

# Bí Cineálta Policy

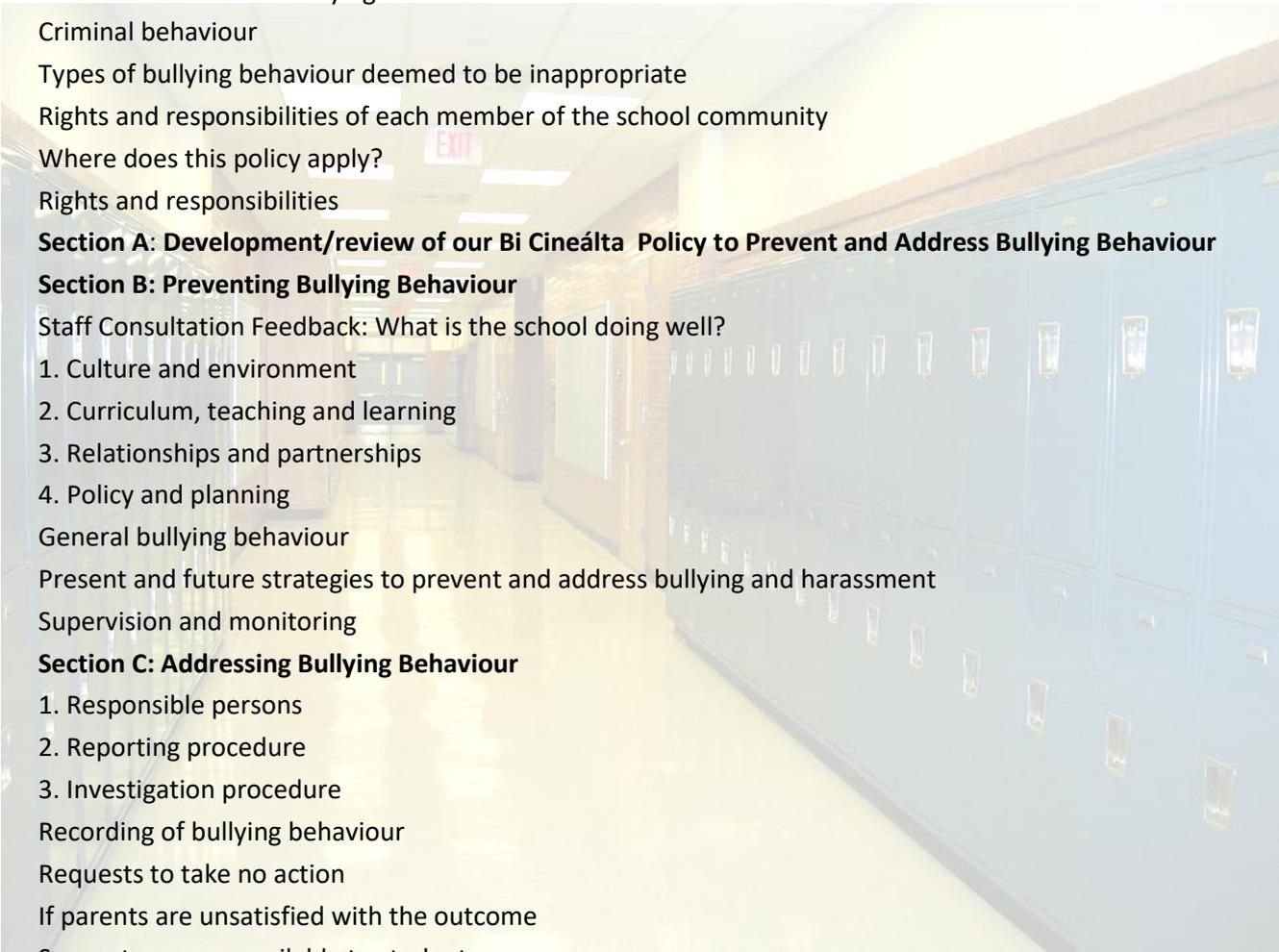
To Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

2025/2026

St. Aidan's Community School



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## Introduction

The Board of Management of St. Aidan's Community School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

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

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

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the *Bí Cineálta procedures*.

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:

## 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, and exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, and 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 deemed as 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 that 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 school'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.

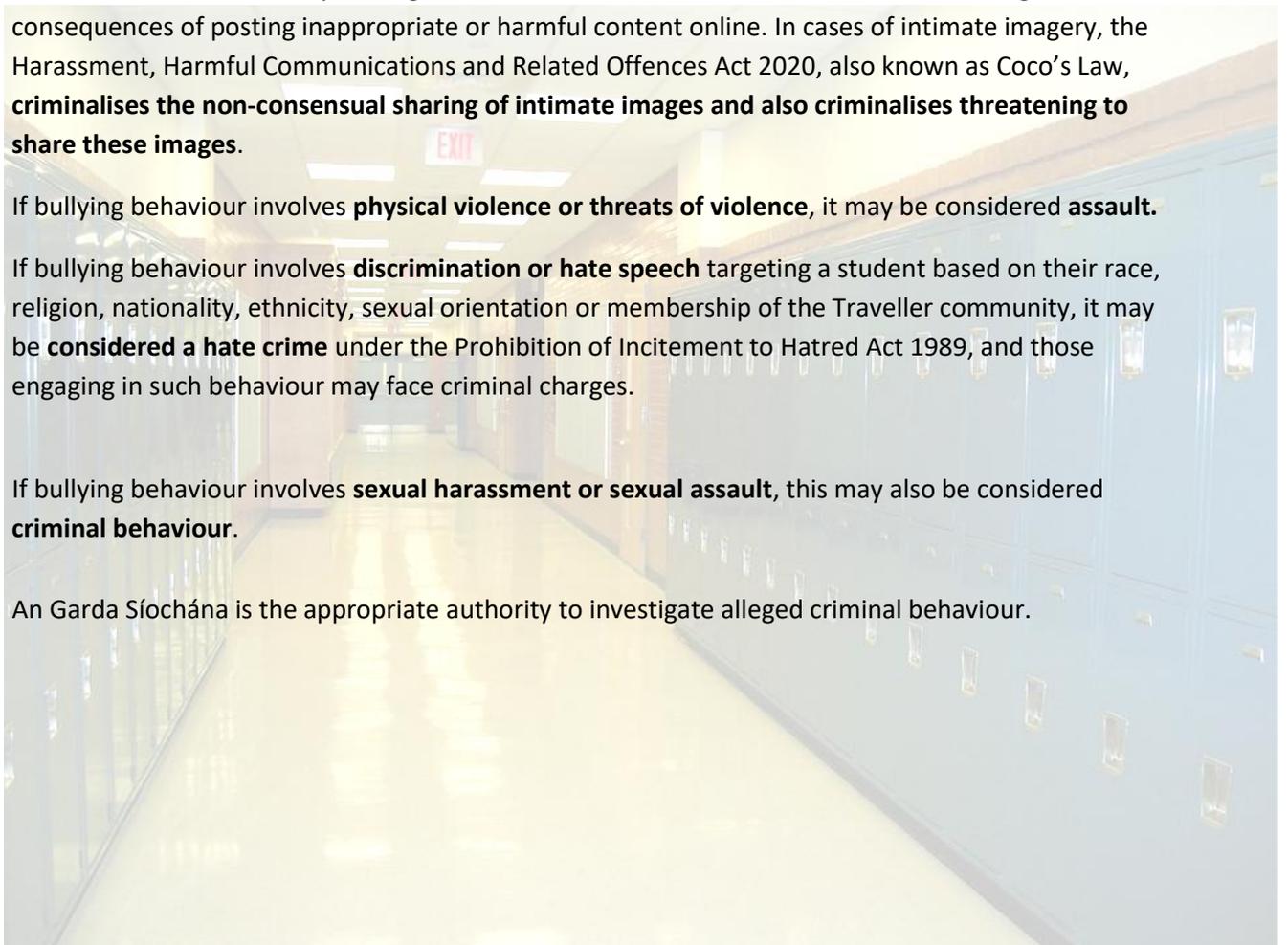
Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, **criminalises the non-consensual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

<p><b>General behaviours which apply to all</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation, e.g., sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying, etc.</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Name-calling</li> <li>• Slagging</li> <li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li> <li>• Exclusion</li> <li>• No innocent bystander</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cyber</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation</li> <li>• <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name</li> <li>• <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>• <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information, which you then post online</li> <li>• <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>• <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>• <b>Cyber stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>• Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li> <li>• Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> <li>• Abusive communication on social networks, e.g., Facebook/Instagram/Tik Tok/Be Real/Twitter/You Tube etc. or on games consoles</li> <li>• Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> <li>• Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
<p><b>Identity Based Behaviours</b></p>	<p><b>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation</b> (gender, including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).</p>

<b>Homophobic and Transgender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation</li> <li>• Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>• Name calling, e.g., gay, queer, lesbian ... used in a derogatory manner •</li> <li>Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>• Threats</li> </ul>
<b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background •</li> <li>Exclusion based on any of the above</li> </ul>
<b>Relational</b>	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malicious gossip</li> <li>• Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> <li>• Ignoring</li> <li>• Excluding from the group</li> <li>• Taking someone’s friends away</li> <li>• “Bitching”</li> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> <li>• Breaking confidence</li> <li>• Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>• The “look”</li> <li>• Use of terminology such as “nerd” in a derogatory way</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching •</li> <li>Harassment</li> </ul>
<b>Special Educational Needs, Disability – Learning Difficulties and Gifted</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name-calling</li> <li>• Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs •</li> <li>Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.</li> <li>• Mimicking a person’s disability</li> <li>• Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>

### Where does this Policy Apply?

- In class, between classes and while on the school premises
- While in a school uniform
- On the way to and from school
- On school-based activity, school tours, etc.
- To anything done in the school name
- To any behaviour that adversely affects the school's reputation or the education of any student in the school.

## Rights and Responsibilities

### Rights and Responsibilities of Each Member of the School Community

Right	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have the right to be safe in school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have a responsibility to make our school a safe and secure place for others</li> </ul>

### Rights and responsibilities of students and staff

I have a right to be:	I have the responsibility to ensure that:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treated with respect</li> <li>• Physically safe and to expect my property to be safe at school</li> <li>• Free from all forms of bullying</li> <li>• Able to learn &amp; teach without disruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Others are treated with respect</li> <li>• Others are physically safe and the property of others is safe</li> <li>• Others are free from all forms of bullying</li> <li>• Others/students are able to learn without disruption</li> <li>• Bullying behaviour is acted upon as appropriate</li> </ul>

### Rights and responsibilities of parents

I have a right to:	I have the responsibility to ensure that:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect that my child is safe in school and can learn without disruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I report bullying behaviour to the school</li> <li>• Co-operate fully with the implementation of school policy</li> </ul>

### Rights and responsibilities of bystanders/witnesses

I should:	I should not:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say 'no' or 'stop' when you see or hear someone behaving unfairly - be assertive but not aggressive</li> <li>• Seek help immediately from an adult if the situation is dangerous.</li> <li>• Tell when you know a student is being bullied.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join in bullying behaviour for example, laughing at, sneering, 'slagging' or Fighting etc.</li> <li>• Cheer on somebody who is bullying.</li> <li>• Stay in a dangerous situation, e.g. a fight.</li> <li>• Bully the 'bully'.</li> </ul>

## Section A: Development/review of our Bi Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to contribute to the development and review of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School staff		Staff CPD ½ Day Closure Staff Survey
Students		Student Council Meeting Focus Group Survey (in SPHE and RSE classes)
Parents		Talk given to parents Information given at PTM Focus Group HSCIL WhatsApp Groups Survey
Board of Management		Board Meeting In- Person Survey
Wider school community, as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		School Website School Administration School App Glanmore Foods Company Auxiliary Staff Bus companies

Date policy was approved:	02-09-2025
Date policy was last reviewed:	02-09-2025

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

Staff Consultation Feedback: What the School is Doing Well?

St. Aidan's Community School demonstrates a **strong, inclusive, and caring school culture** that actively promotes student wellbeing through a range of strategies and initiatives across four key areas.

### 1. Culture and Environment

#### Celebrating diversity and inclusion:

- The annual *student-led Culture Day* and participation in *Stand-Up Awareness Week* celebrate cultural, religious, and personal diversity.
- The *Interfaith Group* recognises and respects all beliefs, including those with no religious affiliation, strengthening inclusion across the school community.

#### Building positive relationships:

- Strong student-teacher relationships are fostered through daily *Check and Connect* sessions.
- Weekly *Pastoral Care (SSST) meetings* ensure ongoing attention to student wellbeing.
- An *external psychotherapist* works two days a week, providing professional mental health support and timely interventions.

#### Embedding restorative and respectful practices:

- Restorative practices encourage empathy, accountability, and community.
- Teachers model respectful behaviour, reinforcing the school's values through example.

#### Fostering belonging and connection:

- Programs such as *Belonging Plus Mentoring* for first years, *peer mentoring*, and the *Friends Programme* promote social connection and ease transitions into school life.

#### Encouraging student voice and participation:

- The *Student Council* advocates for students and contributes to policy and school life initiatives.
- Initiatives like the *Spotlight Initiative* allow students to lead projects and activities.

#### Promoting engagement and achievement:

- A wide range of extracurricular activities, including sports, dance, book club, fashion club, juggling club, and choir, supports holistic development.
- Student successes are recognised through school announcements, the website, and social media.

## 2. Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

### Whole-school wellbeing focus:

- Wellbeing is central to all subject plans, with wellbeing indicators addressed across all areas of teaching and learning. Teachers actively promote resilience, empathy, inclusion, and respect in everyday classroom practice.

### Timetabling and curriculum planning:

- Timetables are designed through the lens of the student experience.
- *LCA curriculum developments* expand specialisms, allowing students to tailor learning to their strengths and interests (e.g., hair and beauty, childcare, woodwork).
- Provide targeted support for students for whom English is an additional language (EAL)

### Comprehensive Wellbeing and SPHE programmes:

- Delivered through SPHE, Life Programme, and Guidance classes, including *The Decider*, *Lockers*, *Fuse*, *Alert*, *The Respect Effect*, and *Be in Ctrl*.
- These programmes support emotional regulation, resilience, and online safety.

### Targeted supports and transition programmes:

- *The 1st Year Transition Programme* assists students in adapting to post-primary life.
- *Targeted AEN interventions* and additional support during key assessments ensure all students are supported to achieve their potential.
- Provide targeted support for Ukrainian students through a dedicated Ukrainian teacher, ensuring they receive academic, linguistic, and pastoral support.

### Active and collaborative learning:

- Teachers use active learning methodologies and small-group collaboration to build communication, teamwork, and confidence.

### Inclusive and diverse curriculum:

- SPHE and RSE are delivered sensitively with role-play exercises and guest speakers.
- CSPE and Religious Education explore diversity, inclusion, awareness of racism, and interdependence in communities.

### Inclusive education and AEN/ASD support:

- Initiatives include primary school visits, weekly AEN meetings, World Dyslexia Awareness Day, and regular staff updates.
- Annual meetings between AEN lead teachers and class teachers ensure coordinated support.

### Staff professional development:

- Ongoing CPD in anti-bullying equips staff to prevent and respond to bullying.
- Whole-school surveys inform planning and ensure responsiveness to student experiences.

### Creative expression and performance:

- Drama and the School Show provide platforms for self-expression, teamwork, and confidence-building.

### 3. Relationships and Partnership

#### Positive classroom relationships:

- Teachers model respectful relationships and maintain clear classroom expectations.
- Seating plans and class bonding activities support inclusion.
- Active learning methodologies make lessons engaging and collaborative.

#### Restorative and pastoral practices:

- Restorative practices are embedded to strengthen relationships and resolve conflicts constructively.
- The pastoral system, including the chaplain, Board of Trustees, counsellors, and the *Student Support Team (SST)*, provides ongoing academic, emotional, and personal support.

#### Peer mentoring and student leadership:

- Programmes such as *Mentors* and the *Belonging Programme* foster peer guidance, friendship, and leadership.
- The *Student Council* ensures student voice shapes school life.

#### Parental engagement and family support:

- HSCL initiatives and small group engagements support families, particularly those facing language, cultural, or educational barriers.

#### External partnerships and professional services:

- Links with *NEPS*, *CAMHS*, *Tusla*, and *Gardaí* provide specialist support.
- Partnerships with local clubs, community projects (*YSI*, *Mini Projects*), and feeder schools enrich student learning.
- Guest speakers, Garda visits, external coaches, choreographers, and artists enhance both curriculum and extracurricular experiences.
- Programmes such as *Jigsaw One Good School* and the *Credits System* for 1st years support wellbeing and social skills.

#### Curricular and community engagement:

- Students participate in CBAs and class projects, such as *CSPE Action Projects* and *SPHE CBAs*, fostering civic responsibility and inclusion.
- Fundraising and community initiatives promote acts of kindness, inclusivity, and respect for diversity.

#### Supporting student participation:

- Students are actively involved in school life through extracurricular activities and clubs.
- Age-appropriate awareness initiatives help students navigate friendships, understand bullying, and develop positive social behaviours.

#### Staff collaboration:

- Staff collaborate through planning sessions throughout the year to ensure consistent approaches to wellbeing and inclusive practices.

## 4. Policy and Planning

### Wellbeing and inclusion policies:

- BÍ Cineálta initiatives are embedded through staff workshops and training.
- Policies supporting wellbeing include:
  - *Bí Cineálta Policy*
  - *Code of Behaviour Policy*
  - *Guidance Policy*
  - *Acceptable Use Policy; phone and Internet Use Policies*
  - *Child Safeguarding Statement*
  - *SHPE/RSE Policy*
  - *Learning Support Policy*
  - *Admissions Policy*

### Child protection and safeguarding:

- Staff are mandated persons, receive annual reminders of procedures, and complete the *Children First E-Learning Programme*.
- The Principal and Deputy Principal complete and refresh *DLP/DDLP training*.

### Data protection:

- Clear policies ensure compliance and safeguard students' personal information.

### Strategic DEIS planning:

- The DEIS plan focuses on attendance, retention, transitions, attainment, literacy, numeracy, parent partnerships, and collaboration with external partners.

### Student participation in policy development:

- Students contribute to policy review and development via the *Student Council*.

### Staff professional development:

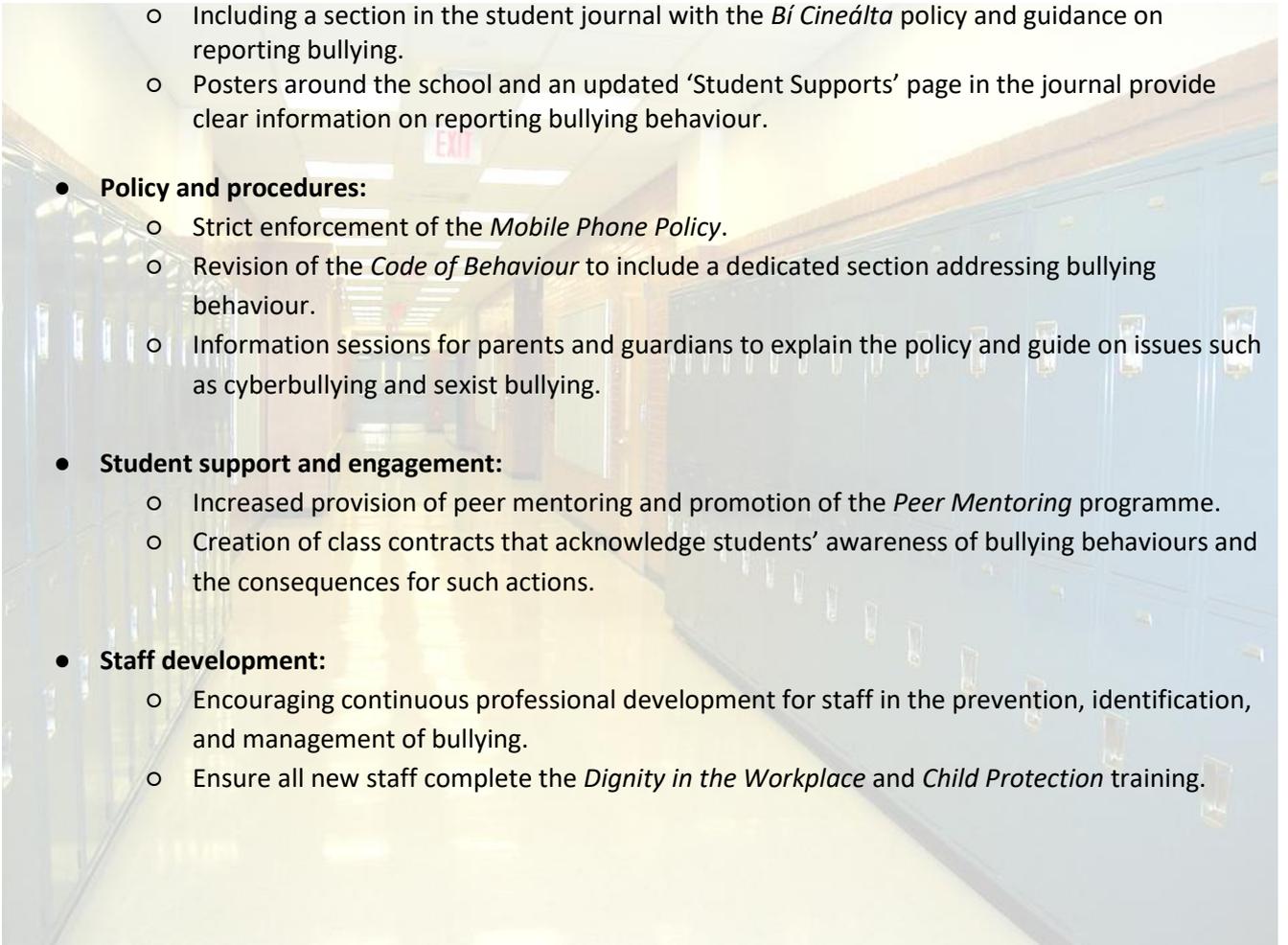
- Continuous professional learning is provided through workshops, online courses, and training sessions to equip staff with strategies to promote student wellbeing effectively. This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed 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).

## General Bullying Behaviour

St. Aidan's Community School is committed to creating a positive school culture and climate that actively prevents and addresses bullying, while promoting inclusivity, respect, and safety for all students. The school strives to foster an environment that is welcoming of difference and diversity, encourages disclosure of bullying incidents, and supports respectful relationships across the school community.

### Key strategies and initiatives include:

- **Promoting awareness and education:**
  - Educating students about bullying during tutor time, assemblies, and in class.
  - Increased visibility of the student-friendly *Bí Cineálta* policy throughout the school.
  - Including a section in the student journal with the *Bí Cineálta* policy and guidance on reporting bullying.
  - Posters around the school and an updated 'Student Supports' page in the journal provide clear information on reporting bullying behaviour.
- **Policy and procedures:**
  - Strict enforcement of the *Mobile Phone Policy*.
  - Revision of the *Code of Behaviour* to include a dedicated section addressing bullying behaviour.
  - Information sessions for parents and guardians to explain the policy and guide on issues such as cyberbullying and sexist bullying.
- **Student support and engagement:**
  - Increased provision of peer mentoring and promotion of the *Peer Mentoring* programme.
  - Creation of class contracts that acknowledge students' awareness of bullying behaviours and the consequences for such actions.
- **Staff development:**
  - Encouraging continuous professional development for staff in the prevention, identification, and management of bullying.
  - Ensure all new staff complete the *Dignity in the Workplace* and *Child Protection* training.



## Present and Future Strategies to Prevent and Address Bullying and Harassment

This includes online, homophobic, transphobic, sexist, sexual, racial, and religious bullying. The focus is on prevention, awareness, and education for the whole school community.

### Preventing Online bullying behaviour

- Reviewing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology
- Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour
- Promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online
- Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online

### Preventing Homophobic and transphobic bullying

- Continued promotion of Stand Up Awareness Week
- Visually promote diversity and inclusion in the classroom and whole school environment
- Ensure students of all gender identities and sexual orientations feel safe in school
- Challenging gender-stereotypes through all subjects and curriculum.
- Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic/transphobic behaviour.
- Establishing support groups for LGBTQ+ students and being active participants in Stand Up Awareness Week.

### Preventing Sexist bullying and sexual harassment

- Invite the *Community Guard* to speak to students about *Coco's Law*, the *Sexual Offences Act*, and related legislation, helping students understand their rights, responsibilities, and the consequences of harmful behaviour.
- Staff training around the use of gender specific language
- Student talks about the importance of gender equality
- Celebrate International Women's Day
- 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
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home

### Preventing Racist bullying

- Encourage further engagement with *Culture Day*.
- Develop and implement a “*Show Racism the Red Card*” module in Transition Year, with potential rollout across junior years.
- Invite speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds to raise awareness and understanding.
- Promote diversity and inclusion across all subject areas and the whole school environment.
- Foster a school culture where students “see themselves” reflected in the curriculum, displays, and activities.
- Ensure library materials and textbooks represent the lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.
- Support bystanders to report racist behaviour, reinforcing accountability and community responsibility.
- Continue to provide support for staff to meet the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with parents.
- Provide guidance and support for staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their families.

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### Preventing Religious Identity bullying

- Continue to grow the Interfaith Group each year by inviting more students to join
- Continue to enhance the oratory as an interfaith sacred space in the school.
- Continue to promote and celebrate various religious festivals
- Promote diversity and inclusion in the classroom and whole school environment.
- Encourage student-led initiatives that raise awareness of different religions and beliefs.
- Invite guest speakers from diverse faith backgrounds to discuss beliefs, values, and tolerance.
- Include content about different religions and ethical perspectives in the curriculum where appropriate.
- Provide staff CPD on recognising and addressing religious identity bullying.
- Encourage peer support and mentoring for students experiencing religious-based bullying.
- Celebrate Religious Diversity Week or themed assemblies to promote understanding and respect.
- Ensure school policies explicitly address discrimination based on religion or belief.
- Offer safe spaces for students to discuss their beliefs and experiences respectfully.

## Supervision and Monitoring

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviours to facilitate early intervention where possible. (See Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Teachers are expected to supervise their classes at all times and monitor student behaviour and well-being.
- Substitution arrangements are in place for all absent teachers to ensure classes are supervised and student well-being is maintained.
- Staff are timetabled to supervise key areas including the lunch hall, corridors, toilets, astro, and outside entrances.
- Staff supervise students during school activities, sports, trips, and outings to ensure safety, behaviour management, and wellbeing.
- Staff maintain high visibility during class changeover times to monitor behaviour, promote safety, and support wellbeing.
- CCTV cameras are used throughout the school to support supervision, monitor behaviour, and ensure student safety.
- Staff observe relationships between students in class and around the school, note absence patterns, and educate students on the importance of behaving respectfully.
- The Care Team meets weekly to discuss any concerns brought to their attention.
- All visitors to the school are supervised at all times and are never left alone with students.
- Murals, artwork, and signage are used to promote the school's values such as equality, diversity, inclusion, and respect.
- Respect for all is embedded at the heart of the Code of Behaviour.
- Induction programmes are provided for new students.
- Team-building days are organised for students.
- Tutor time sessions are used to support student wellbeing and behaviour.
- Cyber safety talks are delivered to students.
- Extra-curricular activities support student engagement and positive behaviour.
- Stand-Up Awareness Week is held to address key wellbeing themes.
- Restorative Practice is used to resolve conflicts and strengthen relationships.
- Well-being initiatives are implemented across the school.
- Culture Day celebrates diversity and inclusion within the school community.
- Regular class and whole-school surveys monitor student wellbeing and school climate.
- Partnerships with parents through meetings and events help address behaviour and support students.
- Year group assemblies reinforce school values, expectations, and wellbeing strategies.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

### 1) Responsible Persons

The school deems that every staff member has the responsibility for reporting any incident of unwanted negative behaviour, harassment or bullying. The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are as follows:

Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, Deputy Principal & Principal.

### 2) Reporting Procedure

If a student is the victim of bullying or is aware that bullying is occurring, they are encouraged to share this information with a responsible adult. This is responsible behaviour, not “telling tales,” as it allows the school to address the situation and end the distress of the student involved. Sometimes, students and parents worry that reporting bullying might make things worse. At St. Aidan’s Community School, our experience shows the opposite: addressing the issue promptly usually leads to a positive resolution.

- Any student or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All members of staff must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant Year Head.

### 3) Investigation Procedure

The School will investigate the following criteria to clarify if bullying has occurred. **For an incident to be considered bullying, it must satisfy the following criteria:**

- Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
- Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
- Is the behaviour repeated?

**When bullying behaviour is alleged, the school will:**

- 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

The steps that the school will take 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)

### **1. Initial Listening and Documentation**

The Year Head or designated staff member (Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain, Deputy Principal or Principal.) will meet with the student(s) reporting the incident to listen to their account and record details accurately. The focus is on ensuring the student(s) feels heard, safe, and supported.

### **2. Investigation and Information Gathering**

The Year Head or designated staff member will gather information by speaking individually with all students involved to understand different perspectives on the incident. If necessary, teachers may ask each student to provide a written account of their experience.

### **3. Assessment of Bullying Criteria**

Based on the gathered information, the Year Head or designated staff member assesses whether the behaviour meets the criteria of bullying, focusing on aspects such as repetition, intentional harm, and power imbalance. The *Bí Cineálta* definition of bullying is applied for clarity.

### **4. Consultation with Relevant Staff and Parents**

The Year Head or designated staff member will consult with other relevant staff (leadership or student support team) and inform the parents or guardians of the students involved. Parents and guardians are included early in the process to foster a collaborative approach.

### **5. Development of an Intervention Plan**

If bullying is confirmed, an intervention plan is created to stop the bullying behaviour and support all parties involved. This may include serious sanctions such as suspension for the perpetrator and in time, mediation (if appropriate), counselling support, and additional monitoring of the students involved.

### **6. Implementing Restorative Approaches**

Where possible, restorative practices are used to encourage accountability and facilitate reconciliation between parties. Mediation or restorative meetings are conducted only if all involved students consent.

### **7. Ongoing Monitoring and Support**

Both the student experiencing bullying and the student displaying bullying behaviour receive ongoing support and monitoring. This may include regular check-ins, peer support, and additional supervision in shared areas.

### **8. Progress Review and Follow-Up**

Within 20 school days of implementing the intervention plan, the designated teacher meets with all involved parties to assess if the bullying behaviour has ceased and if support needs have been met. Parents are also updated on the progress.

### **9. Further Actions if Necessary**

If the bullying behaviour persists, additional disciplinary measures may be applied in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. Further support strategies, including engagement with external services, may also be considered.

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*.

## Recording of bullying behaviour

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.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

1. Record all incidents of bullying behaviour (use appendix 1 for initial reporting of the bullying behaviour). The report will then be given to the Year head.

Record the following details:

1. Source of bullying
2. Location of incident
3. Date and time of the incident
4. Form/s of bullying behaviour
5. Type/s of bullying behaviour
6. Description of the bullying behaviour
7. Impact of the bullying behaviour
8. Details of action taken, in line with the Code of Behaviour.

2. Record how the incident was investigated (use appendix 2)

Record the following details:

1. Source of bullying
2. Location of incident
3. Date and time of the incident
4. Form/s of bullying behaviour
5. Type/s of bullying behaviour
6. Date of initial engagement with student(s)/parent(s)
7. Views of student(s)/parent(s) regarding the actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour
8. Date of review with student(s)/parent(s) to determine if bullying behaviour has ceased, and the views of students and their parents in relation to this.

Note any involvement with external services or supports. Keep the records according to the school's record-keeping policy and in line with data protection rules.

In the Year Head's Student Files, place a copy of the record there to help the support team provide consistent help for the student's well-being.

## Requests to Take No Action

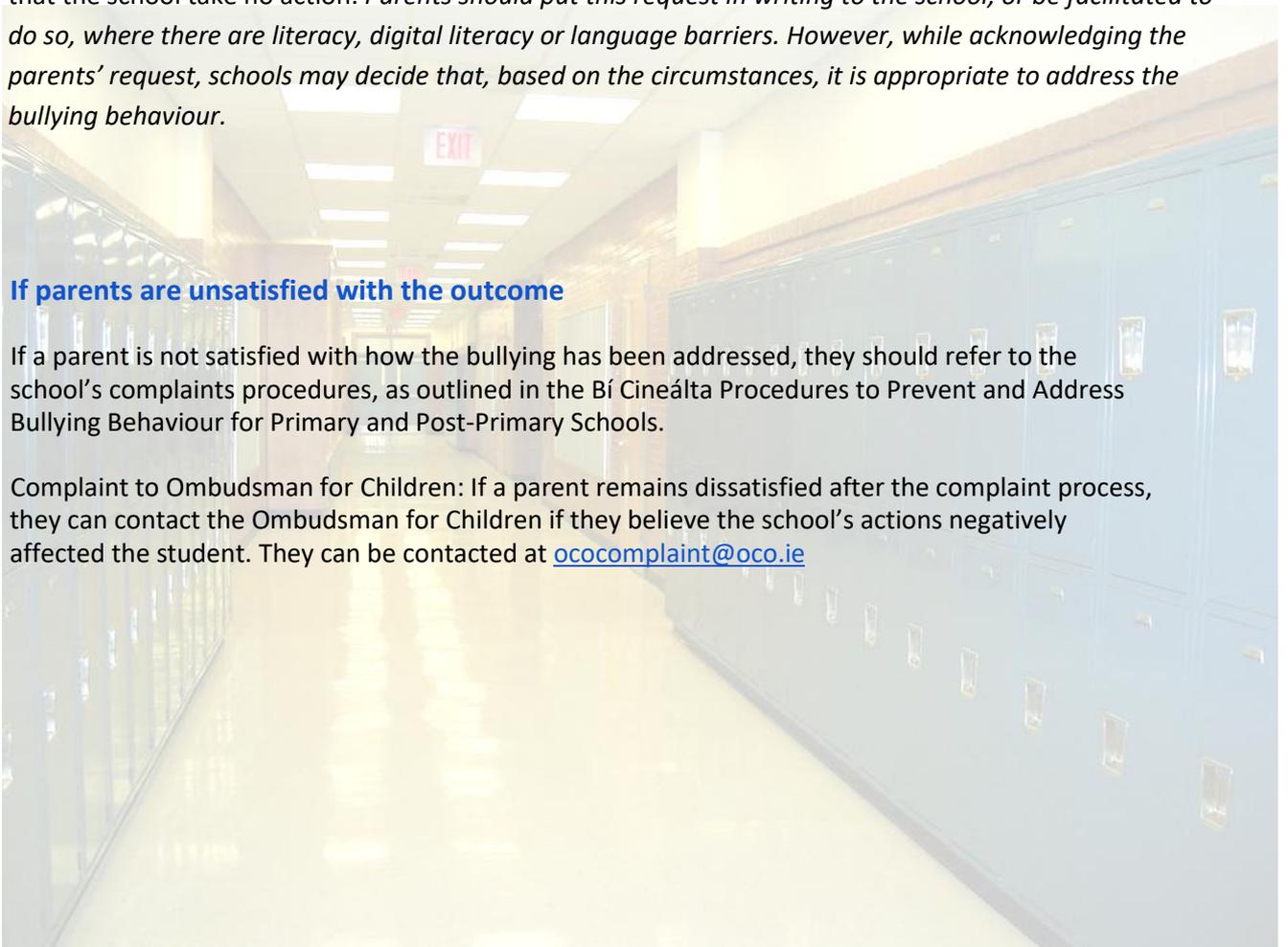
A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask a member of staff to do nothing about the behaviour other than “look out” for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them. Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

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

## If parents are unsatisfied with the outcome

If a parent is not satisfied with how the bullying has been addressed, they should refer to the school’s complaints procedures, as outlined in the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Complaint to Ombudsman for Children: If a parent remains dissatisfied after the complaint process, they can contact the Ombudsman for Children if they believe the school’s actions negatively affected the student. They can be contacted at [ococomplaint@oco.ie](mailto:ococomplaint@oco.ie)



## Support

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):

### Students Who Experience Bullying

- **Counselling and Emotional Support:** Access to the guidance counsellor or external support services for individual sessions to help manage the impact of bullying. These may include: -National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), Oide, National Parents Council (NPA), CAMHS, Jigsaw
- **Quiet Spaces:** Provision of quiet spaces, such as the library or oratory, where students can feel secure and supported during school hours.
- **Regular Check-Ins:** Scheduled meetings with a designated teacher or trusted adult to ensure the student feels supported and safe

### Students Who Witness Bullying

- **Encouragement to Report:** Reinforcing the importance of reporting bullying behaviour and providing clear guidance on how to report safely.
- **Support and Education on Bystander Impact:** Offering information on the positive role bystanders can play and conducting empathy-building activities to foster a culture of kindness and inclusion.
- **Counselling Access:** Witnesses of bullying may experience anxiety or guilt; they have access to the guidance counsellor/ Chaplain if they need to discuss the impact of witnessing such behaviour.

### Students Who Display Bullying Behaviour

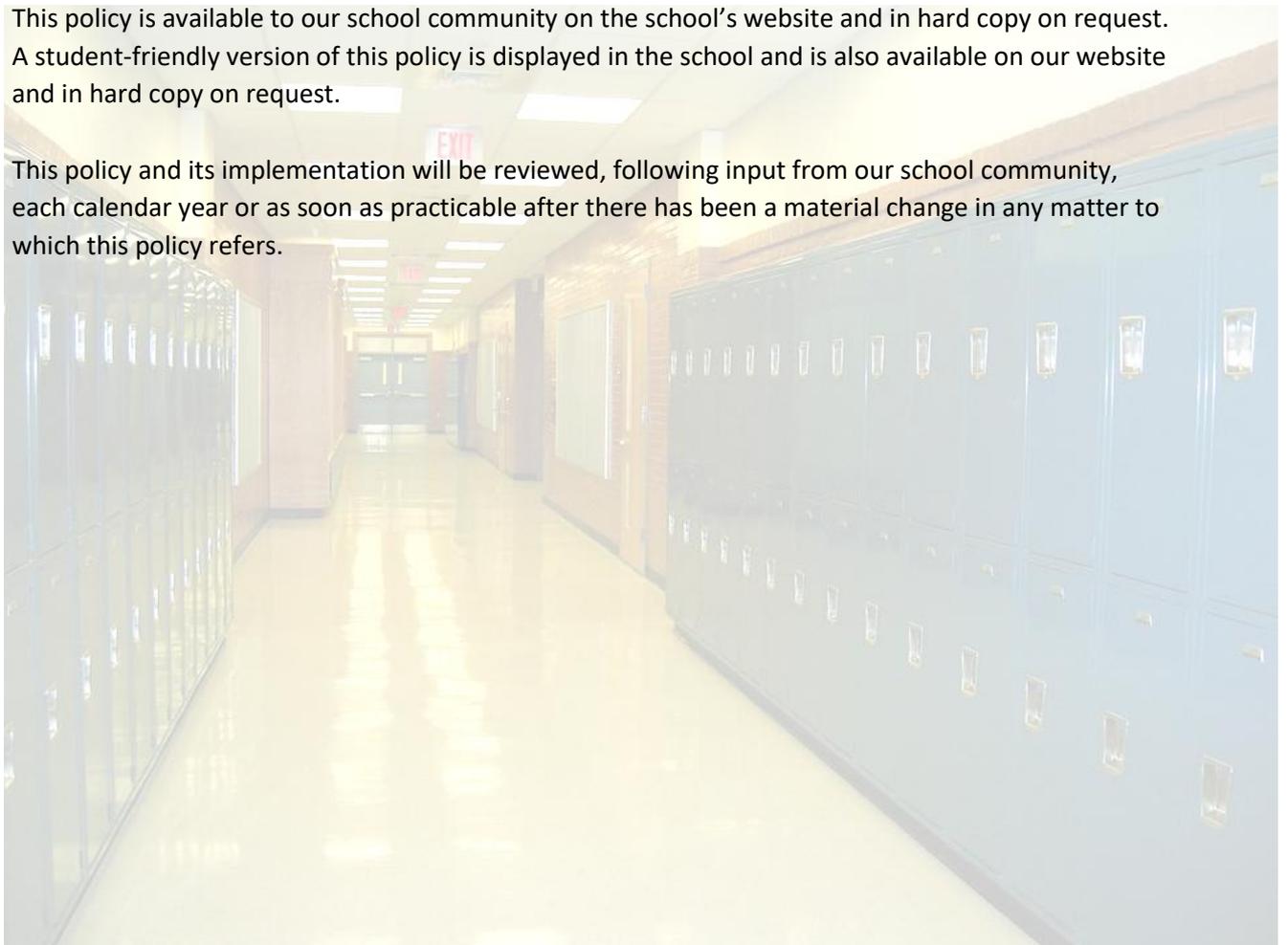
- **Behavioural Interventions:** Development of a tailored intervention plan, with the support of the BOT (Behaviour for Learning) teacher, focusing on behaviour change, with specific, positive goals.
- **Restorative Practices:** Using restorative conversations or mediation to help the student understand the impact of their behaviour, fostering accountability and empathy (where appropriate and consented by both parties)
- **Regular Monitoring and Mentorship:** Assigning a staff mentor to monitor and support the student as they work towards positive behaviour changes, with regular check-ins.
- **Parental Involvement and Support Programs:** Collaborating with parents and guardians to reinforce positive behaviour at home, ensuring a consistent approach between school and family.
- **Counselling or Additional Support:** Providing counselling to address underlying issues, such as low self-esteem or past experiences of bullying, which may be influencing the student's behaviour.

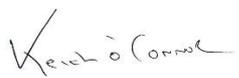
## Section D: Oversight

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

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

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



Signed: 

Date: 02-09-2025

(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Signed: 

Date: 02-09-2025

(Principal)

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Student friendly Bí Cineálta Policy

Appendix B: Checklist to analyse if bullying behaviour has occurred

Appendix C: Bullying incident student statement form

Appendix D: Bullying Incident report form

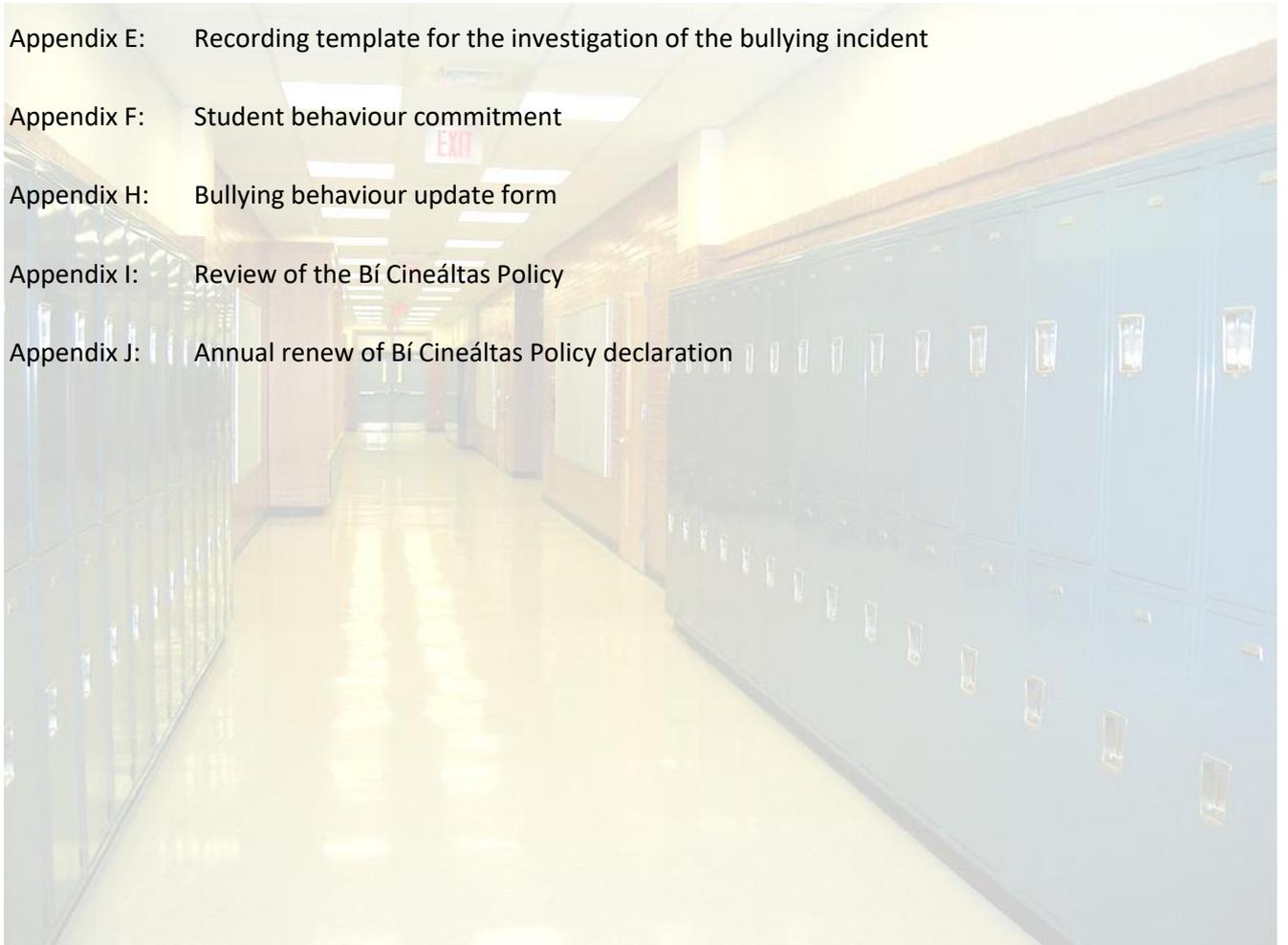
Appendix E: Recording template for the investigation of the bullying incident

Appendix F: Student behaviour commitment

Appendix H: Bullying behaviour update form

Appendix I: Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

Appendix J: Annual renew of Bí Cineálta Policy declaration



# Bí Cineálta!

We want everyone at our school to feel safe and happy.

If you think that you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied, you need to tell a teacher or another adult that you trust. They will know what to do to help.

Get help!

Tell someone!

Please tell someone if you think that you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied.

Bullying behaviour is when someone keeps being mean or hurtful to others on purpose over and over again.

If a student tells a staff member that they think they are being bullied, we will:

- talk with the student
- ask the student what they want to happen
- work out a plan together
- talk to their parents
- talk to the other student(s) involved
- talk with the other student's parents



St. Aidans Community School  
a Bí Cineálta policy to stop  
bullying behaviour.

We look at this policy every year to see what is working well or what could work better. We will ask you what you think



## Appendix B

### Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour, the Year Head should consider the following questions:

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?

If the answer to each of the questions above is **yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

Note: One-off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

If the answer to any of these questions is **No**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.



**Appendix D**

**Bullying Incident Report Form**

1. Name of student being bullied: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Class: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Name(s) and class(es) of students allegedly engaged in bullying behaviour:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. Source of bullying concern/report (tick as relevant):

Student concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Student/s	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Location of incident(s) (tick as relevant):

Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	School grounds	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Out of school eg. school trip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>	School club/society	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lockers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Canteen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outside of school hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Date and time of incident (s)  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

7. Name of person(s) who reported the alleged bullying concern:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

8. Form of bullying (tick as relevant):

Physical Aggression		Verbal	
Damage to property		Extortion	
Exclusion		Relational	
Cyber- Bullying		Intimidation	
Malicious Gossip		Written	

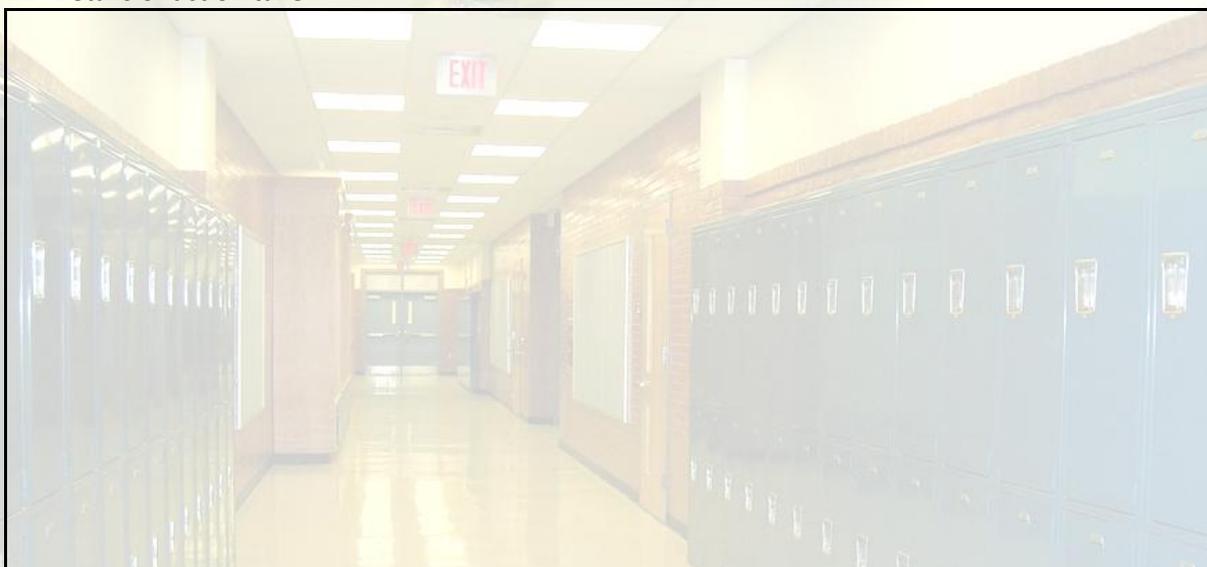
8. Type/s of bullying behaviour (tick as relevant):

Disablist		Physical appearance	
Gender identity		Racist	
Exceptionally able		Cultural	
Homophobic/transphobic		Religious Identity	
Sexist		Sexual harassment	

9. Brief description of bullying behaviour:

10. Impact of bullying behaviour:

11. Details of action taken:



Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix E**

Recording template for the investigation of the bullying incident

Meeting with Parent/ Guardians

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) and class(es) of students allegedly engaged in bullying behaviour:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Date and time of incident (s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Details of bullying

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Date of initial engagement with student(s)/parent(s)

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Views of student(s)/parent(s) regarding the actions to be taken to address bullying

behaviour

11. Date of review with student(s)/parent(s) to determine if bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this.

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12. Engagement with external services/supports (if any)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix F**  
**St. Aidan's Community School**  
**Student Behaviour Commitment**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

I recognise that my fellow students and I are all unique in many ways - such as our hair colour, skin colour, clothing, height, weight, size, accents, religions, nationalities, sexual orientations, past and current homes, hobbies, personalities, academic abilities, study habits, athletic skills, musical preferences, and much more.

I don't want to be treated unfairly or made to feel bad because of any of these differences, or simply because someone might not like me.

I understand that I have the right to be different, and no one has the right to treat me unfairly or be unkind because of that.

I know I am entitled to fair and respectful treatment both in St. Aidan's Community School, in line with the school's B'í Cineálta Policy & Code of Behaviour, and outside of school as well.

Likewise, I recognise that all students deserve to be treated with fairness, equality, and respect. It is wrong to treat anyone in any other way. Therefore, I promise to treat all my fellow students with fairness, equality, and respect, regardless of our differences or personal feelings.

In particular: (Handwrite below "I will always treat (Name) equally, fairly and respectfully")

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix H**



**Bullying Behaviour Update  
for the Board of Management meeting of  
St. Aidan's Community School  
Date \_\_\_\_\_**

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:

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

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 Cineáltas 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.

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ School Principal

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson of the BOM:

## Appendix I

### Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management (the Board) 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

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? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school. \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

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

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3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student-friendly policy on the school website? \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

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

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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 school'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 school uses to prevent bullying behaviour?

Yes  No

8. 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

9. Has the Board discussed how the school 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 school'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?

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14. 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:

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15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has 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 school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour  Yes  No

18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?  Yes  No

19. 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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

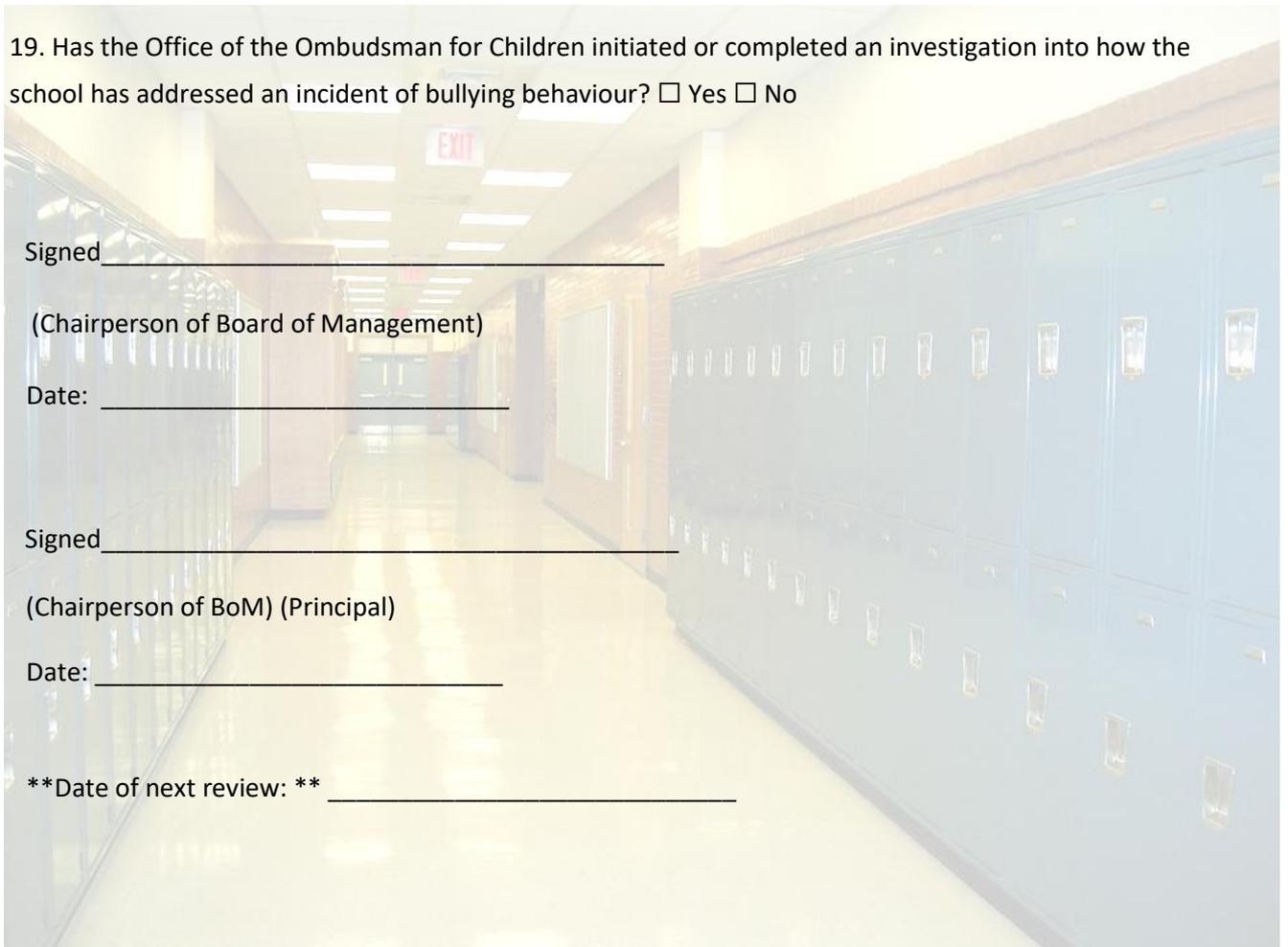
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of BoM) (Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Date of next review: \*\*** \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix F**

**Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the school’s Bí Cineálta Policy**

The Board of Management of **St. Aidan’s Community 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 \_\_\_\_\_ [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 \_\_\_\_\_

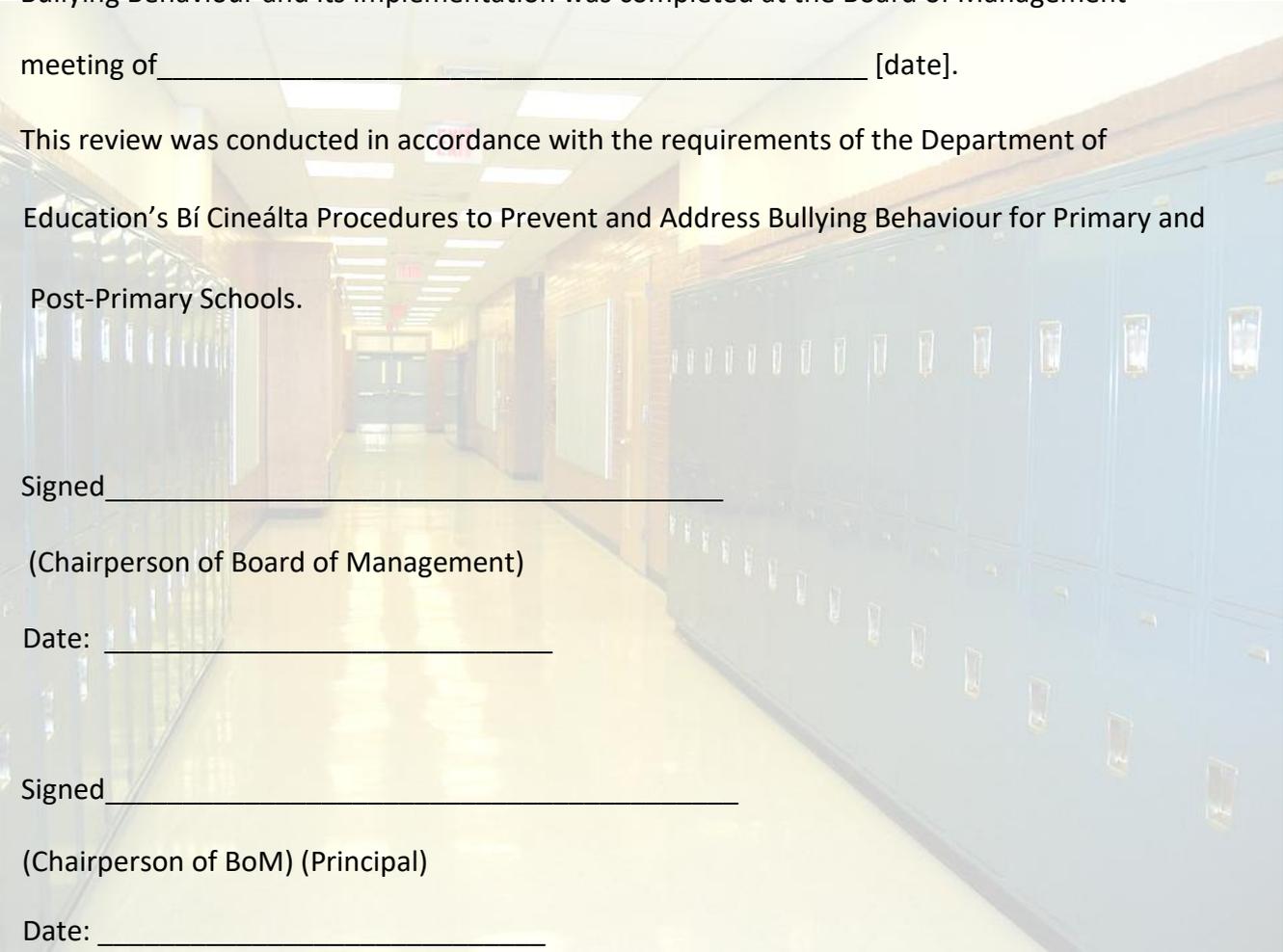
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of BoM) (Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## References

Citizens Information (2025) The Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989

<https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/justice/criminal-law/criminal-offences/law-on-hate-speech/>

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National Youth Council of Ireland (2025) Coco's Law

<https://www.youth.ie/documents/cocos-law/>

Oireachtas (2025) Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020

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Webwise (2025) Beinctrl. <https://www.webwise.ie/beinctrl/>

Webwise (2025) Coco's Law <https://www.webwise.ie/lockers/cocos-law-lesson/>

