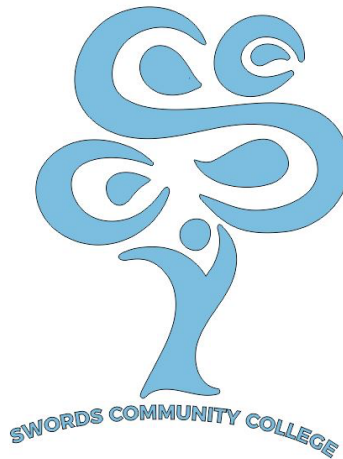




Bí Cineálta Policy Swords Community College 2025

**Date for Review:
June 2027**

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal (Secretary to Board)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Swords Community College Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Swords Community College has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

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

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

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

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

Definition of bullying

Core definition of Bullying:

Bullying is a 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.

An act of bullying is defined if it contains all the following elements:

1. Targeted behavior.
2. Repeated behaviour.
3. The imbalance of power.

It is important to note that not all perceived harmful behaviours are intentional. Some behaviours, particularly among neurodivergent students, may not be intentional, malicious or deliberate but may appear disruptive due to sensory, social or emotional differences. These must be understood contextually and are not automatically considered bullying or misbehaviour.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:

A one-off instance of negative behavior 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 behavior.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying 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 behavior 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 nonconsensual 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 1989¹¹, 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.

When bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern:

Section 10 of the Children First Act, 2015 places a statutory obligation on schools, as a "provider of a relevant service" to ensure, as far as practicable that each child attending the school is safe from harm while attending school or otherwise participating in school activities.

Teachers registered with the Teaching Council are Mandated Persons under the Children First Act. They have a legal obligation under the Act to report harm of children that meets or is above a defined threshold to Tusla, and to assist Tusla if requested, in assessing a concern which is the subject of a mandated report. If the

concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but a teacher feels that it is a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child, a report should be made to Tusla under the Children First National Guidance. The Children First National Guidance applies to everyone. All school staff and volunteers must report reasonable concerns to Tusla.

In determining when bullying behaviour should be reported to Tusla the following factors should be considered:

- the impact on the child.
- protective appropriate action taken by the parents.
- protective appropriate action taken by the school.
- engagement of child family with support services such as NEPS/PSS.

How bullying behaviour occurs:

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

Direct bullying behaviour:

- Physical bullying behavior
- Verbal bullying behaviour
- Written bullying behaviour
- Extortion – where something is obtained through force or threats.

Indirect bullying behaviour:

- Exclusion
- Relational

Online bullying behaviour:

Online bullying behaviour (cyber bullying) is carried out using information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, e-mail, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chat rooms and other online technologies.

This form of bullying behaviour can include:

- sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
- posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent making and, or participating in fake profiles on a social network to

impersonate and, or humiliate other students

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

Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.

As online bullying uses technology to carry out bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact it can occur at any time. Many types of bullying behaviour can be facilitated through online bullying. In many cases online bullying can relate to an offline experience with someone unknown to the student. This type of bullying may involve forms of sexual exploitation including but not limited to, sextortion and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence.

Where bullying can occur:

Bullying behaviour can happen anywhere, online or offline and at any time, but there are certain places and times where bullying behaviour can be more likely to occur. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Inside school:

- schoolyard.
- in the classroom.
- other areas e.g. corridors, toilets, changing rooms, locker areas, gym, canteen, assembly hall, showers.

Outside school:

- coming to and from school.
- online bullying.

Types of bullying behaviour:

There are many different types of bullying behavior. These can include the following which is not an exhaustive list:

- **Disablist bullying behaviour:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of perceived or actual disability or additional need.
- **Exceptionally able bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their high academic ability or outstanding talents.

- **Gender identity bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual gender identity.
- **Homophobic/Transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying:** behavior or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual membership of the LGBTQ+ community
- **Physical appearance bullying:** behavior or language that intends to harm a student because of their physical appearance. Students who look different can be mocked or criticised about the shape, size or appearance of their body
- **Racist bullying:** behavior or language that intends to harm a student because of their race or ethnic origin which includes membership of the Traveller or Roma community. Racism is defined in the National Action Plan Against Racism as a “form of domination which manifests through those power dynamics present in structural and institutional arrangements, practices, policies and cultural norms, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin”
- **Poverty bullying:** behaviour that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources
- **Religious Identity bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity
- **Sexist bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex.
- **Sexual Harassment:** any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of the student.

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

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

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	11/2/2025 28/3/2025 25/05/2026	Staff Survey Staff Consultation during half-day closure Review and consultation
Students	11/2/2025 25/05/2026	Student Survey Student Review
Parents	20/1/2025 25/05/2026	Parent survey Parent Review
Board of Management	05/2/2025 08/4/2025 08/4/2025 20/05/2026	Presentation to BOM on need for school closure and updates Presentation to the BOM Ratification of Policy and feedback from school community
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	25/2/2025 11/2/2025 12/2/2025 10/2/2025	Bus/taxi driver survey Bus escort survey Canteen staff survey Auxillary staff survey
Date policy was approved: 27/05/2026		
Date policy was last reviewed: N/A – Swords CC Antibullying Policy ratified 08/04/2025		

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Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate:

Supervision:

Appropriate supervision is an important measure to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. Swords Community College will take all reasonable measures to

ensure the safety of our students and to supervise students when students are attending school or attending school activities.

Please see Supervision (Draft) Policy 2025

Culture and Environment:

- A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The school environment should be a space where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.
- Relationships between all members of the school community should be based on respect, care, integrity and trust. Open communication between the patron, boards of management, school staff, students and their parents help to foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibilities in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.
- The school leadership team influences the school culture and set the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.
- Each member of school staff has a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.
- Students can shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all.
- Parents, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.

A Telling Environment:

Swords Community College supports a 'telling' environment. Swords Community College aims to promote an environment such that students feel comfortable to talk about concerns regarding bullying behaviour.

The reasons why students may not report include the following:

- fear of retaliation from the student displaying the bullying behaviour or their friendship group
- concerns about being seen as a "tell-tale" for reporting bullying behaviour
- fear that the adult may make the situation worse
- fear that the adult doesn't have the knowledge and skills to deal appropriately with the bullying behaviour
- fear that the adult may deny access to their smart phone

Safe Physical Spaces:

The creation of safe physical spaces supports psychological safety and is an important measure to prevent bullying behaviour. Spaces that have a clear line of sight make it easier for school staff to supervise students. Hidden spaces in hallways, around staircases and in the schoolyard can be areas where there is a greater risk for bullying behaviour to occur.

Swords Community College will create safe physical spaces by:

- Avoidance of students congregating in certain hidden areas.
- Increasing supervision where possible.
- ensure good lighting is present to avoid dark corners or spaces.
- Remove visual barriers from windows such as posters.
- Install mirrors to improve visibility and reduce blind spots
- improve the visibility of school staff who are supervising at break times including during yard duty
- murals, artwork and signage can help schools to promote the school's values of respect, resilience, teamwork and excellence.
- Collaborative learning spaces
- Maintenance of school grounds

A Trusted Adult:

- The concept of "a trusted adult" can be an effective strategy to encourage students to report if they or another student is experiencing bullying behaviour. Staff could support this strategy by letting students know that they can talk to them.
- Students who witness bullying behaviour should be supported and encouraged to report the behaviour to a trusted adult in the school so that the behaviour can be addressed.
- Students who witness bullying behaviour on social media have an important role in helping to address the behaviour by reporting the witnessed behaviour to a trusted adult.
- The trusted adult should reassure the student that they have done the right thing by reporting the behaviour.

- The trusted adult should, without delay, inform the member of staff - Year-Head/Anti-bullying Coordinator or Principal/Deputy Principal, who has responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour
- The trusted adult should continue to support the student, as appropriate, while the behaviour is being addressed by the relevant member of staff.

Curriculum and Planning

The curricular subjects offered to students provide opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity.

- SPHE specifications aim to help students to feel empowered to create, nurture and maintain respectful and healthy relationships with themselves and others.
- The RSE strand of the specification also provides space for students to examine and consider relationships and human sexuality which can foster an understanding of diversity which may help to reduce gender and identity-based bullying as well as sexism and sexual harassment.
- Students can also consider diversity and inclusion via the ETB's Identity, Multi-beliefs and Values Patron's Curriculum which aims to encourage respect and understanding of different beliefs, perspectives and ways of living.
- In Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE), there is a focus on the interdependence of people in communities, at local as well as national and international levels.
- History and, at Senior Cycle, Politics and Society can be used to raise awareness of racism and colonialism.

Relationships and Partnerships

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. These interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as student councils, school clubs, parents' associations and student support teams. Please see list below in Section C, outlining the supports and programmes used by the school to promote relationships.

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

Swords Community College Policy and Planning to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

- Code of Positive Behaviour
- Acceptable User Policy

- Mobile Phone Policy (draft)
- Supervision Policy (draft)
- Special Education Teaching Policy
- Autism Class Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- External Coaches Policy
- Changing for PE/Games Policy
- Guidance Plan
- Wellbeing Policy
- Child Protection Safeguarding Statement and Review

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- Class tutor
 - Year head
 - Anti-bullying Coordinator
 - Behaviour Coordinator
 - Guidance counselor
 - Deputy principal
 - Principal
 - Any member of staff with whom the student feels comfortable
-

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:

Addressing Bullying Behaviour:

The whole school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

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

Please see Appendix C: A guide to addressing bullying behaviour in Swords Community College when supporting those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour.

Please note in Swords Community College if a student reports bullying the incident should also be reported to the Year-Head and Deputy Principal/Principal.

The Year-head, Deputy Principal and Principal will refer the incident to the Anti-bullying Coordinator who will carry out a full investigation following the Guide to Addressing Bullying in Appendix C and the Bí Cineálta: Addressing Bullying Behaviour Flow-chart for reference (Appendix H).

The summary of the procedure is as follows:

- 1. Identifying if bullying has occurred** – Please note that incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful, but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Positive Behaviour.
- 2. Where bullying has occurred, please note the following and refer to Appendix C:**
 - 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.
 - Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in the school, but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school should support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken.
 - It is important for school staff to be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour. Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support. It is important that the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour is engaged with without delay so that they feel listened to, supported and reassured. The Year-head/tutor should be informed and referred to the Anti-bullying coordinator (Appendix D). In the absence of the anti-bullying coordinator, the Year-Head, Deputy Principal and/or Principal will engage directly. The Year-head, Deputy and Principal will be updated of all incidents of investigations into bullying at the student support team meetings weekly or more frequently as required.
 - School staff should identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.
 - A student's agency or sense of power can be decreased when they experience or witness bullying behaviour. When a student tells an adult that they feel that they are experiencing bullying behaviour they may feel that they are taking back some control over what is happening to them. It is very important that a student's agency is not decreased further by adults deciding what will happen next without consulting those involved.

- Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved must be contacted **(within 20 school days)** at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour.
- Before disciplinary measures are applied, behaviours by students with SEN will be reviewed with input from the SET team.

3. Record Keeping:

- it is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- a record should be kept of the engagement with all involved (Appendix G).
- this record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known as detailed in this policy, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.
- the record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour
- It is important to document the date of each of these engagements and the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.
- These records should be retained in accordance with the school's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations.
- Where a Student Support File exists for a student, schools are encouraged to place a copy of the record on the student's support file.

4. Requests to take no action

- A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than "look out" for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them.
- Where this occurs, 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 parent's request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

5. Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased

- The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved **no more than 20 school** days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.
- Important factors to consider as part of the review are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
- Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour. It can take time for relationships to settle and for supports to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behaviour occurred
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school should consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.

6. Complaint process

- If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
- Additional Information relating to schools' complaint procedures are available at the following link: <https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/parental-complaints/>
- In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been

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

Supports:

Supports are available to help prevent and address bullying behaviour.

These include the following:

- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Psychological Support Service (PSS)
- Oide
- Web wise
- Dublin City University (DCU) Antibullying Centre
- TUSLA
- National Parents Council

The following Programmes will run in Swords Community College:

- SPHE/RSE programmes.
- Fuse Programme
- Helping Hands Programme

The Following councils, groups, meetings and supports will take place in Swords Community College to manage and monitor bullying in the school:

Other initiatives include:

- Anti-bullying Coordinator.
- Meditation Room and Sensory Room
- Guidance Team
- Headstrong Student-led Committee.
- Cyberbullying talks.
- Cyberwise initiative.
- Parent webinars.
- LGBTQ+ Alliance Club.
- Ambassador School for Pieta House and Amber Flag Award.
- Darkness into Light participation.
- Positive Merit System.
- Student Council and Student Bill of Rights.
- School Leadership System.
- Prefect System.
- Digital Mentors – iLeaders.
- Student project notice board and wellbeing board.

- Ethos team and notice board and school-led initiatives.
- Anonymous reporting via the 'take action' box in GP area.
- Email reporting via the takeaction@swordsgcc.ie email address

The following teams, groups and leadership programmes will run to continue to create an atmosphere of respect, teamwork, excellence and resilience and to support staff and students:

- Anti-bullying Coordinator
- Anti-bullying Team
- Guidance Team
- Year Head and Tutor System
- Weekly Student Support Meetings.
- Middle management meetings
- Senior management meetings.
- Shared document for reporting between anti-bullying team, middle-and senior-management and guidance department.
- Ongoing CPD in relevant programmes

The following initiatives will be run annually in Swords Community College to help develop school community awareness:

- Friendship Week
- Stand-up Week
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Internet Safety Day
- Internet Safety Week.
- Wellbeing Week
- Fuse Programme
- Helping Hands Programme

Recording Bullying Behaviour:

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This record will include the form **and** type of bullying behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the initial engagement with students and their parents. Please see Appendix G for recording information.

The record will include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour. It will document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this. It will document the date of each of these engagements and the date that has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased. Any engagement with external services/supports will also be noted.

The records will be retained in accordance with Swords Community College's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations. Where a Student Support File exists for a student, a copy of the record will be placed on the student support file to assist the Student Support Team, in providing a consistent and holistic response to the support of the well-being of the students involved. The student support plan will be updated to incorporate response strategies and associated supports.

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

Bullying behavior update to Board of Management:

At each meeting of the Board of Management the principal will present an update on the number of incidents of bullying behaviour and the measures taken to prevent and address bullying behavior, see Appendix A. The purpose of the update is to inform discussion at board level on the effectiveness of the measures that the school is taking to prevent and address bullying behaviour and the effectiveness of the schools Bí Cineálta policy.

The update will include the following:

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

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update 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

- 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 is informed to 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 schools Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review
- the update will not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved

The Board of Management minutes will document:

- the number of new incidents of bullying behaviour,
- the number currently ongoing
- the total number of instances of bullying behaviour since the beginning of the school year as reported by the principal.

The minutes will also note where the board has considered the bullying behaviour verbal update and document when the board has decided that an urgent review of the school's Bí Cineálta policy is required.

The school will enhance oversight by tracking:

- Referrals and outcomes involving neurodivergent students
- Disciplinary patterns across identity and need groups

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, (Appendix E) following input from our school community, each calendar year (Appendix F) or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

The review process will include input from neurodivergent students, their families, and the SET team. The policy review will also include consultation with professionals in SEN and behavioural supports during the process.

List of Appendices:

Appendix A – Update to the Board of Management

Appendix B – Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy

Appendix C – A Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Appendix D – Referral form to the Anti-Bullying Coordinator

Appendix E – Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

Appendix F – Notification Regarding the Board of Management’s Annual Review of the school’s Bí Cineálta Policy

Appendix G – Anti- Bullying Record Forms

Appendix H – Bí Cineálta: Addressing Bullying Behaviour Flow-Chart

Appendix A

Bullying Behaviour Update



Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management of Swords Community College meeting of _____

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

Where incidents of bullying behaviour occurred, a verbal report was also issued following guidelines from Bí Cinneálta: Yes: _____ No: _____

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	

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

Signed: _____
School Principal

Date: _____

Signed: _____
Chairperson of the BOM:

Date: _____

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 were relevant:

Verbal Report Summary:

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	

Appendix B

Appendix B Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy



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! teacher!

Tell any teacher.

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

Our school has a Bí Cineálta policy to try 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.

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

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

When it happens a lot. Not just once.

Be Kind

SCC Bí Cineálta Policy 2025

Remember every student has a right to feel safe in school!

- At Swords Community College we are all committed to creating a safe environment in our school
- At Swords Community College we are committed to making everyone feel comfortable about reporting bullying behaviour
- At Swords Community College we are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all

If you need to report bullying behaviour, email takeaction@swordsccl.ie

Or speak to the following members of staff:

Anti-bullying coordinator:
Ms Kelly
Antibullying team:
Mr Connolly
Ms O'Keefe
Ms Fitzmaurice

Any teacher in the school you feel comfortable talking with

Alliance club teachers:
Ms Kelly
Ms Cassidy
Ms Canavan
Mr Reynolds

Appendix C

Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour:

The whole school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour. Schools should work in partnership with their patron, board of management, staff, students and their parents to develop and implement their Bí Cineálta policy.

This appendix is intended as a guide to addressing bullying behaviour. It is based on the information contained in Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Approach:

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

When addressing bullying behaviour teachers should:

- ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured
- seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- consider the age and ability of the students involved
- listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how
- best to address the situation
- take action in a timely manner
- inform parents of those involved

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred:

Bullying is defined in Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools as targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying 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.

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour you 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.

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

- if a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group
- at the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views
- each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting
- it may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

Where bullying behaviour has occurred:

- parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour
- it is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- a record should be kept of the engagement with all involved
- this record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bi Cineálta procedures), where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents
- the record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred:

- the teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement
- important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved
- the teacher should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this
- the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded
- any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted
- ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased

- if the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased
- if it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is

continuing to display the behaviour, then the school consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

- If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.
- if a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures.
- if a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student

Appendix D:

Counter Bullying form for Senior Staff Members

Name of staff member reporting incident:	
Date:	

Name of student being bullied:

Students involved in incident:

Name:	Class:

Please answer the following questions in as much detail as possible

What happened?:

When did it happen or is it currently happening?

Please fill in the details of parents contacted:

Date:	Name of parent contacted:

Other staff members that have been contacted about this incident:

	Name:	Date:
Priomhoide		
Leas Priomhoide		
Year head		
Guidance counsellor		
Tutor		
Class teacher		

Appendix E:

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?

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?

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

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?

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:

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

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

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

Appendix F

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

The Board of Management of Swords Community College 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)

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Appendix G: Reporting Forms

Bullying Record Form (1)

Your Name:	
Class:	
Date:	

Please answer the following questions in **as much detail as possible**:

<i>What happened?</i>
<i>Where did it happen?</i>
<i>When did it happen?</i>
<i>Who has involved?</i>
<i>Why do you think this happened?</i>

Signed: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY YEAR HEAD/TUTOR ONLY:**Relevant people notified:**

If applicable:	✓	Name	Date
Year Head			
Tutor			
Other Tutor (if alleged bully is in a different group)			
Guidance Counsellor			
Parent			
Teacher			

Relevant people notified if required:

	✓
Priomhoide	
Leas Priomhoide	

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Bullying Reflection Form (2)

Your Name:	
Class:	
Date:	

Please answer the following questions in **as much detail as possible**:

What were you thinking at the time?

Who has been affected by what has happened?

How do you think they felt at the time?

What do you think needs to happen next?

Signed: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

TO BE COMPLETE BY YEAR HEAD/TUTOR ONLY:
Restorative Meeting

People in attendance:

<i>What was discussed?</i>
<i>What was agreed?</i>
<i>What action was taken? (Warning, Sanctions, Referral, Agreement, Mediation, Other)</i>
<i>Suggestions for Follow Up:</i>

Relevant people notified:

If applicable:	✓	Name	Date
Year Head			
Tutor			
Guidance Counsellor			
Parent			

Relevant people notified if required:

	✓
Priomhoide	
Leas Priomhoide	

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Bullying Form (3)

Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

Name(s) and class of pupil(s) in bullying behaviour

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Type of bullying behaviour (tick the relevant box(es))

Physical Aggression	☐	Cyber-bullying	☐
Damage to Property	☐	Intimidation	☐
Isolation/Exclusion	☐	Malicious Gossip	☐
	☐	Other (Specify)	☐

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

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Type of bullying behaviour (tick the relevant box(es))

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
		Other (Specify)	

Where behaviour is regarded as identity-base bullying, indicate the relevant category

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Other (Specify)

Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

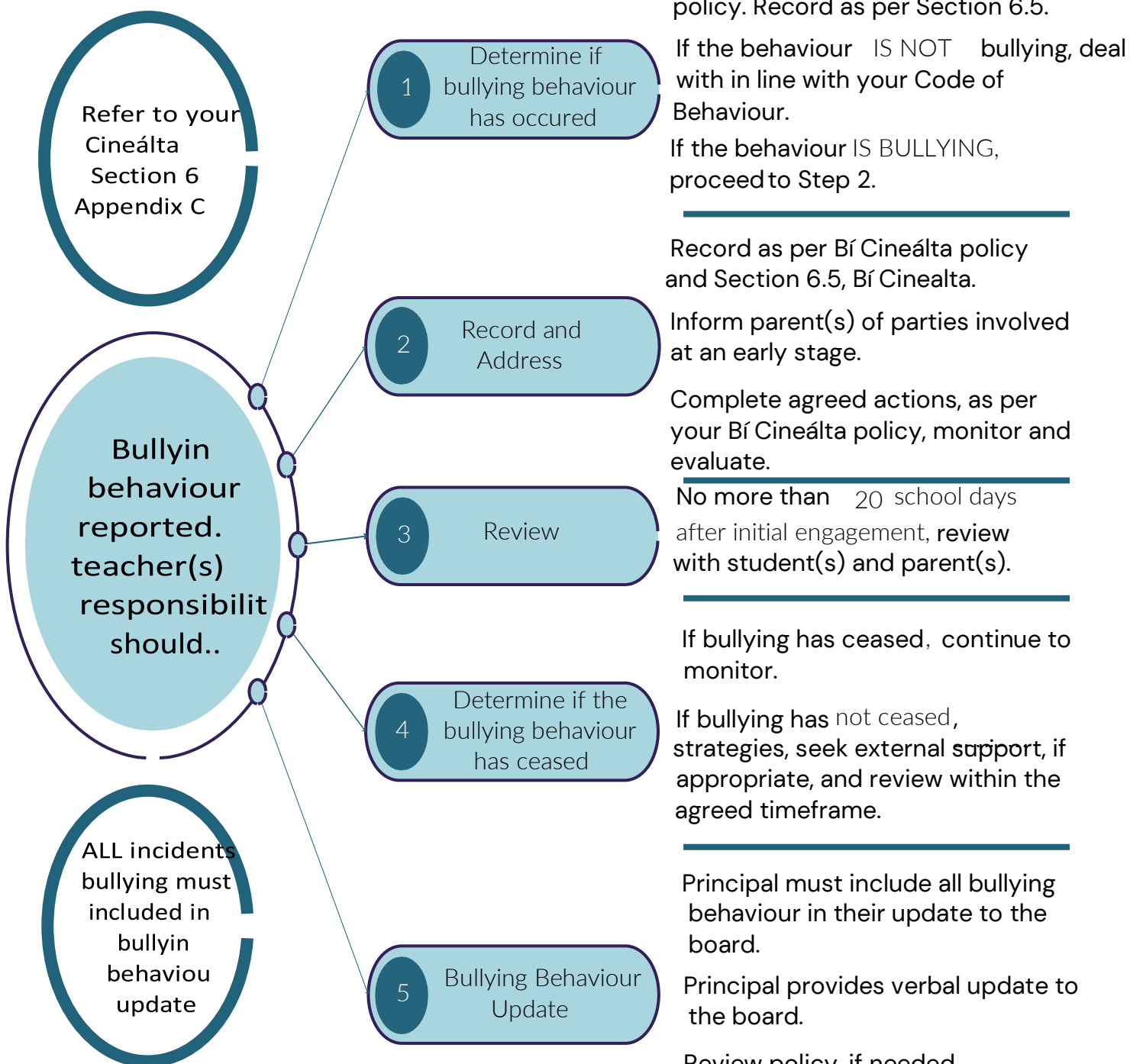
Date submitted to Priomhoide/Leas Priomhoide _____



Class Observation Form

Teacher_____Class_____Date_____

Time	Name of pupil(s)	Behaviour	Directed towards



Oide

Tacú leis an bhFoghlaim
Ghairmiúil i measc Ceannairí
Scolú agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional
Learning of School Leaders
and Teachers