Scoil Ide Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scoil Ide 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.

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

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

Definition of bullying

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.

There are many different methods of bullying behaviour, including physical, verbal and relational forms, and it can take place online and offline. There are also many different motives for bullying behaviour which can be understood on an individual level (for example, desire for dominance, status, revenge) and/or on a societal level (for example, identity based bullying such as racist, disablist, sexist or LGBTQ+ bullying). Bullying behaviour in schools is often strongly influenced by attitudes, behaviours, norms and power dynamics that are deeply engrained in our society.

The core elements of the definition are further described below:

Targeted behaviour

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the student displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example, personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example. withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and long-term negative impact on the student experiencing the bullying behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying but, importantly, must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

> Repeated behaviour

Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online, and which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

> Imbalance of power

In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity, technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted student to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour

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

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

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

Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying. These behaviours, while not defined as bullying can be distressing. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

How bullying behaviour occurs

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

Direct bullying behaviour:

- Physical bullying behaviour:

Physical bullying behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While students can often engage in "mess fights" they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

Personal property can be a focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, schoolbooks and other learning material. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

- Verbal bullying behaviour:

Continual name-calling directed at a student which hurts, insults or humiliates the student should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance; for example, size or clothes worn or gender identity. It can also refer to a student's accent, distinctive voice characteristics, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.

- Written bullying behaviour:

Written bullying behaviour includes writing insulting remarks about a student in public places, passing around notes about or drawings of a student.

- Extortion

Bullying behaviour can involve extortion. Extortion is where something is obtained through force or threats.

Indirect bullying behaviour:

- Exclusion

Exclusion bullying behaviour occurs where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.

- Relational

Relational bullying behaviour occurs when a student's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. Common forms include control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"; a group of students ganging up against one student; non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a student; giving a student the "silent treatment"; and the deliberate manipulation of friendship groups to make someone unpopular.

Online bullying behaviour:

Online bullying behaviour (cyberbullying) is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, e-mail, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This form of bullying behaviour can include:

- sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
- posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent

- making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students

- excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game

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.

Where bullying behaviour can occur

Bullying behaviour can happen anywhere, online or offline and at any time, but there are certain places and times where bullying behaviour can be more likely to occur.

- School yard: Bullying behaviour can take place in the school yard. Many common school yard games present opportunities for bullying behaviour because of their physical nature. Continuing provocation may lead to a physical fight and in some cases the student experiencing bullying behaviour may appear to be the aggressor as they give vent to their frustration.
- In the classroom: Bullying behaviour can take place in class. It may occur subtly through glances, looks, sniggers or may take the more overt form of physical intimidation or deliberate isolation. Bullying behaviour may also occur as pupils / classes move through the school for different activities, teaching or events.
- Outside School: 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, the school will deal with it in accordance with this policy.
- Online bullying (cyberbullying): Access to technology means that online bullying behaviour can happen anytime, and the student's home is no longer a safe place. The nature of these technologies means that digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and the content is almost impossible to delete permanently.

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 Racism13 as "a 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"14

- poverty bullying: behaviour that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources

- religious identity bullying: behaviour that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity

- sexist bullying: behaviour 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

Students who may be more at risk of experiencing bullying behaviour

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.

Scoil Ide will consider the composition of their student population when identifying who may be more at risk of experiencing bullying behaviour so that preventative strategies can be tailored to support students at risk. At-risk groups can include:

- students who have additional learning needs
- students with disabilities
- students from an ethnic minority background and migrant students
- students who are members of the Traveller and Roma communities
- students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+)
- students who practise or display a religious faith
- students experiencing homelessness
- students experiencing health or mental health issues

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	Oct 2024 Feb 2025 March 2025	Staff Meeting Half Day Closure Staff Survey
Students	Jan 2025 March 2025 June 2025	Student Council Discussion and Poster Competition Pupil Survey Student Council – Student Friendly version of Policy
Parents	Nov 2025 March 2025 June 2025	Parents informed at PA meeting Parent Survey Policy to be sent to all parents
Board of Management	May 2025 June 2025	Bi Cinealta procedures and video sent to BOM BOM - Policy reviewed
Wider School Community as appropriate	May 2025	Secretary and caretaker consulted.
Date policy was approved:	June 3rd 2025	Policy brought before BOM and ratified
Date policy was last reviewed:	June 3rd 2025	
Date policy will next be reviewed	Nov 2026	

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by this school.

In addition to our strategies to address general bullying behaviours, these prevention strategies include strategies aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate:

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

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

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

In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will take as much time as is practicable listening to young persons and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and further engagement, by the school, young persons and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and will help inform future prevention strategies.

Culture and Environment

We strive to :

- Create a positive and inclusive school culture and environment, where all students and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported;

- Develop and maintain relationships between all members of the school community that are based on respect, care, integrity and trust;

- Ensure open communication between the patron, the Board of Management, school staff, our students and their parents so as to foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibility in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour;

- Develop and maintain a school culture where bullying is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour;
- Promote kindness and inclusion among our students
- Promote parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated;
- Support the idea that our school is a telling environment;
- Promote the concept of a trusted adult to encourage students to report bullying behaviour;
- Create safe spaces in our school building and yards, ensuring maximum visibility and ease of supervision;
- Ensure appropriate supervision is in place at all time when students are attending school or attending school activities.

Ways in which we work to achieve these goals are as follows:

- Staff are briefed on the uniform approach we must take to handle all reports of bullying – this is distributed to staff and a copy is displayed on the Staff Room notice board for ease of access also;
- Anti Bullying week will be celebrated each year in the school, supporting activities such as

  Random acts of Kindness, curriculum activities, extra-curricular activities, anti-bullying poster competition, etc
- Playworks – Students from 4th and 5th class volunteer as yard coaches to help facilitate playworks
- Student Council – Through class representatives and council meetings, facilitated by a member of staff, the particular targets above can be regularly reflected on, developed and implemented;
- Parents' Association – The PA helps to promote parents as active partners in their child's education, in fostering an environment where bullying is not acceptable, and in organising events for students and parents which focus on developing and maintaining positive relationships;
- Stay safe and SPHE lessons focusing on positive behaviour form part of curricular content in all classes;
- Staff adhere to the concept of positive reinforcement with all pupils.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils – see Supervision Policy
- Implementation of a Voluntary smartphone agreement;
- Maintaining 'Worry Boxes' in each of our classrooms;

- Ensuring the availability of suitable reading material and textbooks which represent lived experiences, including various cultures, ethnicities, sexual orientations, learning difficulties, physical challenges and family dynamics.

Curriculum (teaching and learning)

We strive to:

- Provide teaching and learning which is collaborative and respectful;
- To ensure that the lesson content offered to pupils provides opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity.

Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy;
- The SPHE Curriculum, including Stay Safe and RSE, are taught in full to each class level, on a 2 year, roatational basis.
- Through providing pupil lessons directly focused on internet safety eg. Webwise
- By holding an Internet safety Day in the school;
- Through providing opportunities for pupils to engage in online learning in a safe and supportive environment to foster positive online communication skillsets and behaviours;
- SPHE lesson content will include a focus on fostering students' well-being, self-confidence and sense of belonging and on developing students' sense of personal responsibility for their own behaviours and actions;
- Through appropriate content in the SESE Curriculum;
- Curricular and extra-curricular activities which provide opportunities for students to develop a sense of self-worth are provided;
- Acknowledging and celebrating our diverse school population through art, displays, photographs, school events, noticeboard displays, announcements etc.
- By providing regular opportunities for staff professional learning;
- Effective SET and EAL provision
- Use of Circle-Time/ group-work/ pair work
- Implementation of in-class model of SET Teaching;
- Inter-class collaboration

- Grow in Love Programme

Policy and planning

We strive to :

- Ensure that the wellbeing of the school community is at the heart of all school policies and plans
- Ensure the development, implementation and review of the school's Bí Cinealta policy and student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy are completed in line with current procedures
- Ensure that an Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision policy, Special Education Teaching Policy and Code of Behaviour are all developed and implemented
- Ensure that whole school curricular plans include content and resources which support the implementation of the Bi Cinealta policy
- Promote effective leadership across the Principal, Deputy Principal and all middle management roles which supports the implementation of this policy
- Ensure that the lesson content offered to pupils provides opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity.

Modelling respectful behaviour across the school community

- We have an up-to-date and easily accessible Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying Policy – available on our Shared drive, Website, Available in Principal's office on request
  Prominently displayed Pupil Version of our Bí Cineálta Policy – in foyer.

School Culture and Ethos

- We promote a school ethos of respect, inclusion and diversity
- We celebrate difference eg. Intercultural Week, International Women's Day – this list is not prescriptive
- We display inclusive materials around the school reflecting diverse identities and backgrounds, eg. Variety of books in our library, Anti-Bullying Poster competition each year – entries are displayed on rotational basis throughout the school

Continuous Professsional Development

- We encourage ongoing CPD for teachers and Snas on :

  Recognising and responding to different types of bullying

- Supporting LGBTQ+ children and children from ethnic minorities
- Safeguards in place to ensure safe and appropriate online behaviour.
- We use resources from PDST/OIDE, Webwise

SPHE and RSE Curriculum Integration

- We use the SPHE and RSE curriculum to:
- Teach empathy, inclusion, respect for diversity and digital citizenship
- Use resources like Making the Links, Walk Tall, Stay Safe and Webwise HTML Heroes.

Student Voice

- Involve children in creating Children's version of Bí Cineálta
- Involve children in creating classroom rules and charters against bullying.
- Use circle time, group discussions, student councils to promote inclusion and mutual respect
- Provide safe ways in which students can inform staff if they have concerns – eg. Worry boxes and yearly surveys.

Online Safety Education

- Teach digital literacy and online etiquette through lessons on cyberbullying awareness and prevention.
- Use age-appropriate lessons from Webwise.ie
- Involve parents in online safety education

Active Supervision and Reporting Mechanisms – See Supervision Policy

- Ensure staff actively supervise break times
- Create clear, child-friendly reporting systems – eg. Worry boxes, anti-bullying posters offering advice
- Keep detailed records of all bullying incidents and follow the school's response procedure

Parent/Guardian Engagement

- Send home information on bullying awareness and prevention
- Encourage open communication between school and home

- Provide guidance for managing children's online activity at home – Parents Hub Webwise.

Partnerships with External Agencies

- Collaborate with organisations like Show Racism the Red Card, Webwise, PDST/Oide, Tusla, Salthill School Liaison Gard

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): Please see our Supervision Policy.

Culture and Environment

A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. We aim to ensure Scoil Ide is a space where students and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.

Relationships between all members of the school community should be based on respect, care, integrity and trust. Open communication between our patron, Board of management, school staff students and their parents help to foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibilities in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

The school leadership team influences the school culture and set the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

Each member of our 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 in Scoil Ide can shape our school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all.

Parents as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.

A Telling Environment

Scoil Ide supports a "telling' environment . Students are encouraged to feel comfortable to talk about concerns regarding bullying behaviour.

A Trusted Adult

Students are supported and encouraged to report perceived bullying behaviour to a trusted adult in our school. The trusted adult should reassure the student that they have done the right thing by reporting the behaviour. The trusted adult should, without delay, inform the child's class teacher and/or the principal/deputy principal

Creating Safe Spaces in our School

Remain vigilant and mindful of preventing the development of hidden spaces in our school.

We ensure that visual barriers on windows , such as posters, are not blocking views of corridors/yard etc.

Staff are expected to ensure they have a vantage point which provides visibility of all the yard area while on supervision duty. When supervising indoors, staff patrol the corridors, checking each classroom.

Supervision

Appropriate supervision is an important measure to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. We take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of our students and to supervise students when attending school or school activities. Please refer to our Supervision Policy.

Curriculum – Teaching and Learning

We promote teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful. We provide opportunities for students to develop a sense of self-worth through both curricular and extra-curricular programmes. SPHE and RSE curricula aim to foster students' well-being, self-confidence and sense of belonging and to develop students' sense of personal responsibility for their own behaviour and actions. Students social and emotional learning can be improved through the SPHE curriculum.

Ways in which we work to achieve these goals are as follows:

- Staff are briefed on the uniform approach we must take to handle all reports of bullying – this is distributed to staff and a copy is displayed on the Staff Room notice board for ease of access also;

- Anti Bullying week will be celebrated each year in the school, supporting activities such as

Random acts of Kindness, curriculum activities, extra-curricular activities,Anti-Bullying Poster competition, etc.

- Sixth Class Prefects are each assigned a class to help supervise on wet days and when classes line up in the yard. Students in Fourth and Fifth classes volunteer to run Playworks for younger classes on yard.

- Student Council – Through class representatives and council meetings, facilitated by a member of staff, the particular targets above can be regularly reflected on, developed and implemented.

- Parents' Association – The PA helps to promote parents as active partners in their child's education, in fostering an environment where bullying is not acceptable, and in organising events for students and parents which focus on developing and maintaining positive relationships.

- Stay safe and SPHE lessons focusing on positive behaviour form part of curricular content in all classes.

- Staff adhere to the concept of positive reinforcement with all pupils.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
- Implementation of a Voluntary smartphone agreement.
- Maintaining 'Worry Boxes' in our classrooms.
- Ensuring the availability of suitable reading material and textbooks which represent lived experiences, including various cultures, ethnicities, sexual orientations, learning difficulties, physical challenges and family dynamics.

Policy and Planning

The wellbeing of our school community is at the heart of school policies and plans. As well as this policy, several of our policies support implementation of our Bí Cineálta Policy, eg. Scoil Ide Acceptable Use Policy, Special Education Teaching Policy, Code Of Behaviour Policy.

Staff are encouraged to engage in appropriate teacher professional learning courses – this can support school staff to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

In Scoil Ide, we support the participation of students in the development and implementation of school policies and plans.

We strive to:

- Ensure that the wellbeing of the school community is at the heart of all school policies and plans ,to ensure the development, implementation and review of the school's Bí Cinealta policy and student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy are completed in line with current procedures.
- Ensure that an Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision policy, Special Education Teaching Policy and Code of Behaviour are all developed and implemented.
- Ensure that whole school curricular plans include content and resources which support the implementation of the Bi Cinealta policy.
- Promote effective leadership across the Principal, Deputy Principal and all middle management roles which supports the implementation of this policy.

- To ensure that the lesson content offered to pupils provides opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity.

Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy;
- The SPHE Curriculum, including Stay Safe and RSE, are taught in full to each class level, every year;
- Through providing pupil lessons directly focused on internet safety;
- By holding an Internet safety Day in the school;
- Through providing opportunities for pupils to engage in online learning in a safe and supportive environment to foster positive online communication skillsets and behaviours;
- SPHE lesson content will include a focus on fostering students' well-being, self-confidence and sense of belonging and on developing students' sense of personal responsibility for their own behaviours and actions;
- Through appropriate content in the SESE Curriculum;
- Curricular and extra-curricular activities which provide opportunities for students to develop a sense of self-worth are provided;
- Acknowledging and celebrating our diverse school population through art, displays, photographs, school events, noticeboard displays, announcements etc.
- By providing regular opportunities for staff professional learning;
- Effective SET and EAL provision;
- Implementation of in-class model of SET Teaching;
- Inter-class collaboration
- Grow in Love Programme

Relationships and Partnerships

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behavior. These connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as student councils, Green Flag /Active Flag committee members, Parents Association…

We engage in several initiatives which aim to strengthen relationships and partnerships between members of our school community eg. Friends for Life Programme, promoting acts of kindness,

supporting the active participation of parents in school life, including those who may find it daunting to engage with the school due to being unfamiliar with the education system or due to language or cultural barriers.

Preventing cyberbullying behaviour

We in Scoil Ide promote digital literacy, digital citizenship and we foster safe online environments. We have a Ban on SmartPhone Voluntary agreement in place. Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following:

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum
- We have an acceptable use policy for technology
- We refer to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in our Code Of Behaviour.
- Parents are invited to sign our Voluntary Ban on Smart Phones until after 6th class – on a yearly basis.
- We promote and occasionally host online safety events for parents (who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online)
- We hold an Internet Safety Day every year to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.
- Visits from our school Garda , discussing Online Safety.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

All class teachers to address bullying behaviour involving children from their class.

Principal - Mr. Casserly

Deputy Principal – Mrs. Ostheimer

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):

The whole school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour. We will work in partnership with our patron, board of management, staff, students and parents to develop and implement our Bí Cineálta Policy.

Approach

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behavior and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the students involved, rather than to apportion blame.

When addressing bullying behaviour teachers should:

> 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

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

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 behavior is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. (See Ch2 of Bí Cineálta procedures for detailed definition.)

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the following questions should be considered:

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 eg. A hurtful message posted on social media.

If the answer to any of the above 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.

When identifying if bullying behavior has occurred teachers should consider what, where, when and why?

- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first
- Thereafter, all students involved should 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 be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s).

Where bullying behaviour has occurred:

The following principles must 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 of those involved

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 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. The school will be mindful of communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents – eg. Literacy, digital literacy or language barriers.

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.

Requests to take no action

On occasion, a student reporting bullying behaviour asks that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than 'look out' for them. (They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them). In this instance, 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 will be informed of the situation. If parents request that the school take no action, they must put this in writing . However, while acknowledging the parent's request, the school 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 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 behavior, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved. Day One of the twenty days is not the day the alleged bullying behaviour is reported, it is the day it is decided that it is bullying behaviour.

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

Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, the school will consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Recording Bullying Behaviour

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded. See Appendix 1.

The record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour - Section 2.5 and 2.7 of Bí Cineálta Procedures. It should include where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students 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. It should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this. The date of each engagement must be documented and the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased. Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.

These records should be retained in accordance with the school's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations.

Where a Student Support File exists for a student, the school may decide to place a copy of the record on the student's support file, in order to assist the SET team in providing a consistent and holistic response to support the wellbeing of the students involved.

Complaint process

If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.

In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and/or parent may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Supports

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):

Supports available to help prevent and address bullying behaviour include:

NEPS, Oide, Webwise, NPC, DCU Anti-Bullying Centre, Tusla.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

For those who experience bullying:

- Provide a safe space to talk and be listened to in confidence.
- Ensure incidents are taken seriously, investigated promptly, and followed up with appropriate support.
- Reassure the pupil that they are not to blame and that action will be taken.
- Offer guidance on how to respond to future incidents.
- Involve parents/guardians where appropriate and keep them informed of developments.
- Support the pupil in rebuilding confidence and relationships with peer
- Engage support strategies such as social skills groups, circle time, yard buddies, and daily checkins.
- Provide SET and/or SNA support where necessary.
- Where a Student Support File or Plan exists, update it with relevant response strategies.

For those who witness bullying:

- Encourage a culture of reporting and ensure pupils know who to talk to.
- Acknowledge the important role of bystanders and empower them to safely intervene or seek help.
- Provide guidance and reassurance to those who report bullying, ensuring they are supported and protected.
- Encourage students to speak up when witnessing bullying behaviour.
- Reinforce the concept of "a trusted adult" as a key support strategy
- Address the behaviour as an opportunity for learning and change.
- Engage the pupil in reflection to understand the impact of their actions.
- Support development of empathy and social understanding.
- Involve parents/guardians and maintain communication.
- Apply relevant Code of Behaviour measures, ensuring they are age-appropriate and proportionate.
- Update or develop Behaviour Support Plans if not already in place.
- Provide tailored interventions for emotional regulation, social skills..

Whole-school approaches to support all pupils:

- Deliver discreet lessons revisiting SPHE content, school rules, and mission and vision statements.
- Prioritise pupil safety and wellbeing.
- Ensure inclusive strategies for at-risk groups, including students with additional needs, disabilities, or from minority backgrounds.
- Celebrate diversity visibly in the school environment through posters, literature etc.
- Challenge stereotypes and foster a culture of kindness and inclusion.
- Support communication with families of students from ethnic minorities or with English as an additional language.
- Facilitate student participation in shaping school culture through student councils, wellbeing committees etc.

- Engage external supports when necessary (NEPS, Oide, NCSE, Webwise, Tusla, National Parents' Council, DCU Anti-Bullying Centre).
- Encourage and support staff participation in relevant professional learning.

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

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:_____ (Chairperson of Board of Management).

Date:_____

Signed:_____ (Principal).

Date:_____