



Anti-bullying Policy 25/26

1. Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the [Education \(Welfare\) Act 2000](#) and the code of behaviour [guidelines](#) issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Templemichael College has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the [Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour \(2024\)](#), which replace the Anti-Bullying Procedures of 2013. It has been developed in consultation with students, parents, staff, and the Board of Management, in line with the [Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying \(2022\)](#)

2. Scope

The School Bí Cineálta Policy ("the Policy") applies in the following contexts:

- 1.1. The relationships between students and other students.
- 1.2. The relationships between students and staff members.

The matter of intra-staff bullying is addressed in the following [LWETB policies](#).

- Bullying Prevention Policy – Compliant Procedure for ETB Staff.
- Harassment/Sexual Harassment prevention policy – complaint procedure for ETB staff.

3. Application

This policy comprehends bullying that is either perpetrated by students or experienced by students in Templemichael College. This policy applies to all members of the school community and to all forms of bullying behaviour, whether:

- When students are on the School grounds.
- When students are travelling to and from School.
- When students are on School tours and trips.
- When students are in school uniform.
- When students are engaged in extracurricular activities organised by the School.
- To any bullying behaviour outside School which seriously impacts on a student's participation in School.
- To any behaviour that adversely affects the school reputation or the education of any student in the School.



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4. Statement of Commitment

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the profound negative impact it can have on the lives of students and staff. In response, the Board of Management of Templemichael College has adopted the *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour (2024)* as the framework for addressing bullying and has also adopted this policy to ensure bullying is effectively prevented and tackled. The Board is fully committed to the key principles of best practice in this area.

Templemichael College is committed to protecting the rights of all students as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We acknowledge that bullying undermines these rights, and we place the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of every student at the heart of our work.

We will take all reasonable steps to prevent harassment or discrimination on any of the nine protected grounds under equality legislation. Allegations of bullying will be addressed through fair, transparent, and appropriate procedures for both students and staff.

As a diverse and inclusive school community, Templemichael College embraces equity, respect, and belonging as core values. We are dedicated to fostering a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where every member of our community is valued and has the opportunity to flourish equally.

4. Defining Bullying

In accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour (2024)* bullying is defined as follows.

- Bullying is targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm.
- The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature and can have lasting effects on the child experiencing the behaviour.
- Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.
- It is behaviour which is deliberate in nature and is unwanted. It is not accidental or reckless behaviour.

A detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures

The harm can be:

- Physical (e.g.: personal injury, damage to or loss of property)
- Social (e.g.: withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion)
- Emotional (e.g.: low self-esteem, depression, anxiety)



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- A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:

If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour, but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying, but, importantly, must be addressed under the School's Code of Behaviour.

- Some students with special educational needs, may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned, but in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they cannot control.
- Disagreement between students is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Basic Considerations:

- a. Every case of bullying is unique and different.
- b. Villiers School reserves the right at all times to protect the students in its care from bullying behaviour.
- c. Parents and Guardians should inform the School of episodes which they suspect to be bullying which have come to their attention through their students or through other parents and guardians or through social or personal media and have a negative impact on a student's participation in School.
- d. Investigations of alleged bullying can take a considerable amount of time.
- e. Investigations and resolutions of bullying behaviour must follow the process as outlined in Section 12 of this Policy.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Code of Behaviour.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in **Section 2** of the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to prevent and address bullying behaviour*



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5. Development 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	Aug 2025 Staff Meeting – May 2025	Stage 1: Sharing of draft policy with staff to discuss / consult and make any amendments. Overview of Bí Cineálta procedures
Students	Aug 2025	Students from our Student Council and focus groups from Junior and Senior Cycle were consulted on the student-friendly policy.
Parents and Guardians	Aug 2025	Bí Cineálta policy draft shared with Parent Teacher Association for feedback.
Board of Management	Sept 2025	Review and ratification
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		



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6. *Examples of bullying behaviour*

General behaviours which apply to all	
	• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in equality legislation – e.g., sexual harassment, homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, racist bullying, racist and ethnic identity-based bullying etc. • Physical aggression. • Damage to property. • Name calling. • Slagging. • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person. • Offensive graffiti. • Extortion. • Intimidation. • Insulting or offensive gestures. • The “look”. • Invasion of personal space. • A combination of any of the types listed.



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Cyber

- **Denigration:** Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation.
- **Harassment:** Continually sending vicious, mean, or disturbing messages to an individual.
- **Impersonation:** Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name.
- **Flaming:** Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight.
- **Trickery:** Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online.
- **Outing:** Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images.
- **Exclusion:** Purposefully excluding someone from an online group.
- **Cyber stalking:** Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for their safety.
- Silent telephone / mobile phone calls.
- Abusive telephone / mobile phone calls.
- Abusive text messages.
- Abusive email.
- Abusive communication on social networks – e.g. Facebook / Ask.fm / X / You Tube / Snapchat / Instagram / TikTok / BeReal or on games consoles.
- Abusive website comments / blogs / images.
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology.



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Identity based behaviours	Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (sexual orientation, gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, disability, race, and membership of the Traveller community). (Equal Status Acts 2000-2018).
Homophobic, biphobic, gender identity and transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation. • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation. • Name calling language used in a derogatory manner. • Physical intimidation or attacks. • Threats.
Race, nationality, ethnic background, and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments, or insults about skin colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or Traveller background. • Exclusion based on any of the above.
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Malicious gossip. • Isolation and exclusion. • Ignoring. • Excluding from the group. • Taking someone's friends away. • 'bitching'. • Spreading rumours. • Breaking confidence. • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear. • 'The Look'.



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Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching. • Harassment. • Sexting – i.e., the sharing of explicit text and images about or of students or other without their permission.
Special Educational Needs; Disability	• Name calling. • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs. • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability. • Setting others up for ridicule.

7. Bullying as Criminal Behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years. Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, criminalises the 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 1989, and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges.

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

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



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8. Personnel:

Students, parents, non-teaching staff or members of the wider community should feel welcome to report their concerns to any member of the teaching staff – including the Principal, the Deputy Principal. In this regard, any member of the teaching staff is deemed to be a relevant teacher in the context of Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour (2024)

Anonymous reporting will be available via: e.g. reporting box/email.

9. Education and Prevention Strategies

Preventing Bullying Behaviour

Templemichael College is committed to a proactive approach to preventing bullying by promoting a positive culture and embedding prevention measures across the school community. Our approach is guided by the following principles:

1. Positive School Culture and Climate that:

- welcomes difference and diversity through inclusivity,
- encourages students and staff to disclose and discuss concerns in a supportive, non-threatening environment, and
- promotes respectful relationships throughout the school community.

2. Strong and effective leadership.

3. A whole-school approach involving all members of the community.

4. A shared understanding of what bullying is and the impact it has.

5. Education and awareness strategies that:

- build empathy, respect, and resilience in students,
- explicitly address cyberbullying and identity-based bullying, including homophobic and transphobic bullying.

6. Effective supervision and monitoring of students.

7. Supports for staff in recognising, responding to, and preventing bullying.

8. Clear and consistent procedures for recording, investigating, and following up on incidents, using established intervention strategies.

9. Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Templemichael College will:

- Make it clear that bullying of any kind is unacceptable and must be reported.
- Focus on resolving differences and restoring relationships, while reserving the right to apply disciplinary measures where appropriate.



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- Promote positive self-worth through curricular and extracurricular programmes.
- Build empathy, respect, and resilience in students.
- Provide opportunities to understand the causes and effects of bullying, with particular focus on identity-based bullying (e.g., homophobic and transphobic).
- Use SPHE and RSE programmes to address bullying, diversity, belonging, relationships, and safety.
- Promote inclusivity through the Schools for Health in Ireland Framework and across all subject areas and activities.
- Address cyberbullying by teaching safe online behaviour and fostering a culture of reporting.
- Encourage students to report bullying confidentially, with reassurance that their identity will be protected.
- Adopt a whole-school approach involving staff, students, parents, and the wider community.
- Hold annual parent information evenings and involve parents in developing anti-bullying policies and practices.
- Expect parents and students to cooperate fully with investigations and resolution processes.
- Work with school bus drivers and others in daily contact with students to help identify and report bullying.
- Engage with external agencies (NEPS, HSE, Gardaí) where appropriate.
- Pay particular attention to supporting students with disabilities or SEN through inclusion, social skills development, and a respectful school culture.
- Provide annual staff training to raise awareness of bullying, build shared understanding, and strengthen prevention and response.
- Commit to ongoing professional development to enhance the school's capacity to prevent and address bullying.
- Survey students at least once per year to assess the extent of bullying.
- Address bullying explicitly with every year group each year through SPHE and RSE.
- Host an annual Safe Internet Awareness Day and Anti-Bullying Week.
- Train senior students to recognise bullying, report concerns, and support vulnerable peers.
- Strengthen prevention through student voice initiatives such as peer mentoring, student council, and surveys.
- Apply restorative practices where appropriate to repair harm and rebuild relationships

10. Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The School's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the School for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour



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are underpinned by a restorative approach, and are as follows (see Section 6.8 of the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*):

- a. Incident comes to the attention of any staff member
- b. The incident is then referred to the relevant personnel – teacher, tutor, year head, religious and spirituality coordinator, counsellors, boarding staff, deputy, and head of school.
- c. In dealing with an allegation of bullying the teacher/staff member will exercise their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best to resolve the situation
- d. Investigation to be carried out, including the interviewing, and taking of statements from those involved and from witnesses and bystanders.
- e. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned
- f. Parents and guardians to be contacted and if necessary, requested to meet in School with the relevant personnel
- g. Parents and guardians, and students are required to cooperate with any investigation and assist the School in resolving any issues and restoring as far as is practicable the relationships of the parties involved.
- h. In cases where it has been determined that bullying has occurred it should be made clear to the student who engaged in bullying behaviour how they are in breach of the School's Bí Cineálta Policy and efforts will be made to get them see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied
- i. Following investigation: meeting to discuss findings and to agree proposed actions (including disciplinary and support actions required for parties involved)
- j. Head of School/Deputy Head of School to ratify proposed actions
- k. Parents and guardians and students informed of actions
- l. Where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between any student being disciplined, their parents and guardians and the School
- m. Bullying Incident Report Form, if applicable, to be stored in Disciplinary File
- n. The School will, always, endeavour to comply with current legislation.

11. Record Keeping:

The relevant teacher must keep a record of their investigation. The relevant teacher must use the recording template (Appendix 2) to record bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:



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- a. in cases where they consider that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after they have determined that bullying has taken place and/or,
- b. If the bullying behaviour is of sufficient gravity to be recorded immediately, e.g., serious assault.

In the circumstances of (a) and (b) above the recording template at Appendix 2 must be completed in full and a copy retained by the relevant teacher and a copy provided to the Head of School/Deputy Head of School. The recording template can be completed in written or e-format.

12. Programme of support for working with students affected by bullying

Templemichael College will put in place a programme of supports for students who have been bullied. This programme will involve the following elements.

- Students who have been bullied will be:
- offered appropriate counselling; and
- provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self esteem, to develop their social skills and to build their resilience.
- Students who have been involved in bullying behaviour will be:
- provided with counselling to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others; and
- provided with appropriate opportunities to build their self esteem and feelings of self-worth.
- Students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with their teachers and their parents and to avail of counselling where they feel it may assist them to cope effectively with what they have experienced.

13. Supervision and Monitoring of Anti-Bullying in School/College

- The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.
- The implementation and effectiveness of the School's anti-bullying policy will be an agenda item for all staff meetings – so the concerns about the policy and/or the welfare of individual students can be shared and effectively addressed.



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- Data gathered through the reporting templates will be collated and analysed annually with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying issues requiring attention. This analysis will complement the information gathered through the bullying surveys

14. Oversight & Review

- The Principal will update the Board of Management at each regular meeting on the effectiveness of the policy and the number/nature of incidents.
- The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required, in consultation with the whole school community.
- The Board of Management will ensure that an action plan is put in place to address any areas for improvement identified by the annual review.
- Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent School Association.
- Details of the review will be recorded in the minutes of the Board of Management' meeting that adopted the review and a record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, will be made available to the Patron and the DES. In the case of the DES, it is appreciated that the Inspectorate will place a strong focus on the actions Templemichael College takes to create a positive school culture and to prevent and tackle bullying.

15. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that Templemichael College will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of students or staff or the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

16. Policy Dissemination and Publication

This policy will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent School Association.

17. Student-Friendly Version

A simplified version of this policy will be developed with student input, clearly displayed in classrooms, the school website, and other accessible places.

18. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually

Reviewed by staff on 21st August 2025



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This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on _____

Signed _____
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date _____

Signed _____
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date _____



Appendix 1 : Template for Reporting Bullying Behaviour

1. Details of the Student Being Bullied:

Name: _____

Class Group: _____

2. Details of Student(s) Engaged in Bullying Behaviour:

Name(s): _____

Class(es): _____

3. Source of Bullying Concern/Report (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Student Concerned
- ☐ Other Student
- ☐ Parent/Guardian
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Other: _____

4. Location of Incidents (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Recreation Areas
- ☐ Classroom
- ☐ Corridor
- ☐ Toilets
- ☐ School Bus
- ☐ Other: _____

5. Name of Person Reporting the Concern

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Physical Aggression
- ☐ Damage to Property
- ☐ Isolation/Exclusion
- ☐ Name Calling
- ☐ Cyber-bullying
- ☐ Intimidation
- ☐ Malicious Gossip
- ☐ Other: _____



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7. Identity-Based Bullying (If applicable, indicate the relevant category)

- ☐ Homophobic
- ☐ Gender based
- ☐ Socio-economic status
- ☐ Disability/SEN-related
- ☐ Religion
- ☐ Racist/Ethnicity
- ☐ Membership of Traveller Community
- ☐ Other: _____

8. Description of the Bullying Behaviour and Its Impact

(Brief description of the behaviour and how it has affected the student.)

9. Actions Taken

(Steps taken to address the situation, including support for the student and any disciplinary measures.)

19. Signatures

- Relevant Staff Member: _____
- Date: _____
- Date Submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: _____

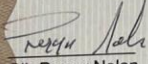
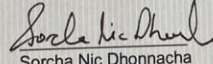
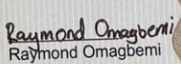


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Appendix 2: Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy

"Antibullying Charter" This will be displayed in the school in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to prevent and address bullying behaviour

 ANTI-BULLYING CHARTER	
Right	I have the right to be safe in school
Responsibility	I have a responsibility to make our school a safe and secure place for others.
Rights I have a right to be:	Responsibilities I have the responsibility to ensure that:
✓ Physically safe. ✓ Expect my property to be safe in school. ✓ Free from all forms of verbal bullying. ✓ Free from any hurtful remarks regarding person, ethnicity, religion and culture.	✓ Others are physically safe. ✓ The property of others is safe. ✓ Others are free from verbal bullying. ✓ Others are free from extortion. ✓ Others are free from emotional bullying. ✓ Others are free from any hurtful remarks regarding person, ethnicity, religion and culture.
 Cllr Peggy Nolan	 Sorcha Nic Dhonnacha Principal
	 Raymond Omagbeni



Appendix 3: Annual Review Checklist for Bí Cineálta Policy

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?



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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



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12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used ☐Yes ☐No to prevent bullying behaviour?

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?



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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 4: Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update for the Board of Management](#)

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for board of management 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 must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

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

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

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

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



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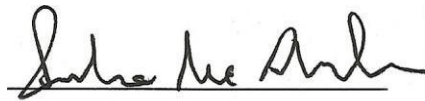
Appendix 5: Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the Bí Cineálta Policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

The Board of Managements annual review of the school's *Bí Cineálta Policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour* and its implementation was. completed at the Board meeting of Templemichael College

This review was conducted in accordance with the checklist set out in Appendix E of the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools*

Signed: 
3

Date: 4/9/25 (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: 
(School Principal)

Date: 4/9/25