

Bí Cineálta Policy



St. Patrick's N.S

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Bí Cineálta Policy has been set up to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

The Board of Management of St. Patrick's N.S. has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the well-being 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.

We confirm that we will take all steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent all bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated.

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 targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm.
- The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature and can have lasting effects on the the child experiencing the behaviour.
- 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. (pg. 17)
- It is behaviour which is deliberate in nature and is unwanted. It is not accidental or reckless behaviour .

The harm can be:

- Physical (eg: personal injury, damage to or loss of property)
- Social: (eg: withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion)
- Emotional: (eg: low self esteem, depression, anxiety)
- A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a 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.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:(will be addressed under the school's Code of Behaviour)

- A once off instance of negative behaviour.
- 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 intentional, deliberate or planned, but in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they cannot control.
- Disagreement between students is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Forms of Bullying: 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:** pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. Physical assault. Destruction of personal property.
- **Verbal:** continual name calling which insults, humiliates the student – this may refer to physical appearance, size, clothes, gender, accent, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.
- **Written:** Writing insulting remarks in public places, passing notes or drawings about the student.
- **Extortion:** where something is obtained through force or threats

Indirect bullying behaviour:

- **Exclusion:** where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.
- **Relational:** Where a student's attempts to form friendships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined, threats, non-verbal gesturing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours, silent treatment and manipulation of friend groups etc can all form relational bullying for a student.

Online bullying behaviour: Cyber bullying is carried out via text, direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies. This can include:

- Sending or sharing of insulting and offensive or intimidating messages

or images via online means as mentioned above.

- Posting information which is personal, private or sensitive without consent.
- Making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students.
- Exclude/disrupt access to a student on purpose on online chat groups/access to accounts/from an online game.

Bullying behaviour outside school: St. Patrick's NS 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 continues into the school environment, the school will address the bullying behaviour in accordance with this Bí Cineálta policy.

Development/review of our Bí Cineálta Policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

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

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	February 2025 – April 2025	• Questionnaires compiled for staff. • All staff watched the Bí Cineálta video. • Staff given the opportunity to discuss contents. • Half-day closure to compile, share, discuss and formulate Bí Cineálta policy.
Students	May 2025	• Questionnaires to seek their input in developing an Anti Bullying policy in Child

		Friendly Format. • Their wording, examples and suggestions were all considered when drafting this policy
Parents	May 2025	• Views of parents obtained via surveys.
Board of Management	May –June 2025	• Review new policy draft – leading to consultation and final ratification after amendments are made where necessary.
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 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.

1. Culture and Environment: Main points from guidelines i.e. trusted adult, culture of telling, safe place, supervision

- As a school community with encourage a ‘telling’ environment through

building relationships based on trust. Continuously reminding the children that when 'they tell the truth they will get in less or no trouble depending on the bad choice / mistake they made'.

- School staff continuously make it clear to students 'if we don't know, we can't help'. Students use the strategy of 'Say no, get away, tell'. Promote the concept of a trusted adult – stay safe linkage – who to tell.
- St. Patrick's NS 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
- Create a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.
- Involve parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated.
- Create safe spaces in our school building and yards by ensuring that all areas including out of eyeline areas are well monitored by staff members.
- Highlight artwork and signs that promote our school values which are visible around the school environment. Ensure student participation in promoting these values.
- Encourage a sense of belonging with ownership over their own space through art and creativity.
- Create a positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.
- Encourage pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and promote respectful relationships across the school community.
- Provide appropriate supervision to prevent and address bullying behaviours.

2. Curriculum Teaching and Learning:

- Provide teaching and promote learning which is collaborative and respectful, fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Students will regularly work in small groups with their peers to build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.
- Develop a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact. Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- Teach SPHE and RSE content which fosters students' well-being and self-confidence, as well as promoting personal responsibility for their own behaviours and actions.
- Model respectful behaviour towards colleagues, pupils and visitors in our school environment.
- Curricular and Extra-curricular activities can help to develop a sense of self-worth, working together, inclusion and respect.
- Acknowledgement of our diverse school population – celebrating diversity and culture in our school through art, displays, photographs, and international events.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including, in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

3. Policy and Planning

- The student friendly version of this Bí Cineálta Policy will be clearly displayed around the school.
- Raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
- Promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- Develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- Work with appropriate agencies in counteracting all forms of bullying and promoting anti-bullying behaviour
- Staff upskilling

The Acceptable Use Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, Supervision Policy, Special Education Policy and Code of Behaviour all support the implementation of the Bí Cineálta policy

4. Relationships and Partnerships

- Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as our buddy systems, Board of Management, friendship squads, committees and our various student committees (e.g. Green Schools, Active Schools)
- The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This school 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, this school 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.
- Age and stage-appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the student body in looking at their own behaviour – promoting acts of kindness and friendship, being an active helper to others and looking at the causes of and impact of bullying during SPHE lessons.
- Conducting lessons for students to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
- Conducting workshops / seminars / talks for the school community to raise awareness for the impact of bullying. (visits from Gardaí / internet safety talks etc)
- Encouraging peer support.
- Promote acts of kindness.
- Promote inclusion of all pupils.
- Support activities that build empathy, respect and resilience.
- Active participation for parents in school life.
- Active participation of students in school life.
- Supporting active participation of students in school life and active participation of parents in school life also.

5. Preventing cyberbullying behaviour

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship

- Having regular conversations with students about their responsibility to be respectful and kind with online comments
- 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 ultimately, responsible for overseeing their children's activities online
- Holding an Internet safety day/week in February to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour

Reminding children that 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 data. In Ireland, the digital age of consent is 16.

Therefore, technically, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account.

6. Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum.
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students. about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship.
- Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
- Ongoing review and communicating of the 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.
- Holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.

7. Preventing racist bullying behaviour

- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students “see themselves” in their school environment
- Celebrating the cultural diversity of the school
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of racism
- Encouraging peer support, such as peer mentoring and empathy-building activities
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
- Providing support to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
- Support staff in fostering inclusive learning environments by equipping them to effectively support students from ethnic minority backgrounds, including Traveller and Roma communities, and by encouraging positive, respectful communication with their parents and guardians
- Inviting speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds to share their experiences and perspectives, promoting understanding and empathy across the school community
- Ensure that library collections and classroom resources reflect the diversity of the school population, representing the lived experiences and voices of people from various national, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds in an accurate and respectful manner

8. Preventing sexist bullying behaviour

- Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally, irrespective of their sex
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex
- Celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students
- Organising awareness campaigns, workshops and presentations on gender equality and respect
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home

9. Preventing Sexual Harassment

- Promoting positive role models within the school community
- Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

See Chapter 5 of Bí Cineálta procedures

- Appropriate supervision is in place at all times.
- There are a variety of activities available to children on both yards
- Staff at all times endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff and recorded on Aladdin using the template for this.
- School-wide awareness raising on all aspects of bullying, supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities.
- Involvement of pupils in contributing to a safe school environment, e.g. Kindness/ Anti-bullying week, and other activities that can help pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Refer to appropriate online behaviour when using devices and in SPHE lessons.
- Promote online safety events or materials for parents
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school, e.g. www.tacklebullying.ie, www.antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse, www.webwise.ie
- Challenge gender stereotypes – equal participation of all. Equal recognition.

- Raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour and encourage students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour
- Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated and students in the school environment.
- Internet Safety Day.
- Encourage peer support, such as peer mentoring and empathy-building activities.
- Ensure all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- Relevant teacher is the class teacher. Investigations and / or reports about bullying behaviour must be dealt with by the relevant teacher first.
- Principal and / or deputy principal will deal with bullying behaviour if the relevant teacher is absent or the relevant teacher uses their professional judgement and deems it necessary to have the Principal or Deputy Principal present at an investigation. The Principal and / or Deputy Principal are also available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist the relevant teacher in addressing bullying behaviour.
- The relevant teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the schools procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the schools template.
- All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.
- Principal will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- ⇒ ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured.
- ⇒ seek to ensure the privacy of those involved.
- ⇒ conduct all conversations with sensitivity.
- ⇒ consider the age and ability of those involved.

- ⇒ listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.
- ⇒ take action in a timely manner.
- ⇒ inform parents 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

Step 1: Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred:

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour is to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore relationships in a fair manner. Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents. Class teachers will carry out investigations with another staff member present who will record the conversations using the schools template.

1. The relevant teacher will ask the following questions to determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour or not.
 - Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
 - Is the behaviour on purpose / intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
 - Is the behaviour repeated?

If the answer to each of the questions above is **Yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour will be addressed using the procedures that follow below.

If the answer is **No**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour and it will be dealt with using the schools Code of Behaviour.

Step 2: Approaches taken when bullying behaviour has occurred:

2. If a group of students are involved each student will be engaged with individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved will be met as a group.

3. At the group meeting each student will be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views. Children are encouraged to tell the truth straight away and try to minimize loss of teaching time.
4. The relevant teacher will use the school template for recording the investigation and consider the 'what, where, when and why'.
5. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
6. The relevant teacher does not apportion blame but will make an effort to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
7. The relevant teacher emphasises that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. The perpetrator will sign the promise sheet. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be **no penalty** and that will be the end of the matter.
8. When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the 'Relevant Teacher' will complete a report using the schools template, to include the findings of the investigation, actions to be taken and any other relevant information.
9. This will be stored in the child's file in the office.
10. Where bullying behaviour has occurred and the investigation has taken place, the parents of the students involved will be contacted to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour. Parents may be invited into the school for a meeting. Parents and children are required to co-operate with and support any investigations and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.

Step 3: Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred:

11. The relevant teacher will engage with the students involved

and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement.

12. The relevant teacher will document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased.
13. The date that the bullying behaviour has ceased will also be recorded.
14. If it is found that the bullying behaviour has not ceased and the pupil chooses to continue the bullying behaviour the school will use disciplinary sanctions as provided for within the schools Code of Behaviour. Such sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying behaviour. It must 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.
15. Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent must be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
16. In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their rights to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
17. The School will maintain care for the victim over time. This will be done by speaking to the child a number of weeks after the incident to check on their continuing welfare. The child's parents will also be consulted.
18. If a child makes a report of bullying, but asks that nothing is to be done about it, the relevant teacher will support the child appropriately to explore how it will be handled sensitively and how parents may be notified.
19. If a parent makes a report of bullying, but asks that nothing is to be done about it, they must submit in writing that they require no further action to be taken, but even so, the school may still deem it necessary to be investigated and handled appropriately.

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

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 Bullied pupils:

- Ending the bullying behavior
- Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils
- Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils
- Indicating clearly that the 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 facilities available to pupils who need it in a timely manner (subject to available funding)
- Helping bullied pupils 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).

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,
- Making adequate counseling facilities available to help those who need it 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,

- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

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.

- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Oide
- National Parents Council
- Dublin City University (DCU) Anti-bullying Centre, which offers a range of modules as part of its FUSE programme
- Webwise
- In cases where bullying behaviour is considered a child protection concern, Tusla will be contacted directly for advice.

In St. Patrick's N.S., the following steps will also be followed.

- Give children an understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour and the language associated with same
- Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils,
- Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils,
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes ie engagement with the National Bullying Prevention Month (October), e.g reading books, watching videos, designing posters etc
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and the speedy resolution of bullying situations,
- Helping bullied pupils 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).

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing, and giving them praise for this,
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth,
- In dealing with negative behaviour in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child,
- In dealing with bullying behaviour, seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for 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.

Ratification and Review:

This policy was ratified by the BoM on 18/06/2025. It will be due to for review in June 2026.

Signed

Chairperson: _____

Principal: _____

Date: _____

Appendix A: Template to be used when recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil experiencing the bullying behaviour and class group

Name _____

Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

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3. Form of Bullying Behaviour		4. Type of Bullying Behaviour	
Physical		Disablist bullying	
Verbal		Exceptionally able bullying	
Written		Gender identity bullying	
Extortion		Homophobic / transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying	
Exclusion		Physical appearance bullying	
Relational		Racist bullying	
		Poverty bullying	
		Religious identity bullying	
		Sexist bullying	
		Sexual harassment	

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

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6. Where the bullying behaviour occurred

Inside School	Outside School	Online
Location:	Location:	Device:
		Location:

7. When the bullying behaviour took place

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Description of what happened:**Views of the student****Views of the parent / parents****Action (School)****Action (Parent)****Action (Child)****Further Information / Parental involvement (phonecall / face to face meeting)**

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix B: Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

Details of engagement with the students involved and their parents no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement.

Date that the bullying behaviour has ceased:
If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the new timeframe agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased is as follows:
Further relevant information:

Signed _____ *(Relevant Teacher)* *Date* _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Parent Meeting Log

Child:	Class:	Teacher:															
What happened / Where did it happen / When did it happen																	
Type of unkind behaviour: <i>(Refer to Section 2.7 — Tick all that apply)</i> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Disablist bullying behaviour</td> <td>Exceptionally able bullying</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender identity bullying</td> <td>Homophobic/ transphobic</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physical appearance bullying</td> <td>Racist bullying</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Poverty bullying</td> <td>Religious identity bullying</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexist bullying</td> <td>Sexual harassment bullying</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> Other:			Disablist bullying behaviour	Exceptionally able bullying		Gender identity bullying	Homophobic/ transphobic		Physical appearance bullying	Racist bullying		Poverty bullying	Religious identity bullying		Sexist bullying	Sexual harassment bullying	
Disablist bullying behaviour	Exceptionally able bullying																
Gender identity bullying	Homophobic/ transphobic																
Physical appearance bullying	Racist bullying																
Poverty bullying	Religious identity bullying																
Sexist bullying	Sexual harassment bullying																
Action (School)	Action (Parent)	Action (Child)															

Further relevant Information

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Pupil Behaviour Promise

Student Name: _____

Class: _____

I know that all the boys and girls in my school are different from each other and from me in many ways. I would not like if my friends made me feel sad because of any differences or just because they did not like me. I know that I have a right to be different from others. I know that this does not give anyone the right to be unkind to me or to hurt my feelings. I know I should be treated fairly, equally and respectfully in school because of the school's Code of Behaviour. I know I should be treated fairly, equally and respectfully outside of school too. I also know that all other boy and girls should be treated fairly, equally and respectfully. It is wrong to treat anyone any other way.

I promise that in future I will treat all my school mates fairly, equally and respectfully despite our differences and whether I like them or not.

In particular: (Handwrite below "I will always treat (N) fairly and respectfully")

Signed: Pupil: _____

Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Appendix D: Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for board of management meeting of St. Patrick's N.S.

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix E: Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

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

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school.

_____/_____/20____

1. Where in the school is the student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?
2. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student-friendly policy on the school website? ____/____/20____
3. How has the student-friendly policy been communicated to students?

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

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ST. PATRICK'S NS BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY

1. Have all school staff been made aware of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? Yes ☐ No ☐
2. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour? Yes ☐ No ☐
3. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year? Yes ☐ No ☐
4. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour? Yes ☐ No ☐
5. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy? Yes ☐ No ☐
6. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented? Yes ☐ No ☐
7. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour? Yes ☐ No ☐

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

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

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

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

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

☐ Yes ☐ No

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

☐ Yes ☐ No

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

☐ Yes ☐ No

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

The Board of Management of St. Patrick's National School confirms that the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of _____.

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 Schools*.

Chairperson

Date

Principal

Date

Appendix G: Overview of the Procedures

The following is a guide to the main changes between the requirements of the *2013 Antibullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* and the requirements of the *2024 Bí Cineálta procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, which replace the 2013 procedures. This is not an exhaustive list.

Chapter 1	Responsibilities of the school community	All members of the school community must work together in partnership to prevent and address bullying behaviour at school.
	Legal basis	Legislation underpinning Bí Cineálta: Children First Act 2015. Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 also known as Coco's Law.
Chapter 2	What is bullying behaviour?	Updated definition of bullying behaviour based on Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2022).
	Criminal behaviour	Updated information on when bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour.
	Child protection concerns	Updated information relating to when bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern.
Chapter 3	Impacts of bullying behaviour	Updated information on how bullying behaviour can impact students who experience bullying behaviour, students who witness the behaviour and students who engage in bullying behaviour.

ST. PATRICK'S NS BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY

Chapter 4	Bí Cineálta Policy	Schools must engage with the whole school community to develop their Bí Cineálta policy, using the template in Appendix A. The policy must list preventative strategies that are used including those to specifically prevent cyberbullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate. Schools must list specific support strategies for individuals experiencing bullying behaviour, those who witness bullying behaviour and those displaying bullying behaviour. All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded. The school principal is required to provide a bullying behaviour update at each ordinary board of management meeting. The school's Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed in collaboration with the whole school community once each calendar year and sooner if a serious incident occurs and the board of management determines an urgent review is required.
Chapter 4	Appendix A Bí Cineálta Policy	This template document must be used as a basis for each school's Bí Cineálta Policy.
	Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	Every school must develop a student-friendly version of its Bí Cineálta policy and display it where students and the school community can see it.
	Appendix B Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	This template document can be used by schools as a basis for their student-friendly policy.
Chapter 5	Preventing Bullying Behaviour	Prevention measures are linked to the four areas of Wellbeing Promotion. Importance of fostering a "telling environment" in schools and the role of the trusted adult. Prevention strategies must be provided relating to specific types of bullying behaviour including cyberbullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment, as appropriate.
Chapter 6	Appendix C Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour	Guide can be used to address bullying behaviour.

Remit of the school in addressing bullying behaviour	A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.
Requests to take no action	Guidance for schools on how requests by students and parents to “take no action” should be addressed.
Engagement with students involved in bullying behaviour and their parents	Schools must engage with students who have experienced bullying behaviour to decide the actions to be taken to address the incident of bullying behaviour. Schools must also engage with their parents. Schools must engage with students who have displayed bullying behaviour as well as their parents when deciding actions to be taken. Schools must engage with all involved when reviewing progress and determining whether bullying behaviour has ceased.
Recording Incidents of Bullying Behaviour	All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded by the teacher addressing the behaviour.

Chapter 7	Update to the board of management	Principal must provide an update to the board of management at each ordinary board meeting. This report includes the number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board meeting, the number of incidents ongoing and the total number reported since the beginning of the school year. The principal must provide a verbal update which will include, where relevant, trends and patterns, the strategies used to address the incidents and whether an urgent review of the policy is needed. The update is to inform discussion at each ordinary board of management meeting regarding the effectiveness of the preventative strategies used by the school and the overall effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta Policy.
	Appendix D Guide to providing bullying behaviour update to the board of management	Guide can be used to assist principals in providing bullying behaviour update to board of management.
	Review of Bí Cineálta Policy	The Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed once each calendar year, in collaboration with the whole school community, and earlier if the Board determines an urgent review is warranted.
	Appendix E Review of the Bí Cineálta policy.	The Review template must be completed when the Bí Cineálta policy is reviewed.
	Appendix F Notification of Annual Review	The template can be used to notify the school community that the annual review has been completed.

Ratification of policy for St. Patrick's NS

Chairperson

Date

Principal

Date