# Bí Cineálta

# Stepaside Educate Together National School

# September 2025

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# Stepaside Educate Together National School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

## Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Stepaside Educate Together NS 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. This publication will be drawn upon when dealing with situations involving bullying behaviour.

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.

## Rationale

The policy as outlined was put in place to:

- Identify SETNS's commitment to the prevention of bullying behaviour
- Identify the positive strategies that we have in place in every class in order to prevent any incident of targeted and repeated behaviour
- Outline the support we have in place for pupils who experience bullying behaviour
- Outline the support we have in place for pupils who engage in bullying behaviour
- Identify strategies for a shared way forward for both parties
- Clarify procedures for pupil, staff, principal and parental engagement

## Aims of this policy

The aims and objectives of this policy can be summarized as follows:

- To prevent any bullying behaviour
- To heighten the community awareness of our practice and rationale
- To define the actions taken in instances of bullying and to define when these instances require sanctions from the Code of Behaviour to be imposed.

## 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.

Examples of Forms of Bullying Behaviour

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Physical Aggression** | pushing: kicking: punching: poking etc. | **Verbal** | Name-calling: humiliating; mimicking etc. |
| **Written** | In public places/passed notes/drawings | **Extortion** | Something obtained through force or threat |
| **Relational** | Non-verbal gestures (looks, eye-rolling etc); malicious gossip; silent treatment; manipulation of friend groups to make someone unpopular; 'do this or I won't be your friend anymore' etc. | **Online** | Sending/sharing/ nasty/offensive/ intimidating/ insulting/ messages/ images; posting private/sensitive content; impersonation; exclusion |
| **Exclusion** | Deliberately isolated/ignored/ excluded | **Personal Property** | Damage to/hiding of; stealing of; interference with belongings |

## Participation of all members of the community in Developing this Policy

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 | various dates inc half day school closure on March 14th '25 | Staff meeting- policy shared in advance and feedback sought |
| Students | 9/5/25 | Student council feedback sought. |
| Parents | 8/5/25 | PAC input - questionnaires given |
| Board of Management | 8/5/25 | Policy circulated in advance of BOM meeting and feedback brought to meeting |
| Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers | 7/5/25 | Secretary and Caretaker - questionnaire |
| Date policy was approved: 24th June 2025 | | |
| Date policy was last reviewed: | | |

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

| General Stepaside Educate Together National School **Strategies** to Prevent Bullying Behaviour |
|---|
| • Maintaining a positive and inclusive school culture and environment<br>• Relationships between all members of the school community should be based on respect, care, integrity and trust.<br>• 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<br>• The school leadership team influences the school culture and set the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing and addressing bullying behaviour<br>• 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 prompting 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.
- SETNS community is a 'telling' environment.
- All pupils in SETNS know a 'trusted adult'- this can be their class teacher, a previous class teacher, the Deputy Principal or Principal.
- SETNS creates safe physical spaces- there are no hidden corners on the yard, school staff supervise on yard, artwork and signage help to promote the school's values such as equality, diversity and respect.
- School grounds are well maintained to promote a sense of ownership and respect in the school community.
- A sense of belonging is created amongst the pupils where they are given ownership of their own space through art and creativity.
- The inclusion of places within schools for collaborative learning can also play a part in fostering a sense of belonging.
- SETNS offers a mix of organised activities during breaktime
- Teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful is promoted.
- Students have regular opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which helps to build a sense of connection, empathy and belonging.
- Range of curricular and extra curricular programmes on offer
- SPHE programme is covered
- Patron curriculum- 'Learn Together' is taught in each class
- Acceptable use policy, supervision policy, additional education needs policy and Code of Behaviour support implementation of our Bi Cinealta policy.
- Pupils contribute to policies as appropriate and child-friendly versions of important policies are developed for pupils.
- Engaging in appropriate teacher professional learning courses supports staff to prevent and address bullying behaviour.
- Staff are given opportunities to share their experiences and examples of best practice
- There is a range of training available for staff which relates to promoting inclusion and diversity in schools
- Relationships and partnerships are invested in through structures such as the Student Council
- Age-appropriate initiatives such as those dealing with navigating friendships, identity based bullying, racist bullying, homophobic/transphobic bullying, sexism and sexual harassment.
- Encouragement of peer support such as peer mentoring
- Supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience
- Promoting acts of kindness
- Teaching problem solving
- Active participation of parents in school life including those who may find it difficult or daunting to engage with the school due to being unfamiliar with the education system or language and cultural barriers

## The Curriculum:

Many areas of the curriculum support us in our prevention of bullying behaviours. These include:

- SPHE and learn Together (programmes which promote ethics, morality, kindless, tolerance and diversity)
- The Weaving Wellbeing programme (which specifically addressed issues of positive interpersonal relationships)
- The anti-bullying module of the SPHE curriculum (communication, conflict, friendship,

personal safety and many more topics)
- The Stay Safe programme- which specifically addresses personal protection skills
- The RSE programme (human sexuality and relationships have a particular relevance for identity-based bullying)
- Many other cross-curricular areas (English- literature to stimulate discussion, Geography/History: exploitation and dictatorships to illustrate negative aspects of power, PE; cooperation and channelling energies in a positive manner, Drama etc)

## Our School Events/activities/initiatives:

- Wellbeing week
- Buddy systems
- CPD to maintain staff awareness
- Assemblies promoting values system
- Display boards promoting same
- Peer mediation- 5th class
- SET postbox
- Worry box
- Zippy's Friends
- Friends for Life
- Resilience training in senior classes
- Anti-bullying week each year
- Playground leaders
- Muinteoir mail
- Neurodiversity week
- Friendship week
- Intercultural day

## Preventing Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying prevention is addressed through the SPHE curriculum.
Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online
communicating our acceptable use policy
referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour

## Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour

Maintaining an inclusive physical environment by displaying relevant posters
Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring
Challenging gender stereotypes
encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour
Workshops/seminars for pupils and staff on the topic

## Preventing racist bullying behaviour:

Foster a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students see themselves in their school environment
Having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
Provide supports for school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents.

Providing support to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students , and to encourage communication with their parents.
Inviting speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds.
Ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate loved experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds

## Preventing sexist bullying behaviour

Ensure staff members model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex
Ensure all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex
Celebrate diversity at school
Encourage parents to reinforce these values of respect at home

## Preventing sexual harassment:

Promote positive role models within the school community
Challenge gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

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

- SETNS supervision policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Child Friendly Acceptable Use Policy
- SETNS Bi Cinealta Policy
- SETNS Bi Cinealta Policy for pupils
- SETNS Communication Policy
- SETNS Code of Behaviour
- Integration policy
- Wellbeing policy

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- All staff are responsible for the safety of pupils
- ANA's will report incidents to relevant teachers
- The class teacher or support teacher, with the support of the principal, will take responsibility for addressing the behaviour
- A key adult with whom the pupil may have a special relationship may be involved
- The principal will be involved in all cases where bullying behaviour has been identified
- The principal will inform the BOM of a case that is being dealt with, without naming pupils or families.
- If the bullying behaviour continues, details of the case may be spoken of at the Board of Management meeting. All names will be redacted.
- In the process of addressing the bullying behaviour, where appropriate the Board of Management will follow procedures laid out in the Code of Behaviour policy

**Proactive strategies taken by the class teacher/support teacher may include:**

- Positive relationships between child and staff; identification of key adult
- Collaborative communications with pupil and hearing the voice of the student
- Visual timetables in class
- Predictable routines in the classroom and for other times such as assembly and lining up after breaks
- A tidy and visually calm classroom environment
- Emotional regulation strategies taught to the whole class
- Access to movement breaks within the classroom
- Access to sensory supports/breaks
- Calm corner in the classroom
- Environmental checklist used to assess the classroom environment (see *Special Educational Needs; Continuum of Support* for sample checklists)

- Sensory checklist
- Placement within the classroom
- Executive functioning supports
- Focused genuine praise
- Classroom-based interventions such as stamp or sticker charts
- Strategies to support student, e.g access to post-its as an alternative to talking out of turn and other ways to collect all pupils' responses
- Access, where appropriate, to learning support groups to support pupils where difficulties with content might be a trigger
- Flexible seating/access to quiet work areas
- Access to social groups where possible/deemed appropriate
- Basic needs checklist to identify any physical needs and to support access where necessary, e.g. bathroom schedule, extra snacks, water breaks etc.

**When bullying behaviour occurs, SETNS 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. The staff at SETNS know that age appropriate strategies in working with a Junior infant will differ hugely from strategies used with a pupil in 3rd class and different again from a pupil in 6th class.

> Understand that when working with younger children or those with developing social and emotional understanding- including some neurodivergent pupils- we will emphasise terms like 'unkind' or 'hurtful' rather than 'bullying' to better support their comprehension and learning.

> Deal with both parties in the context of the insight staff have of all pupils. Staff will have information about possible reasons why a pupil would act as inappropriately as engaging in bullying behaviour (additional needs, pupils affected by trauma, children anxious not to feel left out, neurodivergence etc.) and take these insights into consideration.

> Act in a nero-affirmative way, endeavouring to ensure that all pupils are in a state of positive emotional regulation when speaking with them

> Listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how they feel it best to address the situation

> Take action in a timely manner.The regulated period of response is 20 working days.

> Inform parents of those involved

> Think and act holistically, with the wellbeing of all pupils in mind. The discussions will not be shame-based.

We recognise that bullying behaviours and incidents can vary in severity. Some children may repeatedly engage in unkind behaviour without fully understanding its impact, while others may deliberately and manipulatively target a peer. Some may show remorse and stop the behaviour immediately , while others may continue despite intervention. As a school we are committed to addressing each situation appropriately, considering the intent, impact, and response of the child 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

## LEVEL 1:

- The principal will be informed and involved in all incidents of bullying and may be involved with all parties at this stage, depending on the nature and severity of the case. The Principal may be involved at any stage.
- The relevant teacher(s) will deal with the pupils in a holistic way
- The relevant teacher(s) will investigate all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour, where these take place within the school with a view to establishing the facts and bringing any such behaviour to an end. Some instances outside of the school may also have implications for the children's school experience and these will need consideration in some circumstances.
- The relevant teacher(s) will explore a 'preferred future' with both parties.
- The school, through the relevant teacher(s) will engage with individual pupils and then with a group of pupils should that be necessary.
- Pupils who are alleged to have been involved in bullying behaviour will be spoken to by the relevant teacher(s) to establish the nature and extent of the behaviour and any reasons for it. The process will engage in reflective practice and will consider all factors that may have contributed to the situation in hand.

Once it has been established that bullying behaviour is taking place:

- The relevant teacher(s) will emphasise that the intention is not to sanction but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop.
- The pupil involved in bullying behaviour may be asked to reflect on something kind that they might do for the other pupil as a restorative gesture. Often a note of apology will be required.
- Parents will be contacted at this stage, should the bullying behaviours be deemed serious enough.
- The relevant teacher(s) will complete a report, to include the findings of the talks with the pupils, the reactive strategies adopted, the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information.

Possible reactive strategies:

- Looking at our Code of Behaviour and how the bullying behaviour breaches it
- Discussion of the behaviour with the relevant teacher/pupil(s) who witnessed it.
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behaviour.
- Supported, collaborative reflection on the situation either immediately or following a period of time to support regulation.
- Explicit teaching of the upsetting and destructive outcomes of bullying behaviour
- Establishing a behaviour plan or contract that would eliminate all bullying type behaviours in the future
- Reactive strategies that take into account the perspectives and experiences of the pupil affected by bullying behaviour
- Possible withdrawal of an in-school privilege (Golden Time, local trip etc)
- Reparation- pupil who has displayed bullying behaviour to apologise to the pupil who was at the receiving end as directed by class teacher

Reviewing progress:

- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the relevant teacher will complete a report, to include the findings of the talks with the pupils, the reactive strategies adopted, the outcome of the intervention , as well as any other relevant information. This will be stored securely on Aladdin with each pupil's records. The name of the second party will not be in the document on either pupil's record; the second party will be registered as the pupil's initials (AB for example).
- It is important to remember that both parties (the pupil engaged in the offensive behaviour and the pupil(s) hurt) need support.
- The pupil(s)who have experienced bullying behaviour must feel that they have been listened to and believed.
- If a pupil has acknowledged the impact of their behaviour and commits to changing their approach and yet continues the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer just be considered as a single incident.
- If a pupil does not recognise that their behaviour is bullying behaviour and they refuse to comply with the resolutions/sanctions in this policy the school will have recourse to the sanctions in the Code of Behaviour including suspension.

## LEVEL 2: In the Event of the Bullying Behaviours Continuing

Where a pupil has been found to be engaged in bullying behaviour, has formally promised to stop and has broken that promise, this will be categorised as 'Level 2"- the relevant teachers will proceed as follows:

- Parent(s) /Guardian(s) will be contacted by the relevant teacher or principal and informed of the nature and extent of the bullying behaviour. This contact will be with a view to agreeing a strategy whereby a promise to end the bullying behaviour would be honoured.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will engage in contact with the principal and relevant teacher(s) (a meeting or phone calls or email) and involve the pupil in the design of an agreed plan of action. This will involve repairing the relationship with the pupil who has been bullied and some gesture of kindness for this pupil will be agreed. It will also acknowledge and emphasise the trust the school had placed in the pupil had been breached and an agreed reactive strategy must be sought. Parents and relevant parties (including the principal) in the school, will endeavour to deepen awareness of the effect of the pupil's behaviour on the pupil who has been bullied. This work will concentrate on developing empathy (Weaving wellbeing programmes, Walk Tall, Stay Safe etc) and the staff will be actively encouraging parental engagement and support.
- Reactive strategies will be discussed with the principal, parents and pupils and an agreed way forward will be found.

Possible reactive strategies:

- Any combination of steps from level one, including time away from the playground/pitch should this be the site of the bullying behaviour.
- Discussion of behaviour with the principal
- Completion of a more formal reflective activity where appropriate.
- Reflective session with relevant personnel during Golden Time or another discretionary time which suits all.
- Loss of the privilege of school trips and tours, if this is when the bullying behaviour has happened.
- Loss of privilege of school tours and trips as a consequence of breaking the initial promise to stop the behaviours.

## LEVEL 3; In the Event of the Bullying Behaviours Still Continuing

Should the pupil who is participating in the bullying behaviours persist despite all support and interventions, this will be classified as 'Level 3' and will be dealt with in direct alignment with sanctions for gross misdemeanours in the Code of Behaviour. Both the proactive and reactive strategies will be followed and sanctions up to and including 'voluntary removal from the school, suspension or expulsion' may be enforced.

**Requests to take no action:**

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.

## Recording of bullying behaviour:

All bullying behaviour will be recorded (see Appendix 1- Bi Cinealta reporting document) and stored securely and confidentially on Aladdin with each pupil's records. The name of the second party will not be on the document on either pupil's record: the second party will be registered as the pupil's initials (AB for example). 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*.

Should the case proceed to Levels 2 or 3, the principal will take a redacted copy to the Board of Management for information and advice.

The BOM will use the Bi Cinealta Appendix D, E and F as appropriate to record decisions.

## Complaint process:

If a parent is not satisfied with how buying 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 school's 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 handled, a student and/or parent 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.

The office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie

## 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.

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: Yvonne Bright Date: June 2025

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: Anne Carroll Date: June 2025

(Principal)

# Appendix A

## Bí Cineálta Recording Form

PLEASE ENSURE COPY IS STORED/FILED CORRECTLY ON ALADDIN & HARD COPY IN PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

In the interest of GDPR, please consider, when writing, who may be reading this in the future.

- Use initials only when referring to other students
- Remain short, concise and factual
- Avoid sharing opinions

1. **Date of Initial Engagement with Student(s) and Parent(s)** _____

2. **Name and Class of Pupil Experiencing Bullying Behaviour**

   Name: _____ Class: _____

3. **Name(s) and Class(es) of Pupil(s) Engaged in Bullying Behaviour**

4. **Name(s) of Person(s) Who Reported the Bullying Concern**

5. **Location(s) of Incidents**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yard/Pitch | | Toilets | |
| Classroom | | Other (specify) | |
| Corridor | | | |

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6. **Forms of Bullying Behaviour***

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Physical Aggression** | | **Personal Property** | |
| **Verbal** | | **Relational** | |
| **Written** | | **Online** | |
| **Extortion** | | **Other (specify)** | |
| **Exclusion** | | | |

7. **Type of Bullying Behaviour (related to)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ability | | Race/Ethnicity | |
| Physical Appearance | | Social Class | |
| Religious Identity | | Gender (sexism) | |
| Gender Identity / Homophobic / Transphobic | | Other (please specify) | |

8. **Brief Description of Bullying Behaviour and Its Impact, as Understood by Staff**

9. **Views of Student(s) Regarding Actions to be Taken to Address Bullying Behaviour**

**10. Views of Parent(s) Regarding Actions to be Taken to Address Bullying Behaviour**

**11. Details of Actions Taken (include reference to any external agencies involved, if appropriate)**

**12. Agreed Date/Timeframe for Review Meeting (within 20 days)**

**Signed: _____ Date: _____**

**(Relevant Teacher)**

**Date Submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: _____**

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# The following section to be completed at Review Meeting(s)

**13. Views of Student(s) Regarding Continuation/Cessation of Bullying Behaviour, Effectiveness of Strategies Used and Current Relationship Between Those Involved**

**14. Views of Parent(s) Regarding Continuation/Cessation of Bullying Behaviour, Effectiveness of Strategies Used and Current Relationship Between Those Involved**

**15. Details of Any Further Actions**

**16. Agreed Date/Timeframe for Review Meeting (if deemed appropriate)**

**17. Date It Has Been Determined That Bullying Behaviours Have Ceased, as Understood by Staff**

**Signed: _____ Date: _____**

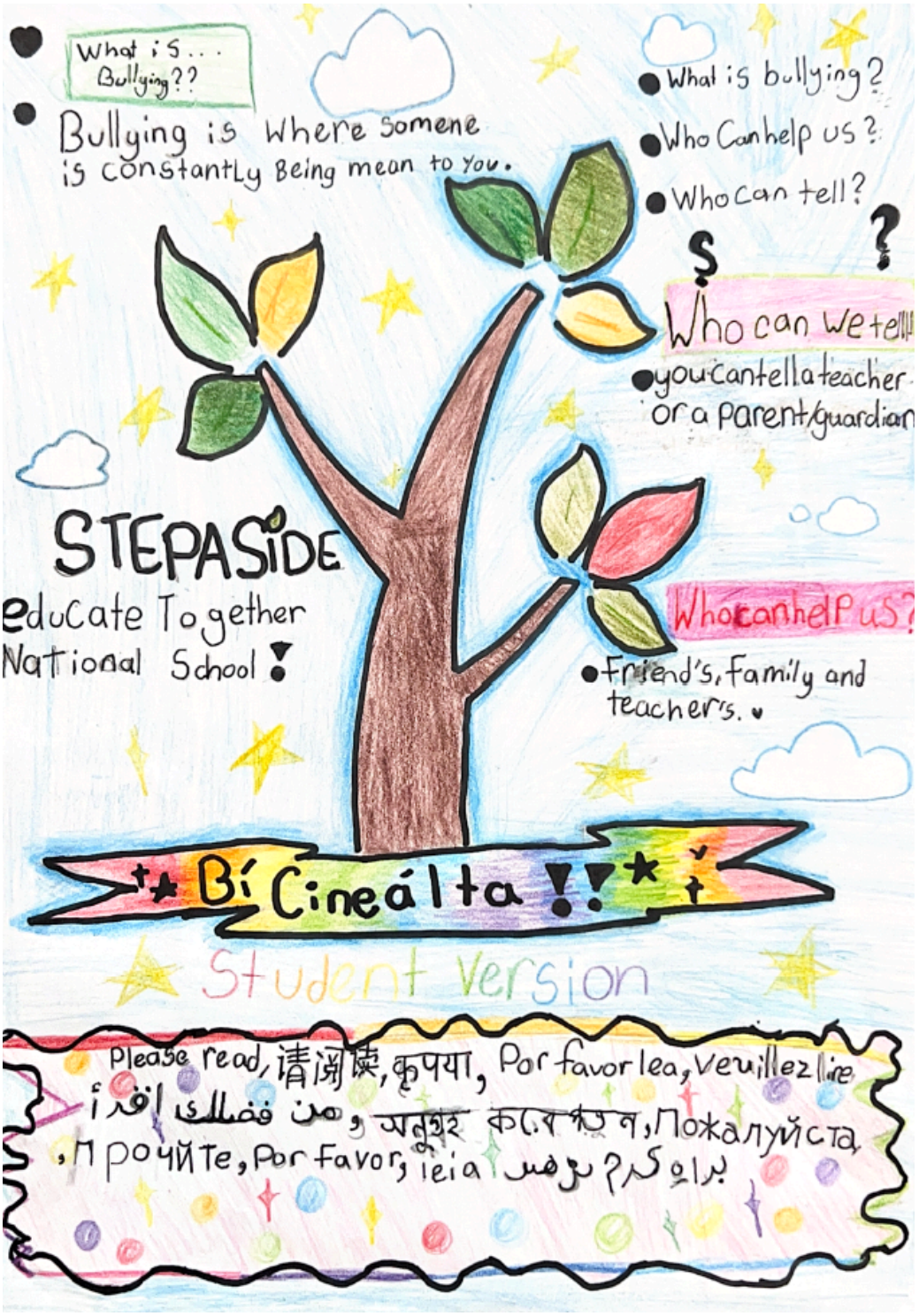
**(Relevant Teacher)**

**Date Submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: _____**

***Examples of Forms of Bullying Behaviour***

## Appendix B

### Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy



# 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
- 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 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 of all involved

- this record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known. (see section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bí 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 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 the 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's 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

## Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

**Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for the board of management meetings DD/MM/YYYY**

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

| | |
|---|---|
| Total number of **new** incidents of bullying behaviour since the last board of management meeting | |
| Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing | |
| Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of 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 etc.
- the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- if a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the board of management
- if the school's *Bí Cineálta* policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

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

# Appendix E

## Review of the *Bí Cineálta* policy

The Board of Management (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? _____/_____/_____

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 students?
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Have all the school staff been made aware of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and the *Bí Cineálta Procedures 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 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:_____ Signed:_____
(Chairperson of the board of management) (Principal)

Date: _____ 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 _____ confirms that the board of managemen'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 policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.*

Signed:_____ Signed:_____
(Chairperson of the board of management) (Principal)

Date: _____ Date: _____