Anti Bullying (Bí Cineálta) Policy

Updated June 2025, next due for review September 2026

Person Responsible for updating policy: Head of Pastoral Care, Head of Pupil Welfare

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Introduction

The Board of Management of St. Columba's College 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.

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. The core definition above sets out clear criteria to help school communities to prevent, correctly identify and address bullying among students. Alleged incidents of bullying are however often complex and must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The core elements of the definition are further described below:

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the following questions will 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?

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 College'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 can't 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 are provided for within the College's Code of Behaviour.

Criminal Behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years.

Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images.

If bullying behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence, it may be considered assault.

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

If bullying behaviour involves sexual harassment or sexual assault, this may also be considered criminal behaviour.

An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour.

Types of Bullying behaviour deemed to be inappropriate:

(this list is not exhaustive)

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 - The "look" - Invasion of personal space - A combination of any of the types listed. - Exclusion
Cyber	- Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation - Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual - Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name - Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight - Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online - Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images - Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group - Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety - Silent telephone/mobile phone calls - Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls - Abusive text messages - Abusive email

	- Abusive communication on social networks e.g., Facebook/Instagram/Tik Tok/Be Real/Twitter/YouTube etc. or on games consoles - Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures - Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
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).
Homophobic and Transphobic	- Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation - Taunting a person because of their 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	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: - Malicious gossip - Isolation & exclusion - Ignoring - Excluding from the group - Taking someone's friends away "Bitching" - Spreading rumours - Breaking confidence - Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear - The "look" - Use of terminology such as "nerd" in a derogatory way

Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability – Learning Difficulties and Gifted	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

The Policy applies to the following:

- When students are on the College grounds.
- When students are travelling to and from the College on the school bus.
- When students are on school tours and trips.
- When students are in school uniform.
- When students are engaged in extracurricular activities organised by the College.
- The College is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the College.
- Where bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

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	24/3/25 28/4/25 27/5/25	Survey, Half-day training, Review of policy before publication.
Students	24/3/25 8/5/25	Survey Students' Council
Parents	24/3/25 9/5/25 31/5/25	Survey Meeting with the chair of PA. Draft copy of policy sent to the chair of PA
Board of Management	11/6/25	Review of policy before publication
Date policy was approved: June 11th 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: June 11th 2025		

Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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

Culture and Environment	Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)
- A telling culture - Culture of inclusion - Bullying Awareness days - Regular check-in surveys - Integrated approach to living arrangements in Houses. - College values are displayed around the campus - First form induction events - Whole school activities - table quiz, céilí. - Communal spaces - Whispering House - Staff lead by example - Posters - Anonymous online reporting form - College rules are listed in the Green Book - Library - inclusive themes and a wide range of authors **In addition to all of the above:** Racist bullying behaviour - Dining Hall - multicultural meals - SPHE Homophobic and transphobic bullying: - Display the LGBT+ flag - Create a safe and inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. - Educate students about the importance of respecting all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. - Guest speakers - SPHE / RSE Sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment - SPHE / RSE	Form I induction - Guest speakers - Student Support Team meetings - Code of conduct for the classroom - Diversity, equity and inclusion are underpinned in all subject areas. In addition to all of the above: Racism: - SPHE - History - English Homophobic and transphobic bullying: - SPHE - History - English Sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment: - SPHE Cyberbullying: - Guest speakers - SPHE - Computer Studies

Cyberbullying
- Digital device, social media and Internet Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils
- Mobile phones are removed for Forms I-IV.
- Guest speakers
- SPHE

Relationships and Partnerships	Policy and Planning
- House social events - Pupil voice - Pupils' Council - PA involvement - Academic tutors for seniors - House systems - Heads of House and House Captains - School counsellor - Zest Life partnership - Head of SEN visits to primary schools - Warden's students' lunches - Matron & School Nurses - Head of Pastoral Care (HPC) - Head of Pupil Welfare (HPW) - HMs primary point of contact with parents and guardians - NEPS and CAMHS - Links with the Board of Management, Fellows and Student Support Team - Parents' Charter - Guest speakers - Neurodiversity working group **In addition to all of the above:** Racism: - Speakers - Racism working group Homophobic and transphobic bullying: - SPHE & RSE - Foróige programme	- Anti-Bullying Policy, Digital device, social media and Internet Policy - Acceptable Use Policy for Pupils - Code of Behaviour, - Anti-Bullying Pledge. - Rules displayed in the Greenbook - Policies reviewed regularly - Posters of the policy posted publicly online and in Houses - Student Support Team - Staff Meetings - HMs' meeting - Pupils' Council - Continuous Professional Development of staff - Staff are mandated persons and have regular reminders of child protection procedures. - Staff are aware that children with SEN are more vulnerable. - Ancillary staff receive regular updates, and training when necessary. - Bí Cinéalta working group - SPHE and RSE policy **In addition to all of the above:** Racism: - Racism working group - Anti-bullying policy Homophobic and transphobic bullying: - SPHE and RSE policies

Sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment:
    ● SPHE and RSE
    ● Foróige programme
 	
Cyberbullying:
    ● Surveys
    ● Anonymous forms
	Sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment:
	    ● SPHE and RSE policies
	
	Cyberbullying:
	    ● Guest speakers for targeted talks on cyber safety
	    ● Content Filtering via HEA
	    ● Untangle content filtering software

Supervision and Monitoring

St. Columba's College has an obligation to provide, to the best of its ability, a safe environment for all our students. We believe students need a certain amount of personal freedom to encourage and foster independence and responsibility and furthermore it is impossible to supervise and monitor all students at all times. We expect that all students adhere to a standard of acceptable and respectful behaviour, whether in the presence of a member of staff, or not.

Most cases of bullying happen outside of class time. We are fortunate to have strong staff presence outside class time as many teachers are involved in afternoon and extra-curricular activities, additionally we have a boarding staff, and we have staff members who reside on the campus, however constant, incessant supervision and monitoring of all students at all times is neither possible nor desirable.

In addition to all the practices identified above under Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Planning and Policy and Relationships and Partnerships St. Columba's College has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place:

- Supervised Cloister queues for breakfast, breaks, lunch, supper and evening snack.
- A weekly schedule of staff are on duty to supervise the queue with the help of a College Prefect to monitor inside Dining Hall and the Lower Argyle. Any causes for concern are dealt with and reported to the relevant Housemaster / Housemistress (from now on this will be abbreviated to HM).
- 1st Form preps are supervised by a rota of senior students. A prep logbook will keep a record of any incidents that might lead to a pattern of behaviour.

- 2nd to 4th Form preps are supervised by a rota of teaching staff. A prep logbook will keep a record of any incidents that might lead to a pattern of behaviour. At times, second form preps will be supervised by senior students.
- 5th and 6th Form may study in the Library which is supervised by a member of staff. Otherwise, they are permitted to study in house. Here the HM will sporadically check on their behaviour.
- All staff are watchful and observe relationships between students in class, note absence patterns and let it be known that high standards of behaviour are always expected.
- Student Support Team – the team meets weekly and collates information from the Houses, teachers, the Clinic and the College counsellor. Action plans are then put in place to address any concerns that might have been raised in these meetings.
- Students are encouraged by their house staff to report any incident of bullying or unpleasant behaviour. They can speak to any of their house staff, to a house captain or monitor, or prefect. Of course, they can also report concerns to any other adult, or make an anonymous online report.
- Students with positions of responsibility in House regularly discuss any concerns they may have regarding students with their house staff.
- Members of Form V in each House undertake "lights duty" in the junior students' Dorms each evening on a rota system. A sixth former is on duty in House each evening. Older students are encouraged to visit junior Dorms on an ad hoc basis; these help to foster better communication between junior and senior students.
- A house staff member is on duty each evening, S/he visits each Dorm. This provides the opportunity for informal chat between staff and students and for students' concerns to be raised.
- Day boarders (Glen and Hollypark only) are allowed into Dorms and this helps to promote a better bond between them and boarders. They are encouraged to respect the personal space of those who board.
- A member of the House team in each of the Day Houses will greet students each morning and will lock up the house at the end of the school day. They will sporadically visit each house throughout the day to check on behaviour.
- Bullying behaviour can potentially happen both on, and on the way to and from, the sports pitches, courts and courses. To help prevent this, the coaching staff should ensure that they arrive on time, and preferably before a session begins. Students should also be punctual. Staff should be alert to any type of behaviour that might indicate that bullying has occurred on the way to, or during, the coaching session or match. It is important that coaching staff from outside the College are made aware of our policy and procedures. All are made aware of these on a regular basis.

- Bullying behaviour may occur when students are waiting for a teacher to arrive. Teachers must ensure that their classrooms are locked if they are leaving them; if there is a lesson in that room with another teacher who has not yet arrived, the students must wait outside where it is more likely that bullying behaviour will be spotted. Teachers should arrive on time for lessons.
- School trips/away matches: Students are made aware that our anti-bullying policy applies outside as well as inside the College, and the same level of awareness of bullying behaviour is required by teachers, coaches, etc.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- All HMs
- Head of Pastoral Care (HPC)
- Head of Pupil Welfare (HPW)
- Sub-Warden
- Warden

When bullying behaviour occurs, the College 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 College to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are underpinned by a restorative approach and are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Where a member of the teaching staff has a concern about a student being bullied, either as a result of a personal observation or as a result of receiving a report from a third party, the teacher should without delay refer the matter to the relevant HM.
- The teacher should fill in an Incident Report form to be given to the HPW or email an account of their concerns and other observations to the HM, HPC and HPW.
- When more than one House is involved in a situation, the HPC and HPW should act as a conduit so that it is dealt with in a uniform manner and all relevant

- information can be shared. The Warden may be directly involved in particularly serious incidents.
- When addressing an allegation of bullying behaviour in any way, HMs are welcome to seek the assistance and support of the HPW, HPC, the Sub-Warden and/or Warden or the student support team at any time. Indeed, given the extent to which the Warden and Sub-Warden are privy to all kinds of personal information about students, it would be prudent for HMs to check in with either of them before taking any action in relation to bullying behaviour.
- If the incident is deemed to meet the threshold for Bullying under the Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2024 then a formal process will start.
- The primary aim in considering and dealing with bullying behaviour is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame).
- If allegations are to be explored, this will include speaking with those directly involved, and those who witnessed the behaviour. A member of the House team will be present to support the student. Students may be asked to give a written account of what happened.
- All conversations should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned.
- If a group of students are involved in bullying behaviour then each will be spoken to individually at first and then as a group, if considered appropriate.
- 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.
- Parents are an integral part of the College community and play an important role, in partnership with the school, in addressing bullying behaviour.
- Where bullying behaviour is deemed to have occurred, the parents of the parties should 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.
- Parents will be given an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the College and the supports for the students.
- If necessary, the College may request the parents/guardians meet with the relevant personnel.
- In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the College will develop an appropriate plan to support the student and for how their parents will be informed.

- The College will consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents, for example, literacy, digital literacy, language barriers, time zones.
- Parents and guardians, and students are required to cooperate with any process and assist the College in resolving any issues and restoring as far as is practicable the relationships of the parties involved.
- In cases where it has been determined that bullying has occurred it should be made clear to the student who engaged in bullying behaviour how they are in breach of the School's Bí Cineálta Policy and efforts will be made to get them to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied
- The College will engage with students and their parents to decide the actions to be taken to address the incident of bullying behaviour.
- The College will engage with students who have displayed bullying behaviour as well as their parents when deciding actions to be taken.
- Following all of this, a meeting will be held to discuss findings and to agree on proposed actions (including disciplinary and support actions required for parties involved).
- The HM along with the HPC and HPW will oversee these actions.
- If, subsequent to this, the student's bullying behaviour persists, that student may be asked to leave the College.
- Parents and guardians and students will be informed of these actions.
- Where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between any student being disciplined, their parents and guardians and the College.
- A Bullying Incident Report Form will be filled in and stored.
- The College will, always, endeavour to comply with current legislation.
- The College reserves the right, in accordance with Section 6 Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools to seek the assistance of agencies such as NEPS, the HSE, and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary to deal effectively with bullying behaviour.

Programme of Support after bullying behaviour has occurred

The College's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is to ensure that the student who experienced bullying behaviour, the person/persons responsible for the offending behaviour and those who witnessed it will be offered ongoing informal or formal support from within the College. St. Columba's College supports restorative practices. The informal supports offered in the school may be check-ins with HM, College Counsellor or another relevant member of staff. The students involved can select a member of staff who will then continue to check in with

them and will report back to the HM and Student Support Team. Formal supports offered in the College may be in the form of monitoring, internal counselling and/or referral to an external counselling agency, a psychologist, psychotherapist, or other agencies, if deemed more appropriate and agreed to by parents and guardians.

Recording

All bullying behaviour will be recorded, using the template from Appendix A. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the initial engagement with students and parents. It will include the views of students and parents on the actions taken to address the bullying behaviour. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented and will keep the Student Support Team informed. If the student has requested a liaison person different from their HM then that person will report back to the HM.

- The relevant HMs will review progress between the two parties.
- When the intervention has ended and those at fault have admitted their part both parties might, if appropriate, be brought together to show that the bullying behaviour has stopped. We hope that they will be able to repair their relationship but if this is not possible then they should be civil and polite in all their dealings with each other. The date of this meeting will be recorded.
- If the bullying behaviour has stopped but one party does not want to meet the other then an intermediary will relay a message to the student who experienced the bullying behaviour to indicate that it has now stopped.
- This will be reviewed again to insure that the bullying behaviour has indeed stopped.
- A note of any external agencies or supports will be made on the record.
- All records will be kept according to the College's recording keeping policy and in line with data protection rules.
- Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the relevant person should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school consideration should be given to 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 and the College.

- If a parent(s) is not satisfied 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 should be referred to the school's complaints procedures.
- If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
- 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.

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, school staff will show empathy to the student, will deal with the matter sensitively and speak with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents and guardians will be informed of the situation.

It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

Parents and guardians may also make the College aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents and guardians will be asked to put this request in writing to the College.

However, while acknowledging the parent's and guardian's request, the College may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

The incident will be recorded by the College and presented to the Board of Management as part of the bullying behaviour update.

Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased.

The school will engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 standard school days after the initial discussion to review progress after 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.

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 College should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to communicate 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 the College should consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the College's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the College.

Oversight

Bullying behaviour update to the board of management.

At each meeting of the board of management the Warden will present an update on the number of incidents of bullying behaviour and the measures taken to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The purpose of this update is to inform discussion at board level on the effectiveness of the measures that the school is taking to prevent and address bullying behaviour and the effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta Policy.

The update will include the following:

- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting
- the number of incidents that are currently ongoing
- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the beginning of the school year

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

- the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour, if known, the location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred
- the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- if a parent has informed the College that a student has left because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the board of management

- if the College's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

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

It is important that the minutes of the board of management meeting documents the number of new incidents of bullying behaviour, the number of currently ongoing and the total number of incidents of bullying behaviour since the beginning of the school year as reported by the Warden. The minutes should also note where the board has considered the bullying behaviour verbal update and document when the board has decided that an urgent review of the College's Bí Cineálta policy is required.

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

Declarations

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on June 11th 2025. Next date for review, September 2026.

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Chairperson of the Board of Management

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The Warden

Appendix A: Template for recording bullying behaviour

1.   Name of student being bullied and form/House group

Name _____

Form and House _____

2.   Name(s) and House(s) of student(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*			4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*	
Student concerned			Cloisters / Dining Hall	
Other Student			Classroom	
Parent			House	
Teacher			Prep	
HM			Toilets	
Other			School Bus	
			Other	

5.   Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

6.   Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Racist	
Homophobic & Transphobic		Sexist	
Sexual Harassment		Other (specify)	

7.   Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic/Transphobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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10.   Details of views of students and parents on the actions taken to address the bullying behaviour.

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Signed: HM   _____

        HPW/HPC   _____

        Warden   _____

Date submitted to Warden/Sub Warden   _____

Appendix B: Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

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

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

1.   When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?

2.   Where in the College is the student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?

3.   What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student-friendly policy on the College website?

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4.   How has the student-friendly policy been communicated to students?

5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student-friendly policy been communicated to parents?

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6. Have all school staff been made aware of the College's Bí Cineálta policy and the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?

Yes
No

7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the College uses to prevent bullying behaviour?

Yes
No

8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the Warden at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year?

Yes
No

9. Has the Board discussed how the College is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour?

Yes
No

10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the College's Bí Cineálta Policy?

Yes
No

11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?

Yes
No

12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour?

Yes
No

13. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

14. Outline any aspects of the College's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:

15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes have been developed?

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16.Does the student-friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

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17. Does the College refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the College has addressed bullying behaviour?

Yes
No

18. Has a parent informed the College that a student has left due to reported bullying behaviour?

Yes
No

19. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the College has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour

Yes
No

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

The Board of Management confirms that the board of management's annual review of the College's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of [date].

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

Signed: (Chairperson of board of management)

Date: June 11th 2024

Date of next review: September 2025

Appendix D: Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for board of management meeting of _____

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