School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy and Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of St. Anne's National 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.

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 - see **Appendix A for examples of Bullying Behaviours**.

It is important to note that bullying behaviour can be experienced by anyone. Bullying behaviour can be directed at individuals for no obvious reason, or it can be more overt based on a student's identity or societal issues. Some students with special educational needs may have difficulties recognising bullying behaviour has occurred. Some students with complex needs may lack awareness of social dynamics leading them to trust others implicitly. Consequently, these students may be more at risk of experiencing bullying behaviour.

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.

Impact of bullying behaviour

When students experience bullying behaviour, it can have a severe and profound impact on them in both the short and long term. Students may develop feelings of stress, insecurity, humiliation and anxiety and therefore become more vulnerable. Experiencing bullying behaviour can have a detrimental effect on their experience of education and education outcomes. The student's self-confidence may be damaged with a resulting lowering of their self-esteem which can continue into adulthood. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering can be indicated through changes in mood and behaviour. Extreme cases of bullying behaviour may contribute to mental health difficulties. Online or cyberbullying can be a hidden form of bullying behaviour. It can often go unnoticed as much online activity is not subject to adult supervision and the student who displays the behaviour can be offered a degree of anonymity that could protect them from being detected.

Signs of when a student may be experiencing bullying behaviour

Signs* that may indicate that a student is experiencing bullying behaviour include but are not limited to the following:

➢ anxiety about travelling to and from school; for example, requesting parents / guardians to drive or collect them, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school;
➢ not wanting to go to school, refusal to attend;
➢ a change in how the student performs in school, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school;
➢ pattern of physical illnesses for example, headaches, stomach aches;
➢ unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or after school holidays;
➢ visible signs of anxiety or distress for example, stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting;
➢ spontaneous out-of-character comments about either students or teachers;
➢ possessions missing or damaged;
➢ increased requests for money or stealing money;
➢ unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing;
➢ reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling them.

*The above signs do not necessarily mean that a student is experiencing bullying behaviour. However, if these signs occur over a period of time or if a number occur together, it may be an indication that the student is experiencing bullying behaviour. Please reach out to your child's class teacher if any of the above signs are relevant / applicable for your child.

Impact of witnessing bullying behaviour:

Students who witness bullying behaviour can also be impacted in a similar way to those who experience bullying behaviour. These students may be afraid to tell someone because of a fear of reprisals for telling or a fear of making the situation worse. Students who witness bullying behaviour may feel guilt or anxiety for not helping the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour. For example, they can feel vulnerable particularly in the case of racist or identity-based bullying behaviour if they share the same race or identity as the student who is experiencing the behaviour. Our school is aware of our need to support students who have witnessed bullying behaviour.

Impact of engaging in bullying behaviour:

There can also be a negative impact on those who engage in bullying behaviour. Those who engage in bullying behaviour can display aggression, anti-social behaviour and lower academic achievement. Students who display bullying behaviour often fail to recognise the impact of their actions and may lack empathy. They may avoid responsibility and deny or minimise their actions when confronted. Long term, these students may find it hard to form long term relationships and they may express feelings of isolation and depression. The lived experience of some students may cause students to engage in bullying behaviour. Some students who engage in bullying behaviour have learned attitudes and behaviours which can undermine their ability to integrate themselves into their peer group. They may suffer from low self-esteem or insecurity and may have been bullied themselves. Students may also display or engage in bullying behaviour out of ignorance or because they are uncomfortable with another student's perceived difference. Our school is aware of our need to support students who have engaged in bullying 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	28th of March 2025 8th of April 2025	Staff Training & Consultation Staff Survey
Students	12th of May 2025	Student Survey
Parents / Guardians	11th of April 2025	Parent Survey
Board of Management	3rd of April 2025 19th of June 2025	Discussion at Board Meetings Review & Ratification
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	N/A	N/A
Date policy was approved: 19.06.2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 19.06.2025		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students and is therefore fully committed to the following **key principles of best practice** in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour. Furthermore, 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 (in line with Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures).

Bullying behaviour is not acceptable. Our school community has a responsibility to work together in partnership to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour. We are committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour as we fully acknowledge and accept that bullying behaviour interferes with the fundamental rights of the child.

Culture and Environment

We always strive to have a welcoming, respectful, positive and inclusive school culture and climate. Our school environment is a space where students and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.
Each member of school staff has a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour. Students can shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all. Parents / Guardians, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect. As a school community, we support a 'telling' environment, where our students feel comfortable to talk about concerns regarding bullying behaviour, to a 'trusted' adult or adults.

The following are some practical actions taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour:
➢ Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times;
➢ Explicitly teach students what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school;
➢ Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages;
➢ 'Catch' students being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention;
➢ Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of students with a disability or SEN;
➢ Give constructive feedback to students when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent;
➢ Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines;
➢ Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school;
➢ Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in student-friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.

Curriculum (Teaching & Learning)

Teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful is promoted. Students will have regular opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy among students. The curricular subjects offered to students provide opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity. We provide opportunities for students to develop a sense of self-worth through both curricular and extra-curricular programmes.

Implementation of curricula

➢ The full implementation of the SPHE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes;
➢ Continuous Professional Learning for staff in delivering these programmes;
➢ School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons, Weaving Wellbeing, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet;
➢ **Cyber Bullying** (Be Safe - Be Web Wise, Think Before you Click, Let's Fight it Together, Web Wise Primary teachers' resources), Drugs Awareness may be organised by PMCA or another organisation for senior classes;
➢ Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level in senior classes. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying;
➢ The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN students with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all students to respond appropriately;
➢ The school will implement the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet):
➢ Students will complete the **Friendship Questionnaire / Bullying Sociogram on a regular basis (see Appendix B)**

Policy and Planning

The wellbeing of the school community is at the heart of school policies and plans. In addition to this policy, there are a range of other policies such as the school's Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision Policy, Special Education Teaching Policy, Data Protection Policy, Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment and Code of Behaviour that can support implementation of this policy.

Relationships and Partnerships

Strong interpersonal connections, based on respect, care, integrity and trust, 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 student councils, school clubs, parents' associations and student support teams.

The following, are examples of activities that may strengthen relationships and partnerships between members of the school community:

➢ age-appropriate awareness initiatives that look at the causes and impacts of bullying behaviour including those dealing with navigating friendships, identity-based bullying, racist bullying, homophobic/transphobic bullying, sexism and sexual harassment;
➢ supporting the active participation of students in school life, including the Student Council and various other Student Leadership Teams;
➢ supporting the active participation of parents / guardians in school life;
➢ conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents / guardians to raise awareness of the impact of bullying;
➢ supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience;

- ➢ encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring;
- ➢ promoting acts of kindness;
- ➢ teaching problem solving.

Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of life that can impact even the youngest members of society. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour.

Schools should proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments.

Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following:

- ➢ implementing the SPHE curriculum;
- ➢ implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship;
- ➢ having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online;
- ➢ developing, reviewing and communicating an Acceptable Use Policy for Technology;
- ➢ referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour;
- ➢ promoting or hosting online safety events for parents / guardians who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online;
- ➢ holding events to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.

Preventing Homophobic / Transphobic Bullying Behaviour

All students, including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students, have a right to feel safe and supported at school.

Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour include the following:

- ➢ maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters;
- ➢ encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities;
- ➢ challenging gender-stereotypes;
- ➢ conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents / guardians to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour;
- ➢ encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.

Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

Schools have become much more culturally diverse over the last number of decades. Students attending schools come from many different cultures and backgrounds. Students from diverse backgrounds may face discrimination and prejudice and may be subject to racist bullying behaviour.

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following:

- ➢ fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment;
- ➢ having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display;
- ➢ conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents / guardians to raise awareness of racism;
- ➢ encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities;
- ➢ encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour;

- ➢ providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents / guardians;
- ➢ providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents / guardians;
- ➢ ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour

Schools focus on gender equality as part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment.

Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following:
- ➢ ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex;
- ➢ ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex;
- ➢ celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students;
- ➢ organising awareness campaigns, workshops or presentations on gender equality and respect;
- ➢ encouraging parents / guardians to reinforce these values of respect at home.

Preventing Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. Our school is clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment will never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include the following:
- ➢ using the SPHE specifications to teach students about healthy relationships and how to treat each other with respect and kindness;
- ➢ promoting positive role models within the school community;
- ➢ challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment.

Supervision and Monitoring Policies

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):

The school has created safe physical spaces for our students to learn and play and appropriate adult supervision (in line with our Supervision Policy) is an important measure to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. Staff members have a distinct responsibility to ensure that supervision of students is effective and consistent whilst on school grounds and on school trips.

Students are informed regularly on how to report bullying behaviour and to whom. In addition, non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school, in line with the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

Although the Board of Management has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, staff have a clear role to act in an exemplary capacity within the school community, stimulating a whole school approach to preventing and tackling bullying and modelling best practice. The Principal and other formal School Leaders play a critical role in setting the highest of standards in

relation to all aspects of student supervision and bullying prevention.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

➢ The relevant class teacher(s);
➢ Principal;
➢ Deputy Principal;
➢ Other Formal School Leaders;
➢ Relevant Teacher is the teacher that witnesses bullying or to whom bullying is reported
➢ The teacher on the playground is the relevant teacher, when an incident happens on the playground;
➢ Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

➢ ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured;
➢ 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 as to how best to address the situation;
➢ take action in a timely manner;
➢ inform parents / guardians 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):

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred:

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher will consider the following: what, where, when and why? If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved will be met as a group. 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 views. Each student should be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting. It may also be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident.

The definition of bullying (see page 1 of this policy) sets out clear criteria to help schools to identify bullying behaviour. The following questions can further assist schools in this regard:
➢ Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
➢ Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
➢ 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).

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.

A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students 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 students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in the school, but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school should support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents / guardians to determine what steps can be taken.

Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within our school's Code of Behaviour.

Where bullying behaviour has occurred:

It is important for school staff to be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour. Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support. It is important that the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour is engaged with (without delay) so that they feel listened to, supported and reassured.

School staff should identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

A student's agency or sense of power can be decreased when they experience or witness bullying behaviour. When a student tells an adult that they feel that they are experiencing bullying behaviour they may feel that they are taking back some control over what is happening to them. It is very important that a student's agency is not decreased further by adults deciding what will happen next without listening to the student and involving them in deciding on the actions that will be taken.

The following principles will be adhered to when addressing bullying behaviour:
  ➢ ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured;
  ➢ 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 as to how best to address the situation;
  ➢ take action in a timely manner;
  ➢ inform parents / guardians of those involved*
    (*Parents / guardians are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents / guardians of the parties involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour as outlined in the school's Bí Cineálta policy. In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their parents / guardians being informed, the school should develop an appropriate plan to support the student and for how their parents / guardians will be informed. Our school will consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents / guardians, for example, literacy, digital literacy or language barriers.

Given the complexity of bullying behaviour it is generally acknowledged that no one approach

works in all situations. International and national research also continues to evolve in this area and the effectiveness of particular approaches continues to be reviewed. Each school must therefore decide on an approach that is best suited to its own circumstances.

Requests to take no action:

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 the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents / guardians will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

Parents / guardians may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents / guardians should put this request in writing to the school or be facilitated to do so where there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent's / guardian's request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased:

The teacher must engage with the students and parents / guardians involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention. Important factors to consider as part of the review are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.

Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour. It can take time for relationships to settle and for supports to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behaviour occurred.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents / guardians and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school should consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents / guardians and the school.

Recording bullying behaviour:

All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded. The record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students and their parents / guardians.

The record should include the views of the students and their parents / guardians regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour. It should document the review with students and their parents / guardians to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents / guardians in relation to this. It is important to also document the date of each of these engagements and the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased. Any engagement with external services / supports will also be noted.

These records will be retained (within the 'documents' section of a child's profile on Aladdin) in accordance with the school's Record Keeping Policy and in line with data protection regulations.

Complaint process:

If a parent / guardian is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they will be referred to the school's complaints procedure. Additional information relating to schools' complaint procedures are available at the following link:
https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/policy-information/schools-complaint-procedures-additional-information-for-parents-and-students/

In the event that a student and / or parent / guardian is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and / or parent / guardian may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student. The Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie

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 students affected by bullying is as follows:

All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the students affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their confidence, self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g. Pastoral Care system; Care teams; Group work such as circle time / social stories; Nurture sessions and/or support from the Nurture Room.

If pupils require counselling or further support, the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to request the same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour

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Section D: Oversight

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 students and parents / guardians. 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*.

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 will not contain personal or identifying information.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request (from the School Office). 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 (from the School Office).

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: *Rory Farrelly*   Date: 19.06.2025

  (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: *John Fingleton*   Date: 19.06.2025

  (Principal)

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Appendix A: Examples of Bullying Behaviours

These apply to all relationships in our school community, pupil to pupil, staff to pupil, pupil to staff, staff to staff, parent / guardian to staff, staff to parent / guardian. Staff includes everybody working in the school.

General Behaviours **which apply to all**	➢ Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. ➢ Physical aggression ➢ Damage to property ➢ Name calling ➢ Slagging ➢ The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person ➢ Offensive graffiti ➢ Extortion ➢ Intimidation ➢ Insulting or offensive gestures ➢ Invasion of personal space ➢ A combination of any of the types listed above
Cyber	➢ Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook / X / YouTube / Instagram / Viber / Snapchat / WhatsApp / on games consoles ➢ Abusive emails ➢ Abusive posts on any form of communication technology ➢ Abusive telephone / mobile phone calls ➢ Abusive text messages ➢ Abusive website comments / Blogs / Pictures ➢ Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his / her safety ➢ Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation ➢ Downloading inappropriate images ➢ Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group / social media ➢ Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online conflict ➢ Gathering 'negative' support on social media ➢ Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual ➢ Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name ➢ Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images ➢ Personal inappropriate comments on media

	➢ Posting comments about staff or other members of our school community online ➢ Posting inappropriate photographs ➢ Prank calling ➢ Secretly recording ➢ Silent telephone / mobile phone call ➢ Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online ➢ Unprofessional / inappropriate social media exchanges ➢ Videoing or taking photographs in school and / or on school trips (without prior consent / approval)
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. Inappropriate comments on religion, family status, marital status, negative comments on dress or appearance or accent.	
Homophobic **and Transgender**	➢ 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	➢ 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	➢ Malicious gossip, spreading rumours ➢ Isolation & exclusion, 'keeping someone out of the loop' ➢ Ignoring ➢ Excluding from the group, trips, games, pastimes, play dates ➢ Taking someone's friends away, deliberately manipulating friendships and groups ➢ Spreading rumours ➢ Breaking confidence ➢ Inappropriate speech - loud enough so that the victim can hear ➢ Innuendo ➢ Exclusion in the playground ➢ Turning your back, huddling together, favouritism ➢ Speculating inappropriately about people's personal circumstances, dismissing people's experiences and opinions, ganging up, snide remarks, undermining character

Sexual	➢ Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching ➢ Harassment ➢ Name calling ➢ Innuendo
Special Educational Needs **Disability**	➢ Name calling ➢ Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs ➢ Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to defend themselves against bullying ➢ Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues ➢ Mimicking a person's disability ➢ Setting others up for ridicule
Physical	➢ Inappropriate physical contact or touching ➢ Shoving; pushing; hitting; kicking; spitting; pinching; grabbing; shaking; jostling; shouldering; biting; slapping; pulling ➢ Throwing objects ➢ Damaging or stealing or hiding personal property ➢ Invading space ➢ Intimidating body language ➢ Pulling down trousers
Verbal	➢ Name calling ➢ Cruel nicknames ➢ Rude noises ➢ Talking behind back, whispering, slagging, ➢ Addressing of others or tone of voice, shouting at others, putting others down ➢ Abusive language, mocking, using language that may exclude others or referring to others in derogatory terms, speaking ill of others ➢ Talking over people, lack of courtesy, dismissive comments
Psychological	➢ Comments on personal appearance, intimidating stares, hurtful sarcasm ➢ Put downs, demeaning others, belittling others and their work and effort ➢ Reporting untruths, lies

Appendix B: Friendship Questionnaire & Bullying Sociogram

Friendship Questionnaire

Name --

Class --

Would you like to talk to someone about bullying?   **Yes No**

Do you know someone who is having a hard time?   **Yes No**

Bullying Sociogram

Are you happy with the atmosphere in your classroom?

Who are your friends?

Are you being bullied in any way?

Is there anyone in class having a hard time or being picked on?

Is anyone being left out or ignored?

Is anyone spreading rumours, gossip, using notes, phone calls, text messages or emails to make others feel bad about themselves?

Is anyone being unfair to others?

Is there a group of pupils making life difficult for others?

Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in this class a hard time? Give examples.