Educational Needs (AEN) Policy

8.3.5.2 Acceptable Usage Policy

8.3.5.3 Code of Behaviour Policy

8.3.5.4 Child Safeguarding and Risk Assessment Statement

8.3.5.5 Data Protection Policy

8.3.5.6 E-Safety Policy

8.3.5.7 Electronic Device Policy

8.3.5.8 Student Support Policy

8.3.5.9 Wellbeing Policy

8.4 Relationships and Partnerships

Strong relationships amongst all members of the school community form the backbone of a positive working environment. Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. These interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as:

8.4.1 Year Teams

The welfare of each student in St Andrew's College is managed through the 'Year Team' structure. Every year group of students has a team of teachers (Subject Teachers, Form Teachers, Year Head/Coordinator and Deputy Principal, Principal) allocated to look after the social and emotional wellbeing of the individual students. Year Heads monitor the pastoral and academic welfare of the students in consultation with Form Teachers and liaise with parents and senior leadership. This policy of timely communication is central to providing the best care possible for our students.

8.4.2 Junior School Class Teacher

The welfare of each student in St Andrew's College junior school is managed through the class teacher. All other staff report incidents to the class teacher.

8.4.3 Student Support Teams

We have student support teams for every year group. Student Support meetings take place weekly and are attended by relevant personnel which include the College Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, and Guidance Counsellors. We also have a College nurse on site and a teacher has the role of new student coordinator to assist new students settling into their new environment.

8.4.4 Guidance Team

The health and wellbeing of students is of the utmost importance at St. Andrew's College. Our guidance counsellors are available to assist students in making choices during their time in the College. Our guidance counsellors are available to meet students for, but not limited to: Career Guidance, Educational Support, Emotional Support, Student Counselling.

8.4.5 Additional Educational Needs (AEN)

St Andrew's College and the Additional Education Needs (AEN) are committed to supporting the inclusion of students with additional educational needs in mainstream schooling. They provide academic and pastoral support through early identification, specialist tuition and comprehensive liaison with parents, year teams and subject teachers.

8.4.6 English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The EAL Department plays a significant role in the College's commitment to creating an inclusive school environment. The culture and language of all students are respected and valued in the learning process. Students are facilitated in maintaining with their own culture and language through the European Annexe, US Studies and Modern Foreign Language Department (MFL).

8.4.7 Parent Teacher Association

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a key platform for open communication between parents and staff. It supports collaboration between home and school, helps the College with practical needs, and organises events that bring families and the College community closer together.

8.4.8 Mental Health First Aiders

As part of a broader mental health programme, we have trained a number of our teaching staff in mental health first aid. This training helps them to identify when someone is in mental health difficulty, provide support to that person on a first aid basis and effectively direct these students towards appropriate support services. These teachers work in conjunction with the year teams and the guidance counsellors.

8.4.9 Anti-Bullying Committee

The College anti-bullying coordinator works closely with the anti-bullying committee to organise events that include:

8.4.9.1 Visiting speakers and bands around the topic of anti-bullying and safer internet use.

8.4.9.2 Tea and Chats.

8.4.9.3 Poster campaigns and competitions for House Cup Day.

8.4.9.4 Student led assemblies.

8.4.9.5 House Cup.

8.4.9.6 Upstanding Programme.

8.4.10 Peer Support

The College has developed structures for providing support for students from other students.

8.4.11 Mentors

The Mentor Programme was designed to assist the first-year students with their transition to secondary school. Fifth-year students are mentored with first-year students.

8.4.12 Prefects

Our senior prefect structure, enables students to develop good leadership skills. They are also seen as good role models by the rest of the student population.

8.4.13 Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Activities

At St Andrew's, we focus on the all-round development of students by encouraging participation in activities beyond the classroom. Students can take part in a wide range of sports, music, cultural and social activities that help build confidence, friendships and important life skills. A full list of extra-curricular activities is available on the College website.

9. Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is (are) as follows: Junior School Class Teacher, Year Team, Deputy Principal.

The College's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the College for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are underpinned by a restorative approach, and are as follows:

9.1 Identifying Bullying Behaviour

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the relevant teachers will consider:

- 9.1.1** What, Where, When and Why?
- 9.1.2** If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged with individually at first.
- 9.1.3** Thereafter, all students involved **may** be met as a group (if appropriate).
- 9.1.4** At the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- 9.1.5** Each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting.
- 9.1.6** Students involved may be asked to write down their account of the incident(s).

- 9.1.7** In dealing with an allegation of bullying, the class teacher/relevant personnel will exercise their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best to resolve the situation. (*please see Appendix A*).
- 9.1.8** Incidents occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the Code of Behaviour.

9.2 Investigation of Bullying Behaviour

The College's procedures for investigating and follow-up of alleged bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the College for dealing with cases of alleged bullying behaviour are as follows:

- 9.2.1** We adopt a **shared concern** approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying. The primary aim is to resolve any issues and to restore as far as is possible, the relationship of the parties rather than to apportion blame or punishment.
- 9.2.2** An alleged bullying complaint may be brought to any teacher in the College by a student or parent, if the teacher is not the Relevant Teacher, they will inform the Relevant Teacher. All students and parents should be aware of the Relevant Teacher concerned (as above).
- 9.2.3** Non-teaching staff such as support staff, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts are encouraged to report any incidents of alleged bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the Relevant Teacher.
- 9.2.4** All such complaints will be investigated and acted upon in order to encourage confidence in "telling".
- 9.2.5** When investigating bullying behaviour, the College will always endeavour to:
- 9.2.5.1** Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to, reassured and supported.
 - 9.2.5.2** Seek to ensure the privacy of all involved.
 - 9.2.5.3** Conduct all conversations with sensitivity (those involved, witnesses, bystanders).
 - 9.2.5.4** Consider the age and ability of those involved.
 - 9.2.5.5** Listen to the views of the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.
 - 9.2.5.6** Take action in a timely manner.

- 9.2.5.7** Be fair and consistent.
- 9.2.5.8** Inform parents of those involved and if necessary, request them to meet in the College with the relevant personnel.
- 9.2.5.9** Parents, guardians and students are required to cooperate with any Investigation and assist the College in resolving any issues and restoring as far as is practicable the relationships of the parties involved.
- 9.2.5.10** In circumstances where, a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the College will develop an appropriate plan to support the student and for how their parents will be informed.
- 9.2.5.11** The College will consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents
- 9.2.5.12** In cases where it has been determined that bullying has occurred, it should be made clear to the student who engaged in bullying behaviour how they are in breach of the School's Bí Cineálta Policy and efforts will be made to get them to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied.
- 9.2.5.13** The student(s) displaying bullying behaviour should be supported to better manage relational difficulties.

9.3 Follow Up of Investigation

- 9.3.1** A meeting is arranged to discuss findings and to agree proposed actions (including disciplinary and support actions required for parties involved).
- 9.3.2** Deputy Principal and/or Principal to ratify proposed actions.
- 9.3.3** Parents/Guardians and students informed of actions.
- 9.3.4** It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined their parents and the College.
- 9.3.5** Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect
- 9.3.6** Bullying Incident Report Form, if applicable, to be stored in Disciplinary File.
- 9.3.7** The College will always, endeavour to comply with current legislation.

10. Bullying Incident Record

All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded. These records should be retained in accordance with data protection regulations. The following should be included in the record:

- 10.1** Recording Bullying Behaviour Form (1. and 2.)
(please see Appendix D)
- 10.2** Note where and when bullying took place.
- 10.3** Include the date of initial engagement with students and their parents.
- 10.4** Document the views for student and parents regarding actions to be taken.
- 10.5** Actions and supports agreed to address the bullying behaviour.
- 10.6** Record the review meeting(s) with student and parent/guardian to assess if the bullying has ceased.
- 10.7** Include the views of students and parents/guardians on whether the bullying has stopped.
- 10.8** Record the dates of all engagements and the date it was determined that bullying ceased.
- 10.9** Note any engagement with external services or supports.
- 10.10** Place a copy of the record in the Student Support File if appropriate.
- 10.11** If a Student Support Plan exists, update it with response strategies and supports.

11. Review if Bullying Behaviour has ceased/Engagement with Students and Parents/Guardians.

A review meeting with students and parents must occur within 20 school days of the initial intervention. The review should consider:

- 11.1** The nature of the bullying behaviour.
- 11.2** The effectiveness of the strategies used.
- 11.3** The relationship dynamics between the students involved.
- 11.4** Even if the bullying has ceased, ongoing support and supervision may be still necessary for:
 - 11.4.1** The student who experienced the bullying.
 - 11.4.2** The student who engaged in the bullying behaviour.
- 11.5** Relationships may take time to heal, and in some cases, ongoing monitoring is required. If bullying behaviour has not ceased:

11.5.1 The Class Teacher/Year Team/Deputy Principal should review strategies to address bullying behaviour.

11.5.2 Consult with students and parents to determine next steps.

11.5.3 Agree on a follow-up timeframe for further reviews until resolution.

11.6 If the student continues bullying:

11.6.1 The school should consider using strategies from the Code of Behaviour.

11.6.2 Any disciplinary action is to be handled privately between the College, the student and their parents.

12. Programme of Support

12.1 Students displaying bullying behaviour

12.1.1 The College's approach to dealing with bullying behaviour is one that emphasises learning rather than punishment.

12.1.2 Students who engage in bullying behaviour should be made aware of their actions, of the effects on others and to ask themselves why they behave in such a way with a view to amending their behaviour.

12.1.3 All students must respect one another and one another's right to be happy and to learn within the College.

12.2 Students who experience bullying behaviour or who witness bullying behaviour

The College recognises the need to support students who have been affected by bullying and the College's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is as follows:

12.2.1 Guidance counselling is available to encourage self-esteem and resilience.

12.2.2 The relevant student support team will work closely with the student to ensure that they feel supported.

12.2.3 The relevant class teacher/year team will check in with the student on a regular basis.

12.2.4 Students who witness incidents of alleged bullying are encouraged to report them.

12.2.5 Teachers of any student who has been bullied should be encouraged (with the permission of parent/guardian and the individual themselves) to take any opportunity to develop the individual's sense of self-worth.

12.2.6 Any student who has been bullied is encouraged to continue to speak out and to seek help where necessary

13. Request to take no action

13.1 Students Requests

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than “look out” for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them. Where this occurs, it is important that:

- 13.1.1 Member of staff shows empathy to the student and handles the situation sensitively.
- 13.1.2 Decisions on action and informing parents/guardians should be made in collaboration with the student.
- 13.1.3 The student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

13.2 Parental Requests

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the College takes no action.

- 13.2.1 Parents should put this request in writing to the school.
- 13.2.2 The College must support parents facing barriers (e.g. literacy, digital literacy, language) in submitting requests.
- 13.2.3 While parental concerns should be acknowledged, the College may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

14. External Agency Support

The College in certain circumstances may also seek the support and advice of TUSLA, NEPS, NCSE, second level school support services, HSE and any other agency deemed appropriate to support the school in dealing with incidents of bullying.

15. Complaints Procedure

15.1 Parent dissatisfied

If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, they should be referred to the school’s complaints procedures, as outlined in *Chapter 6, Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools*.

15.2 Complaint to the Ombudsman for Children

- 15.2.1 A student and/or parent/guardian may make a complaint to the The Office of the Ombudsman for Children if they can believe that the school’s actions have had a negative affect on the student. can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie

16 Review of the Policy

(See Checklist Appendix F)

16.1 Annual Review

16.1.1 Must be conducted each calendar year or sooner if deemed necessary by the Board of Management.

16.1.2 The Annual Review requires input from the full school community: Board of Management, staff, students, parents and wider community (if appropriate).

16.1.3 The Student Council and the Parents Association should be consulted for their views on the policy's content and effectiveness.

16.1.4 The Appendix E template must be completed to confirm the review is done.

16.2 Ongoing Monitoring and Feedback

16.2.1 Regular feedback on policy implementation is encouraged outside of the formal annual review.

16.2.2 Open discussions with staff, students support effective policy implementation.

16.3 Review Following Serious Incidents

16.3.1 If bullying has a serious impact on a student, the school must review its preventative and responsive actions.

16.4 Communication and Transparency

16.4.1 The College community must be notified once the annual review has been completed.

16.4.2 Confirmation (*Please see Appendix G*) should be published on the College website.

17 Oversight (*please see Appendix E*)

17.1 At each meeting of the Board of Management, the Principal must present an update on bullying behaviour incidents. This update will include:

17.1.1 Number of bullying incidents reported since the last board meeting.

17.1.2 Number of ongoing bullying incidents.

17.1.3 Total number of incidents reported since the start of the academic year.

17.2 Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant:

17.2.1 Information relating to trends and patterns (e.g. Type, form, location, time).

- 17.2.2** Strategies used to address incidents.
- 17.2.3** Any wider preventative strategies implemented.
- 17.2.4** Whether any serious incidents have occurred with serious adverse impact on a student.
- 17.2.5** If a student has left the school due to bullying (as reported by a parent).
- 17.2.6** If any support is needed from the Board of Management.
- 17.2.7** If the Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review (ahead of annual review).

17.3 Confidentiality

No personal or identifiable information should be included in the update.

17.4 Board Meeting Minutes must document

Number of:

- 17.4.1** New incidents since last meeting.
- 17.4.2** Incidents currently ongoing.
- 17.4.3** Total incidents since the beginning of the school year.
- 17.4.4** A record that the Board of Management has considered the verbal report.

Appendix A

Types of bullying behaviour

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include the following which is not an exhaustive list:

- > **disablist bullying behaviour:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of a perceived or actual disability or additional need
- > **exceptionally able bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their high academic ability or outstanding talents
- > **gender identity bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual gender identity
- > **homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual membership of the LGBTQ+ community
- > **physical appearance bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their physical appearance. Students who “look different” can be mocked or criticised about the shape, size or appearance of their body
- > **racist bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their race or ethnic origin which includes membership of the Traveller or Roma community. Racism is defined in the National Action Plan Against Racism as form of domination which manifests through those power dynamics present in structural and institutional arrangements, practices, policies and cultural norms, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.
- > **poverty bullying:** behaviour and language that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources
- > **religious identity bullying:** behaviour and language that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity
- > **sexist bullying:** behaviour and language that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex
- > **sexual harassment:** any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of the student

Appendix B (i)

Bí Cineálta!

We want everyone at our school to feel safe and happy

Be Kind

Tell someone!

If you think you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied, you need to tell a teacher or another adult that you trust. They will know what to do to help.

Reach out!

If a student tells a staff member that they think they are being bullied, we will:

- . Talk with the student
- . Ask the student what they want to happen
- . Work out a plan together

Our school has a Bí Cineálta policy. We will look at this policy every year and ask you what you think.

Bullying behaviour is when someone keeps being mean or hurtful to others on purpose over and over again.

Appendix B (ii)

BÍ CINEÁLTA!
(BE KIND!)

The Helping Hand



TREAT EVERYONE

THE SAME!

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

STAND UP FOR WHAT IS RIGHT!

**We want
everyone at
our school
to feel
happy and safe**



Appendix C

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the Year Head should consider the following questions:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
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 should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

Appendix D

Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1.	Name of student being bullied and Form/Class Name: _____ Form: _____																											
2.	Name(s): and class(es) of student(s) engaged in bullying behaviour Name(s): _____ Form/Class(es) _____																											
3.	Source of bullying concern/report			4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))																								
	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Student concerned</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Other Student</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Parent</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Teacher</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Other</td><td></td></tr> </table>			Student concerned		Other Student		Parent		Teacher		Other		<table border="1"> <tr><td>Playground</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Classroom Corridor</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Changing Room</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Toilets</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>School Bus</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Other</td><td></td></tr> </table>			Playground		Classroom Corridor		Changing Room		Toilets		School Bus		Other	
Student concerned																												
Other Student																												
Parent																												
Teacher																												
Other																												
Playground																												
Classroom Corridor																												
Changing Room																												
Toilets																												
School Bus																												
Other																												
5.	Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern _____																											
6.	Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))																											
	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Physical Aggression</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Damage to Property</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Isolation/Exclusion</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Name Calling</td><td></td></tr> </table>			Physical Aggression		Damage to Property		Isolation/Exclusion		Name Calling		<table border="1"> <tr><td>Cyber-bullying</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Intimidation</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Malicious Gossip</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Other (specify)</td><td></td></tr> </table>			Cyber-bullying		Intimidation		Malicious Gossip		Other (specify)							
Physical Aggression																												
Damage to Property																												
Isolation/Exclusion																												
Name Calling																												
Cyber-bullying																												
Intimidation																												
Malicious Gossip																												
Other (specify)																												
7.	Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category																											
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Homophobic</td> <td>Disability/SEN related</td> <td>Racist/Ethnicity</td> <td>Membership of Traveller Community</td> <td>Gender Identity</td> <td>Other (specify) e.g Socio Economic/Religion</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>						Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist/Ethnicity	Membership of Traveller Community	Gender Identity	Other (specify) e.g Socio Economic/Religion																
Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist/Ethnicity	Membership of Traveller Community	Gender Identity	Other (specify) e.g Socio Economic/Religion																							
8.	Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact (give a brief description of the bullying behaviour and how it has affected the student)																											

9.	Details of actions taken to address the bullying behaviour (include: support for student, disciplinary measures, views of parents/students on actions taken)
10.	Date of Review with Student/Parent(s) to determine if bullying behaviour has ceased Date of Review _____/_____/20_____ (Note: review must take place within 20 school days of initial engagement)
11.	Comments/Views of student(s)/parents(s) on cessation of bullying behaviour
12.	Date bullying behaviour ceased _____/_____/20_____

Engagement with External Supports (if applicable)

Signed _____
 Relevant Teacher

Date _____

Appendix E

Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management meeting of DD/MM/YYYY

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous Board of Management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the Board of Management:

Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last Board of Management meeting.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school year.	

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which should include the following information where relevant:

- the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc.
- the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- if a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the Board of Management
- if the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.

Appendix F

Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual (calendar) review of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and its implementation in consultation with the school community. As part of the review, this document must be completed.

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

1.	When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school __27____/__05____/2025____		
2.	Where in the school is the student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed? _____ _____		
3.	What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student friendly policy on the school website? 30_____/05_____/2025_____		
4.	How has the student-friendly policy been communicated to students? _____ _____		
5.	How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student-friendly policy been communicated to parents? _____ _____		
6.	Have all school staff been made aware of the College's Bí Cineálta Policy and the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and Post Primary Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7.	Does the Bí Cineálta Policy document the strategies that the College uses to prevent bullying behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8.	Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the Principal at every ordinary board meeting last calendar year?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9.	Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10.	Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the College's Bí Cineálta Policy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
11.	Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta Policy been implemented?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
12.	Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13.	How have (a) the parents, (b) students and (c) College staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy? _____ _____ _____		

14.	Outline any aspects of the College's BÍ Cineálta Policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review: _____	
15.	Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed? _____	
16	Does the student friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so, why? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
17	Does the College refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the College has addressed bullying behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
18	Has a parent informed the College that a student has left the College due to reported bullying behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
19	Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the College has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____

College Principal

Appendix G

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management of _____ confirms that the Board of Management's/Governors' 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

[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: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____

College Principal

[Link to Gov.ie Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools](#)

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: 27 May 2025

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: 

Date: 27 May 2025

College Principal