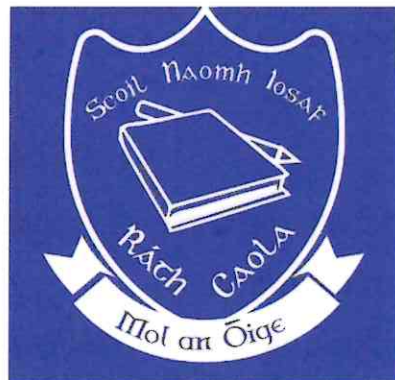


# **St Joseph's Boys' National School**

**Roll No.:18653V**



**Bí Cineálta Policy**

**(Antibullying)**

**2025**

human person is to be devalued and everybody has a part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.”

### **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.
- It is behaviour that is deliberate in nature and is unwanted. It is not accidental or reckless behavior.

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

The harm can be:

- Physical (eg. Personal injury, damage to loss of property)
- Social (eg. Withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion)
- Emotional (eg. Low self-esteem, depression, anxiety)

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

### **Behaviour that is not bullying behavior**

- 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.

### **Types of Bullying**

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include directing bullying

## 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 of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	Sept/October 24  Nov 2024  March 2025  April 25	Staff informed that new Bi Cinealta policy was to be drafted and ratified for the next school year 2025-2026. Staff were informed of the important points in dealing with an incidence or report of bullying. Record form was presented and is on file on Aladdin for any reports of bullying  Principal and Deputy attended training on new procedures for Bi Cinealta.  Half Day Closure: staff were informed of the important points in dealing with an incidence or report of bullying –Staff given time to discuss and relay feedback. Sharing of draft policy with staff to discuss / consult and make any amendments following their review
Students	November 2024  December 2024  April/May 2024	In November:Students from the Students Council were given a questionnaire to seek their input in developing an Anti-Bullying policy in Child Friendly Format – their wording, examples and suggestions were all taken into account when drafting this Policy. In December: All students in the school completed the questionnaire.  In April/May: This policy was distributed to all households and children were given the homework of reading through their policy with parents
Parents	February 2025	Feedback and Questionnaire sought from parents and children in formation of a Child Friendly Anti Bullying policy. Policy created with this information and sent out to parents/children to review together with information on same in terms of how to contact the school if needed. Attention drawn to our policy and Child Friendly policy, resources and initiatives in the school
Board of Management	March 2025 May 2025	Review and discussion of policy – leading to consultation and ratification.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	April 2025	
Date policy was approved: May 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

break/lunch times and at home time.

#### **4. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):**

- SEL Curriculum: We integrate social-emotional learning into the curriculum to help students develop emotional awareness, empathy, and conflict resolution skills.

- Role-Playing and Scenarios: Use role-playing exercises to help students practice how to respond to various bullying situations.

#### **5. Involvement of Students:**

- Student-Led Initiatives: We empower students to create their own anti-bullying campaigns through our Students Council.

-We empower students to use the Students Council to make school staff aware of any bullying instances going on.

-Suggestion boxes are placed in every classroom and checked regularly by class teachers.

#### **6. Open Communication:**

- Safe Reporting Mechanisms: In St. Joseph's B.N.S. there is an anonymous reporting system for students to report bullying without fear of retaliation.

- Encourage Conversations: We promote open discussions about bullying among students, teachers and parents.

- Parents are active partners in our school and are encouraged to come to the school to discuss any concerns occurring within or outside the school. The Principal or Deputy principal will meet with the class teacher and parents to discuss any concerns.

#### **7. Involvement of Parents and Community:**

- Communication with Parents: We provide regular feedback for parents on recognizing bullying and supporting their children through 'Parent-Teacher meetings', coffee-mornings, informal and formal meetings. Information is provided at times regarding useful information on Anti-bullying.

- The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence."

In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and further engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies".

#### **8. Promote Positive Relationships:**

- Stay Safe and SPHE lessons focusing on positive behavior form part of curricular content in all classes. Incredible Years Programme promotes pro social skills and is promoted throughout the school., sporting activities e.g. GAA, soccer, cycling, Talkboost Programme, Walk Tall, etc. etc.

-Effective supervision and monitoring of students.

person experiencing the bullying and the person exhibiting bullying behaviour.

### **Community and Parent Involvement**

- Engage Parents and Community: We celebrate the culture and heritage of all our students e.g. Traveller Culture Day, Multicultural Day etc.

- Create Partnerships: Collaborate with local organizations for resources, support, and outreach programs that promote anti-bullying initiatives e.g. Music Generation, GAA club, Soccer club, After School club, Youth Space, Foroige, Limerick Youth Service, Jigsaw, Limerick Community Families, Education Support Workers, Ficheall Chess Club etc.

### **Safe Reporting Mechanisms**

- Encourage Reporting: Students are taught the importance of reporting bullying and there are safe, anonymous ways for them to report incidents.

- Provide Support: Ensure that students who report bullying feel supported and that their concerns are taken seriously.

### **Regular Assessment and Feedback**

- Monitor Bullying Incidents: Regularly assess the prevalence of bullying through surveys or questionnaires to understand the school climate and identify areas for improvement.

- Adjust Curriculum: Use feedback from students and staff to continually improve anti-bullying initiatives and integrate new strategies as needed.

### **Teacher Training**

- Bí Cineálta training for all teachers in St. Joseph's B.N.S.

By adopting an inclusive and proactive approach within the curriculum, our aim in St. Joseph's Boys N.S. is to create a supportive environment that not only reduces bullying instances but also promotes a culture of respect and empathy among students.

### **Policy and Planning**

Creating effective policy and planning documents to reduce bullying in St Joseph's Boys' National School involves a comprehensive approach that engages students, parents, staff, and the wider community.

#### **1. Introduction**

- Define the purpose of the Bí Cineálta policy document and its importance in fostering a safe and supportive learning environment.

- Definition of Bullying: We have clearly defined what constitutes bullying (e.g., physical, verbal, social, cyberbullying).

#### **2. Goals and Objectives**

- Short-term Goals: Promote awareness, encourage reporting, and create an immediate response plan.

- Long-term Objectives: Foster a school culture of respect, empathy, and inclusion, aiming for a significant

- (c) Acceptable Usage Policy.
- (d) Digital Learning Policy.
- (e) Parents Complaint Procedure.
- (f) Child Protection Policy and Safe-Guarding.
- (g) Health and Safety Policy.
- (h) Supervision Policy
- (i) Special Education Policy

All to support the implementation of the Bi Cineálta policy

## **8. Conclusion**

- Emphasize the collective responsibility to create a safe school environment, and reiterate the school's commitment to staying proactive in bullying prevention efforts. Effective leadership is a key component with Principal, Deputy Principal, DLP, DDLP, and all middle management focused on supporting the implementation of this policy.

All stakeholders have been included in the development and implementation of these documents, ensuring that everyone contributes to creating a positive school culture. Regular review and adaptation of the policies will help to address evolving challenges related to bullying in Scoil Naomh Iosaf.

## **Relationships and Partnership**

Reducing bullying in primary schools requires a collaborative effort among various stakeholders.

- Engaging parents and students in actively contributing to the formation of a Child Friendly Anti Bullying Policy to make them active participants in promotion of and discussion of useful ways to identify and reduce bullying behaviour and highlight procedure and how to deal with it if it does occur.

### **1. School Board of Management and Staff**

- Leadership Commitment: The BOM of St. Joseph's Boys' N.S. and the teaching staff prioritize the Bi Cineálta policy to ensure that all staff receive training on recognizing, preventing, and responding to bullying behaviours.

- Teacher Collaboration: Teachers in St. Joseph's Boys' N.S. work together to create a supportive environment and to share strategies for addressing bullying.

- In St. Joseph's Boys' N.S. we believe that creating a safe and supportive school environment to reduce bullying is a shared responsibility. By fostering these relationships and partnerships, we can build a comprehensive approach that addresses the issue from multiple angles and promotes a culture of respect and kindness.

- Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures. Some of the initiatives / activities in our school include the following: Breakfast club, Incredible Years programme, buddy-reading initiatives, transition programmes for 1<sup>st</sup> class boys from St. Anne's N.S. and 6<sup>th</sup> class boys going to

- We create opportunities for Buddy Reading initiatives / Library visits.
- Team Teaching
- School work / class work is differentiated so that each pupil can reach his own potential.
- We have clearly defined classroom rules, routines and expectations
- whole school staff working closely together
- collaborative approach
- Age and stage appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the student body in looking at their own behaviour – promoting acts of kindness and friendship, being an active help to others and looking at the causes of and impact of bullying during SPHE lessons.
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.

## **Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

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

- The class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form on Aladdin
- The DDLP will follow up after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased.
- All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.
- Principal will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.
- Deputy principal /Anti- Bullying Policy co-ordinator is available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist class teacher in addressing concerns.

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

an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non- aggressive manner.

- If a group is involved each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about the other's statements.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.
- Where the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' has/have determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him to see the perspective of the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour.
- The "Relevant Teacher" does not apportion blame but should make an effort to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied. S/he emphasises that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter.

### **Recording Bullying behavior**

- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the "Relevant Teacher (s)" will complete a report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. This may be recorded on Aladdin under the Bi Cineálta tab, and uploading a file "Alleged Bullying Behaviour Report".
- If a pupil chooses to continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a once off occurrence. In this event parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted. The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for the pupil.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has experienced bullying behaviour is ready and agreeable.
- Depending on the seriousness of the bullying some or all of Level 2 Supportive Interventions will be utilized (See School Code of Behaviour)
- Repeated incidents of bullying behaviour will result in the imposition of sanctions. Such sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying behaviour. It must be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required that this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.

### **Complaint Process**

- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent must be referred to the school's complaints procedure. (see appendix A)
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their rights to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
- The School will maintain care for the victim over time. This will be done by speaking to the child a number of weeks after the incident to check on their continuing welfare. The child's parents will also be consulted.

- Making adequate counseling facilities available to help those who need it learn other ways of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others,
- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school),
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance students' feelings of self-worth,
- In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child,
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

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

### Section D: Oversight

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year.

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures.

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

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

Signed: Motie Horan Date: 3/6/25  
 (Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: Shirley Pratt Date: 3/6/25  
 (Principal)

## **Parental Complaints Procedure.**

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's Boys' School, Rathkeale, Co. Limerick. (Roll Number: 18653V) operates the following Complaints Procedure in relation to complaints by parents/ guardians against teachers.

It is the policy of the Board to promote an atmosphere of harmony in the school at all times.

We would hope that any issues that arise between parents/guardians and teachers would be resolved as quickly and as amicably as possible.

### **Informal stages:**

1. In the first instance, we would ask parents/guardians to approach the class teacher to resolve the issue.
2. If this is not successful, then the parents/guardians are requested to approach the principal in order to resolve the issue.
3. If the issue is not resolved at this point, then the matter should be raised with the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

### **Formal stages:**

If the informal stages have not been successful in resolving the issue, then the parents/guardians should lodge the complaint in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

At this point the Chairperson of the Board of Management will refer to the agreed procedure outlined in Appendix 1 for dealing with complaints

### **Appendix 1.**

The INTO ( the teachers' representative body) and Primary School Management reached agreement in 1993 on a procedure for dealing with complaints by parents against teachers. These procedures were reviewed in 2014 and again in 2023. The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate the resolution of difficulties where they may arise in an agreed and fair manner. The agreement lays out in five stages the process to be followed in progressing a complaint and the specific timescale to be followed at each stage. Please note this is a non-statutory procedure.

Only those complaints about teachers which are written and signed by parents/guardians of students may be investigated formally by the board of management, except where those complaints are deemed by the board to be:

- on matters of professional competence and which are to be referred to the Department of Education and Skills and/ or the Teaching Council;
- frivolous or vexatious complaints and complaints which do not impinge on the work of a teacher in a school; or
- complaints in which either party has recourse to law or to another existing procedure.

Unwritten complaints, not in the above categories, may be processed informally as set out in Stage 1 of this procedure.

### **Formal Stage 1 Discussion**

1.1 Parent/guardian meets teacher A parent/legal guardian who wishes to make a complaint in respect of their own child, should, seek an appointment with the teacher concerned with a view to resolving the complaint. Further meetings with the teacher can be convened as appropriate.

## **Formal Stage 4 Decision (5 days)**

### **4.1 Written decision from Chairperson**

The Board will consider the complaint and the response provided and will adjudicate on the matter. The Chairperson should convey the decision of the Board in writing to the teacher and the parent/legal guardian(s) within five days of the meeting held at stage 3.3.

### **4.2 Complaint concluded**

The decision of the Board shall be final.

The policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St Joseph's B.N.S. on \_\_\_\_\_ and will be reviewed periodically or as the need arises.

Signed:     Katie Horan     Chairperson.

Date: February 2024