

Bí Cineálta Policy

to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviours

The Board of Management of Primrose Hill National School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

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

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

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

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

Definition of bullying

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

Bullying is 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.

Each school is required to develop and implement a *Bí Cineálta* policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

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	13 th March 2025 12 th / 19 th May 2025 26 th May 2025	School half-day closure Examination of parental responses to survey. Creation of prevention strategies and steps to address bullying behaviour
Students	Ongoing throughout year 2024/2025	Student Council involvement in review of Code of Behaviour and development of Pupil Friendly Bí Cineálta guidance.
Parents	30 th April 2025	Parental Survey
Board of Management	9 th April 2025 11 th June 2025	Update on staff training on new guidelines. Presented with final document
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The education and prevention strategies aimed at preventing bullying behaviour (including strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate: Chapter 5, *Bí Cineálta* Procedures) used by the school include the following:

- The anti-bullying module of the SPHE/ Wellbeing Curriculum as it applies during each school year, with particular emphasis on the relevant exercises from the “Walk Tall” and “Stay Safe” programmes.
- Implementation of the full “Weaving Wellbeing” programme from 2nd Class to 6th Class.
- Each class will create their own Class Contract (as outlined in the school’s Code of Behaviour for the promotion of positive behaviours) at the beginning of each academic year.
- Positive language will be utilised in all class contracts and school rules.
- School rules will be explicitly taught at the beginning of each academic year and referred to on a regular basis in classrooms and whole school assemblies throughout the year.
- Themed activities weeks focusing on Friendship and Wellbeing as well as awareness raising exercises during these weeks which will pro-actively explain the nature and variety, causes, negative consequences and unacceptability of bullying.
- During themed weeks, visits from outside agencies including An Garda Síochana are to be conducted to assist in raising awareness of bullying behaviours including Cyberbullying behaviours.
- Facilitation of workshops using Zeeko or another agency for highlighting Cyberbullying. Such facilitation should also include a session for parents.
- Pupils will be encouraged to take part in some of the initiatives within the school, i.e. the Wellbeing Committee and the Amber Flag initiative; Student Council; other committees promoting initiatives to enhance pupil wellbeing within the school.
- The explicitly teaching of the “Zippy’s Friends” Programme to pupils in 1st Class.

Through presentations and other exercises, school staff and parents/ guardians are made aware of the nature and impact of bullying and signs that might indicate that a pupil is being bullied. All school staff are encouraged to be vigilant in watching out for signs of bullying and to report any suspicion of bullying that they may have to the class teacher or another member of staff. The school has the following policy documents in place to assist in monitoring and supervising pupils:

- Code of Behaviour
- Supervision Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy

Through regular reports in school newsletters and other communications, as well as at meetings with the Parents Association, parents and guardians are regularly informed of the ongoing anti-bullying activities of the school and encouraged to support the school in this work.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The primary aim in addressing any report of bullying behaviour is to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationship of the parties involved, rather than to apportion blame.

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

As soon as a staff member/ the school becomes aware, or receives a report that, a child is experiencing potentially bullying behaviour, the following approach will apply: (referring to Chapter 6 and Appendix C of the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*).

Approach for Addressing 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 pupils involved, rather than to apportion blame. When addressing bullying behaviour, teachers should:

- Inform the parents/ guardians of all pupils concerned (including the 20-day timeframe for follow-up).
- Suggest to all parents to keep lines of communication going through the school rather than contacting each other.
- Ensure that the pupil experiencing the bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured.

Following receipt of an alleged bullying incident(s), a nominated person from the below list will act as lead investigator and be charged with investigating the reported behaviour and address the reported behaviour:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Class teachers
- Special Educational Needs Teachers (SETs)

➤ Special Educational Needs Assistants (SNAs)

The nominated lead investigator will conduct investigative conversations to identify if bullying behaviour has occurred. Forms of bullying behaviours are described in Section 2.5 of the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*. In any investigative conversation, the school will:

- Seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- Conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- Consider the age and ability of the pupils involved
- Listen to the views of the pupil who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- The school may also have gentle informal conversations with other children who may have observed the behaviour as part of the investigative process
- Take action in a timely manner
 - Endeavouring to make the pupil's school day as safe as possible (e.g. provide an alternative seating arrangement in the classrooms; monitoring and closer supervision of the pupils as they move within the school building; monitoring during yard time; alter yard/ game arrangements)
 - Discussing with parents, ways to ensure the pupil feels safe going to and from school, encouraging them to implement any strategies they feel necessary.

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour, the following questions will be considered:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?
2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
3. Is the behaviour repeated?

Should the answer to each of the questions be **Yes**, then the behaviour is considered bullying behaviour and the behaviour will be addressed using the *Bí Cineálta Procedures* outline in below.

Should the answer to any of these questions be **No**, then the behaviour is not considered bullying behaviour. Strategies to address inappropriate behaviours are contained in the school's Code of Behaviour.

It is important to note that 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 this becomes a repeated behaviour.

Where bullying behaviour has been identified

Parents play an integral part of the school community at Primrose Hill National School and therefore, a key role alongside school staff in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has been identified, the parents of the pupils involved must be contacted as early as possible to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions that are to be taken to address the behaviour. The school will support all pupils involved to ensure that the behaviours ceases and to restore the relationship between all parties. Such supports may include:

- ❖ Informal gentle conversations individually with the pupils concerned
- ❖ Bringing the pupils together for meaningful mediation – this will depend on the situation and the wishes of the parents
- ❖ Implement in-class and in-school prevention and monitoring strategies as mentioned in Section B of this policy.
- ❖ Liaise with parents to consider strategies to prevent the behaviour from re-occurring in school
- ❖ The school acknowledges that bullying behaviour may also occur outside school, and, while the school cannot investigate or act on this, the school may support the parents and pupils in exploring strategies to prevent this.
- ❖ Explore strategies and programmes that will enable the pupil(s) to cope with the situation (e.g. through SPHE, Wellbeing, informal classroom conversations, Stay Safe Programme, regular check-ins with the child experiencing the bullying behaviour asking if the behaviour has ceased or not).

Following-Up

The lead investigator must engage with the pupils involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement. (This will involve asking/ informing whether the behaviour has ceased, establishing whether bullying has taken place).

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 pupils involved.

The lead investigator and/or class teacher should document the review process to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of the pupils and their parents in relation to this. The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded on the documentation (See Record-Keeping below).

If there has been engagement with external services/ supports, these should also be noted. It may be necessary to have ongoing supervision and support for pupils involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.

In the event that bullying behaviour has not ceased, the class teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the pupils involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

If it becomes clear that the pupil is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then consideration should be given to the using the strategies to deal with the inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant pupil, their parents and the school. In accordance with this school's Code of Behaviour, bullying behaviour and continuous engagement in bullying behaviour is considered serious misconduct and the school will implement the Code of Behaviour sanctions.

Record Keeping

All bullying behaviour will be recorded using Appendix 1. This will include the type of

behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

The school will keep an alphabetic Incident Report Form Folder/ File with copies of all general incident reports so that once a report of bullying behaviour is received, reference can be made to any incident reports as part of an investigation. Incidents that may relate to a report of bullying behaviour will be copied and placed into a newly opened folder/ file for that specific case.

Phone calls will be recorded in a log book in the office and will be followed up by email to the parents with a summary of the conversation. This will be printed out and stored with all relevant information in the folder/ file for that specific case.

All records/ documents will be dated for sequence purposes.

Records will include actions to be taken by all parents involved.

Records will include all actions and strategies taken by the class teacher and/or the school.

If the school discovers that a group has been involved, all parents should be notified and this also recorded.

Appeals

If a parent/ family is unhappy and 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 pupil.

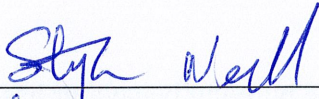
Section D: Oversight

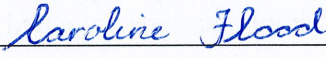
The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management

meeting using Appendix 2. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

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

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

Signed: 
Date: 11/6/25
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: 
Date: 11.06.2025
(Principal)

Appendix 1

Bullying Report Form

Source of Report (circle): Parent Pupil Staff-Member Other

Dates: _____

Name of Reporting Person (if applicable):

If Staff-Member: _____

If Pupil: _____ Class: _____

If someone other than a Staff Member or Pupil:

Name of reporting person: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Details of Alleged Incident:

Location of incident: _____

Time: _____ Day: _____ Date: _____

Possible Targeted Pupil(s): _____ Class: _____

Possible Perpetrator(s): _____ Class: _____

_____ Class: _____

Others who were there: _____

Initial details of Incident:

(a) The "form" it took (e.g. verbal, written, exclusion, extortion, relational, intimidation, physical): _____

(b) The "type" of bullying behaviour (e.g. targeting others on the basis of race, poverty, faith, disability, sex, sexual orientation or identity, high ability, skin colour): _____

Appendix 2

Oversight Report for Bullying Behaviour for Board of Management Meetings

Date of Board of Management Meeting: _____

Date of previous Board of Management Meeting: _____

Having reviewed the details of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous Board of Management meeting, the following information is now available:

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.	

Appendix 3

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

1. Place where incident occurred: _____

2. Date of incident: _____

3. Time of incident: _____

4. Name/s of pupil/s involved in incident: _____

5. Detailed account of incident: _____

6. Details of action taken: _____

7. Name/s of witness/es to the incident: _____

8. Name of person in charge at the time: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Principal Teacher:

Caroline Flood

Signature: _____

Date: _____
