**Moyderwell Mercy Primary School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**

**Final for BOM June 2025**



The Board of Management of Moyderwell Mercy Primary 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 of Moyderwell Mercy PS 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 all bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated.e.g. any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

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

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

# 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.

Moyderwell Mercy PS has developed this Bí Cineálta policy in line with our obligation. It sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school’s Code of Behaviour.

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

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

|  | **Date consulted** | **Method of consultation** |
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| School Staﬀ | 23/5/2025 and  June 2025 | **Stage 1**: Half day closure (23/5/2025) to develop awareness of the Bí Cineálta Anti Bullying Guidelines and to contribute to key sections of the draft policy through groupwork and discussions.    Notice board in staff room from September 2025 with the relevant information displayed as well as resources and recording form.  Resource Padlet in Shared Drive with access to resources to enable teachers to raise awareness of and teach preventative strategies to address Cyber Bullying, racist bullying, gender and identity based bullying. Links to Oide resources shared with staff.  <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/resources-for-primary-schools>.  **Stage 2**: Sharing of draft policy with staff by email on 11/6/2025 to discuss / consult and make any amendments. |
| Students | June 2025 | Students on our Student Council were consulted to seek their input in developing an Anti-Bullying policy in a Student Friendly Format – their wording, examples and suggestions were all considered when drafting this Policy.  In September 2025, our students will be given the homework of reading through this policy with their parents.  All students across the school will then be asked to design posters for a Bi Cinéalta Display at eye level. |
| Parents | May/ June 2025 | All parents were surveyed and the results of this informed the development of the policy. 59 responses were received. The Parents Association and individual parents reviewed the draft policies and gave feedback. These consultations were facilitated by HSCL.  Parents and children will be asked to review the accessible policy in September 2025, together with information on how to contact the school if needed.  Sent out via school website and social media in September 2025. |
| Board of Management | September 2025 | Review new policy drafts – leading to consultation and final ratification after amendments made where necessary. |
| Wider school community for example, bus drivers, bus escorts, ancillary staff | September 2025 | Published on the school website. Professional conversations held with ancillary staff, bus drivers etc., particularly about actions to take and who to contact if they have a concern about a pupil in our school. |
| Date policy was approved: | | |
| Date policy was last reviewed: | | |

# Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

| **This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by staff in Moyderwell Mercy PS. The Prevention Strategies are rooted in four key areas for wellbeing promotion as outlined in the Wellbeing Policy and Framework for Practice 2019 1. Culture and Environment, 2. Curriculum (Teaching and Learning), 3. Policy and Planning, and 4. Relationships and Partnerships These interconnected areas ensure that wellbeing is promoted throughout every aspect of school life.**  **This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by this school to address all forms of bullying behaviour, in whatever form and however motivated, including online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment. (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures)**  **In developing the preventative strategies which this school will use to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour, we come from the context of our Catholic ethos, where inclusivity permeates our school in a real way.** |
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| **Culture and Environment:**   * Our school Mission Statement places kindness, respect and inclusion at the centre of all our relationships. We take a school-wide approach to the fostering of kindness and respect for all members of the school community. Our behaviour motto is ‘Kind hands, Kind feet, Kind words. We actively promote kindness, particularly around World Kindness day on November 13th but also throughout the year through kindness jars, random acts of kindness, kindness books and kindness calendars. Resources in the Bí Cineálta shared folder support this. * We promote the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. We acknowledge and value our diverse school population – celebrating diversity and culture in our school through art, displays and events such as our annual Culture day. * This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at our board of management and staff meetings * We set a positive tone from the beginning of each day with each child met at the gate by a welcoming and supportive adult. Morning activities like Wake Up, Shake Up, Breakfast Clubs and Basketball provide a soft start to the day for our pupils who need this. * We foster and enhance the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions during sporting, music, gardening and wellbeing initiatives like Mindful Mondays and by providing options to engage in alternative lunchtime activities e.g. playing board games or doing art and craft activities. * We promote student voice through our student committees such as our Student Council, our Active Committee and our Green Committee. * In consultation with pupils and parents, we have developed a child-friendly accessible Bí Cineálta anti bullying policy for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school. The school’s Bí Cineálta anti-bullying policy, including the accessible policy, is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) encouraged to access it on the website. The Accessible Bí Cineálta Policy is used as a basis for exploring all aspects of bullying with students and parents at key points of the year, particularly at the start of each school term and during Friendship week in November and in January and February of each year, the months designated for teaching the RSE and Stay Safe Programme. * Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to class teachers. Supervision also applies to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school (see section on Supervision below) * The promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention through Pro- Friendship/Anti-Bullying Week each year, parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars/workshop, student surveys/questionnaire where needed, regular school assemblies by principal. * We encourage **a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders becoming upstanders**. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. During our consultation, students told us of a variety of reasons why they don’t tell including:   *‘They might be afraid that they did something wrong and will get into trouble’*  *‘They might be afraid of the bully’*  *‘The upstander might be afraid the bully will lie and say ‘I did not do that’*  *‘They might be scared their friends won’t like them anymore for being a ‘tell-tale’..*  *‘The person experiencing bullying behaviour might be afraid of being ‘kicked out’ of the friend group.’*  *‘They might be scared that somebody might do something bad to them for telling’*  Adults will be conscious of these barriers to telling and will make it clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly   * We ensure that pupils know **who to tell and how to tell,** e.g. **any trusted adult** within the school e.g, direct approach to the teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class. Hand note up with homework. Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf. The Stay Safe message of identifying one or more trusted adults to tell is promoted all year round. * We ensure our Mobile phone Policy is adhered to: Switch off his/her mobile phone and place in school bag. (The class teacher must receive a written note from the parent to advise that their child has a mobile phone in their possession. The school takes no responsibility for theft or loss). The phone is confiscated for one week and kept with the Principal or Deputy Principal, if used in school buildings or school yards. Parents are informed through Aladdin. * Our School Internet Security System does not allow school access to Social Media such as Facebook, Snap Chat etc. Children in our school are too young to access these Social MediaSites but parents/guardians need to be vigilant. In the event of an accusation of bullying among our students through social media sites, outside the school setting, parents will be notified. The Gardaí may need to intervene if the issue becomes too difficult for school personnel to deal with, quickly and positively. * Internet access in our school is strictly under teacher/SNA supervision only.   **Relationships and Partnerships**   * The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. Moyderwell Mercy PS will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence. * In continuing to develop prevention strategies, Moyderwell Mercy PS will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and further engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies * We support the active participation of students in school life through the work of our Student Council. Our Student Council (3rd to 6th class) meet regularly and discuss and provide feedback on new initiatives and policy and support events in the school. They organise structured games on the yard for our infant classes, modelling and supporting turn taking and positive, kind interactions. * The active participation of parents in school life is also valued and supported though our links with our Parents’ Association, our self-sustaining Parent Support group who meet weekly and through other events and initiatives supported by the HSCL in our school. Home visits and connection to Aladdin, our school app, ensure we partner with all parents in our school community and actively listen to their voice. * We engaged parents and students in actively contributing to the formation of the Student Friendly Accessible Anti Bullying Policy to make them active participants in the promotion of and discussion of useful ways to identify and reduce bullying behaviour and to highlight procedures and how to deal with it if it does occur. * We foster good relations with local preschools and secondary schools to support the smooth and positive transition of our students to Moyderwell and on to secondary schools. * Close relations are maintained with local sports clubs e.g. basketball, soccer and GAA so our students can benefit from coaching in school and have the opportunities to engage in extracurricular activities. * We partner with NEPS, SCP and with Community supports such as SW Counselling, Jigsaw (For children over 12) Kerry Adolescent Counselling Service (for children over 11) to support pupils who display, witness or experience bullying behaviour.   **Curriculum**   * The full implementation of the Social, Personal, Health Education (SPHE) which involves building up their self-esteem, and helping children to learn to communicate, make decisions and express feelings in an appropriate way. * The full implementation of the Stay Safe Programme, learning to deal with negative attention including bullying behaviours. * The full implementation of Relationships and Sexual Education (RSE) to enhance the personal development, self-esteem and well-being of the children in our care and to help them to develop healthy friendships and relationships including family, peers, superiors, members of opposite sex, authority figures, fostering an understanding of, and a healthy attitude to human relationships and sexuality in a moral, spiritual and social framework. * School wide delivery of lessons on personal safety/resilience and positive relationships from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, Relationships and Sexual Education Programmes. * Mainstream class teachers use circletime to enable students to share their thoughts and feelings in a safe space, and at times to enable a debrief after yard. It is used to promote restorative approaches and as a bullying prevention strategy. * In collaboration with SCP a Lifeskills programme is delivered annually to pupils in fourth and fifth classes and a transfer programme is delivered to our sixth classes to support their transition to secondary school. * Where available, Continuous Professional Development opportunities are sourced and promoted to staff to support the continued delivery of these programmes: Friends for Life Programme, Fun Friends programme. Incredible Years including Dina School, Restorative Practice. It can be a challenge to ensure a percentage of staff are trained in these programmes. * Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level as the school requires. These 8 lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyberbullying. * The school specifically considers the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately. Social stories and Programmes such as Zippy’s Friends, Emotion Coaching and Zones of Regulation are used to support this along with visuals and regulation tools. * Whole staff professional development on bullying such as those delivered at the half day closure on May 23rd 2025 to ensure that all staff develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils’ lives and the need to respond to its prevention and intervention.   **Policy and Planning:**   * Bí Cineálta policy 2025 * Accessible Student Friendly Bí Cineálta policy 2025 * Effective leadership is a key component of the above policies with Principal, Deputy Principal, DLP, DDLP, and all middle management focused on supporting the implementation of this policy.   The following policies support and complement the implemention of our Bí Cineálta policy:   * Code of Behaviour * Child Safeguarding Statement * Critical Incident Policy * Supervision Policy 2025 * Internet Safety Policy * Attendance Policy * Visitors Policy * School Outings/Excursions * SPHE Policy * RSE Policy * Complaints Procedures * GDPR procedures, to include safe storage of records of bullying on Aladdin. * Mobile phone Policy is adhered to: Switch off his/her mobile phone and place in school bag. (The class teacher must receive a written note from parent to advise that their child has a mobile phone in their possession. The school takes no responsibility for theft or loss). The phone is confiscated for one week and kept with the Principal or Deputy Principal, if used in school buildings or school yards. The parent is informed through Aladdin. * As stated in the School Policy for School Tours/Excursions (January 2017), the above statement is policy, even on daily school outings, except for overnight excursions i.e. The RDS Primary Science Fair in Dublin, where limited access to personal mobile devices is allowed in consultation with Adult Group Leader, and absolutely no internet, Wi-Fi or use of apps which require data is permitted. Where appropriate photographs are taken, these may only be shared privately with the people in the photograph after the excursion, if one wishes. All downloads (music, videos, games must be age-appropriate, and it is the responsibility of the parent to oversee, before the outing takes place).   **Preventing Cyber Bullying Behaviour:**  Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour. Moyderwell Mercy PS strives to proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments. Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:  • Implementing the SPHE curriculum  • Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship  • Using resources shared in the Bí Cineálta Resources folder in our Shared Drive such as Digi Duck for the younger classes or Webwise and Digitown for the older classes.  • Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online  • Developing 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 who are responsible for overseeing their children’s activities online\*  • Celebrating a Safer Internet Day annually to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour  \* (Note: The digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their date. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. Children between 13 and 16 must have parental permission to sign up to social media services. Most social media platforms have a minimum age requirement and for the majority of these, it is 13 years old. Therefore, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account).  **Identity Based Bullying**  Moyderwell Mercy PS will implement education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and to explicitly address the issues of identity-based bullying including **racist bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying, sexist bullying and sexual harassment.** A padlet of resources with initiatives and programmes to address cyber bullying, racist bullying and gender based bullying is stored in the Moyderwell Shared Google Drive in the Bí Cineálta shared folder, and is available and promoted to all staff. Staff are regularly reminded of the availability of these. The digital folder of resources and hardcopy resources are added to by members of the SPHE team as they become available/ come to their attention.  Staff are also provided with the link to Oide resources to prevent identity based bullying [https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/resources-for-primary-schools](https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/resources-for-primary-schools/). Where issues of identity based bullying arise, the school will deal with them at an individual, group, class, or whole school context in consultation with the parents/guardians of the children involved. The age and stage of the children's development will be taken into consideration |

Section B: 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):** |
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| The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.  Our recently reviewed Supervision policy (2025) provides a framework that effectively ensures, as far as is practicable, the care and safety of children during arrival, dismissal, while moving in corridors, at play on the yard or while engaged in school related activities.  It also ensures we observe and monitor behavioural patterns outside the confines of the classroom.  This policy was discussed at AP Led staff meetings in January 2025 and teachers and SNAS discussed the importance of remaining always alert and vigilant so that all areas of the school and yard are adequately monitored at all times.  The deputy principal compiles a roster of staff to ensure there are always an adequate ratio of adults supervising. Yards are rotated and rostered by the deputy principal also. Supervision is rostered for entry points and yards and corridors on arrival. Class teachers accompany children until they are handed over to the care of their parents on dismissal. The leadership team are rostered to supervise bus children at dismissal until the bus arrives.    **Special Provisions**  a) Out of school activities such as games, swimming, tours, homework club, back up provisions are put in place to ensure there are always adequate levels of supervision.  b) Unless unavoidable, teachers never leave their classroom unsupervised. If necessary, cover is always put in place.  c) Children who are withdrawn from their mainstream classroom for Learning Support are collected at the classroom door by the relevant teacher.  c) On wet days, children remain in their classes under the normal supervision Rota.  d) When visiting teachers such as P.E., Music teachers take over a class, the school encourages teachers to maintain a presence.  The school has up to date security access systems which ensure that children cannot be unsupervised in the school grounds and visitors cannot access the school without permission. |

**Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

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

• **The class teacher** will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form on Aladdin. He/she will liaise with the principal about cases under investigation or review.

• **The class teacher** will follow up after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased and liaise with the principal about cases under investigation or review

• **All staff**, including non-teaching staff will be **vigilant to bullying behaviour** and will report concerns to the class teacher.

• The Principal will inform the Board of Management of incidents of bullying.

• AP2 Bí Cineálta Policy Co-Ordinator and members of the SPHE team are available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist class teachers in addressing concerns.

When bullying 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 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):** |
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| Moyderwell Mercy PS will work in partnership with our patron, board of management, staff, students and their parents to develop and implement our Bí Cineálta policy.  **The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved, rather than to apportion blame. The school’s procedures are consistent with this approach. Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent(s)/guardians) understand this approach from the outset.**  General Principles:   * 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 (see **Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures)** * 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 support needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.   **Requests to take no action (Bí Cineálta Procedures 6.3)**  A student who reports bullying behaviour may ask a member of staff not to do anything and just “look out” for them due to not wanting to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They might 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 behaviour. * It must be made clear to the pupil that other parties may need to be informed for their welfare. * Parents may also make the school aware of bullying behaviour and specifically request that no action is to be taken by the school. Parents should put this in writing to the school. * The school will consider each such request on a case-by-case basis while reserving the right, if determined based on the circumstances, to address the bullying behaviour through the Bí Cineálta procedures and/or the Code of Behaviour where appropriate.   **Incidents of Bullying Which Occur Outside of School (Bí Cineálta 2.6)**  In accordance with the Bí Cineálta procedures the 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, Moyderwell Mercy PS will deal with it in accordance with our Bí Cineálta policy.  **Cyberbullying**   * Bullying behaviour, including cyberbullying behaviour, which has occurred outside of school can often continue in school. * Where a student engages in cyberbullying behaviour when in school, the school must address the bullying behaviour * Where a student experiences cyberbullying behaviour in school, the school must address the bullying behaviour. * In the case of cyberbullying, although the hurtful message may have been sent outside of school hours, the student may view the message while in school. Where this happens, Moyderwell Mercy PS must address the bullying behaviour.   **Determining Whether Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred**  The class teacher will use the questions *what, where, when and why?* to investigate allegations of bullying.  If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged with individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved may be met as a group.  At the group meeting, each student will be asked for their account of what has happened to ensure a shared understanding of what has occurred. This may be asked for in writing. Each student will be supported after the meeting.  Following the investigation, the following three questions will be considered to determine if bullying has occurred.  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?  **Note: One off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single, hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times.**  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 following procedures.  **If the answer to any of these questions is** **No**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school’s Code of Behaviour.  **What is not bullying behaviour?**   * Accidental or reckless behaviour * One off offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power * Disagreements between students due to friendship or other issues * Non-deliberate behaviours of students with special educational needs (Bí Cineálta Section 2.2)   **Approaches to Addressing Bullying Behaviour (as per. Appendix C of the Bí Cineálta Procedures)**   * The school’s procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows: * In investigating and dealing with bullying the teacher(s) will use the three questions outlined above to determine whether bullying has occurred and will determine and decide what type of bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved. * All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the class teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report instances of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. * Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, caretakers and cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to the class teacher. * Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying reported by pupils, staff or parents, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non- aggressive manner. * On being informed of an alleged incident of bullying, the class teacher will first interview the pupil(s) experiencing bullying and discuss the feelings which they have experienced because of the bullying behaviour. * Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved. * When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour the class teacher will seek answers to questions of *what, where, who, when and why.* * If a group is involved each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved may be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about the other's statements. * Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after an interview by the teacher. * Where the class teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the perspective of the pupil being bullied. He or she will be asked to commit or promise that the bullying will stop. If this is the case, no other sanction will apply. * Parents 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 of the students 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. * It is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation. * A record should be kept of the engagement with all involved. This record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bi Cineálta procedures), where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents. The record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour. * The student’s file (and those of others involved) should be added to by uploading the recording template to their Aladdin file. The principal should be informed when this happens. A template for recording all alleged incidents of bullying is provided in Appendix B of this policy and will be provided as a template on Aladdin.   **Reviewing and Monitoring Progress**  Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to bringing them together at a later date, if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.  The school will maintain care for the pupil who has experienced bullying over time. This will be done by the class teacher speaking to the child 20 days after the incident to check on their continuing welfare. The child’s parents will also be consulted. The outcome of this interaction will be documented and acted on by the class teacher and the date that it has been determined the bullying has ceased will be recorded. Any engagement with external support services i.e. NEPS, Counselling services, Art Therapy etc. will also be documented. The principal will be informed of the outcome of this review.  If it is determined that Bullying **has not ceased** after twenty days, the class teacher will review the strategies that have been implemented with students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying has ceased. If the student who is displaying bullying behaviour continues to do so, sanctions proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying behaviour, will be imposed will be imposed as per the Code of Behaviour. It will be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required that this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.  If a parent is not happy with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools*, they will be referred to the school’s Complaints Procedure.  If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they 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. |

| **Support for Pupils who Experience, Witness and Display Bullying Behaviour**  **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):** |
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| The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.  **Supporting pupils who have experienced bullying behaviour:**   * Ending the bullying behaviour, * Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils * Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils, * Indicating clearly that bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes, * Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations, * Making adequate counselling and other supports e.g., art therapy, Drawing and Talking to pupils who need it in a timely manner (subject to availability for the age group and available funding) * Helping pupils who have experienced bullying to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school). * Drawing on the resources and advice of support services such as School Completion Programme, NEPS, OIDE, WebWise, DCU Anti Bullying Centre and TUSLA.   **Supporting Upstanders (Those who witness and stand up for those who are bullied):**   * Encouraging pupils to put themselves in the shoes of the bullied pupils and ask how they can help * Encouraging pupils to tell a trusted adult and communicating that reporting an incident of bullying gets children ‘out of trouble’ not ‘in to trouble’ * Valuing and celebrating upstanders as a school community:   + Posters Displayed around the school encouraging children to be Upstanders.   + School **Assemblies:** Share positive stories to reinforce upstander behaviour **and a**cknowledge students who demonstrate kindness and courage.   + **Classroom Incentives:** Use special privileges for students who show leadership in standing up against bullying.   **Supporting Bullying Pupils:**   * Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a ‘clean sheet,’ - Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honorable thing and giving them praise for this, * Facilitating appropriate supports (Support from SCP project worker, Social skills group, Art Therapy) or Counselling (where possible) to help those who need it to learn other ways of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others, * Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school), * Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils’ feelings of self-worth, * In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child. * Drawing on the resources and advice of support services such as School Completion Programme, NEPS, OIDE, WebWise, DCU Anti Bullying Centre and TUSLA. |

**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**. **The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented.** If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

# Section D: Oversight

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

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

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

Signed: Date: (Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: Date: (Principal)

**Appendices**:

**A**: Student Friendly Accessible Policy, **B:** Recording Template, **C:** Oversight Report to BOM, **D:** Template for Risk Analysis and Annual Review, **E:** Notification of Annual Review to BOM