

Cabra Central National School

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Cabra Central 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 core elements of the definition are further described below:

Targeted Behaviour

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the student displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example, personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example, withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and long-term negative impact on the student experiencing the 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 still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

Repeated Behaviour

Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online, and which

is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others **can** therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

Imbalance of Power

In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity, technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted student to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

How bullying behaviour occurs

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

- **Physical bullying** behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While students can often engage in “mess fights” they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
- **Personal property** can be a focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, schoolbooks and other learning material or interference with a student’s locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.
- **Verbal bullying behaviour:** Continual name calling directed at a student which hurts, insults or humiliates the student should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name calling of this type refers to physical appearance; for example, size or clothes worn or gender identity. It can also refer to a student’s accent, distinctive voice characteristics, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.
- **Written bullying** behaviour includes writing insulting remarks about a student in public places, passing around notes about or drawings of a student.
- **Extortion:** Bullying behaviour can involve extortion. Extortion is where something is obtained through force or threats.
- **Indirect bullying behaviour:** Exclusion bullying behaviour occurs where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.
- **Relational bullying** behaviour occurs when a student’s attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. Common forms include control: “Do this or I won’t be your friend anymore”; a group of students ganging up against one student; nonverbal gesturing;

malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a student; giving a student the “silent treatment”; and the deliberate manipulation of friendship groups to make someone unpopular.

- **Online bullying behaviour:** (cyberbullying) is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies. This form of bullying behaviour can include: sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps, posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent, making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students, excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game.
- Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated. As online bullying uses technology to carry out bullying behaviour and does not require face to - face contact it can occur at any time. Many types of bullying behaviour can be facilitated through online bullying. In many cases online bullying can relate to an “offline” experience with someone known to the student. This type of bullying may involve forms of sexual exploitation including but not limited to, sextortion and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence.

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 non-consensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images. If bullying behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence, it may be considered assault. If bullying behaviour involves discrimination or hate speech targeting a student based on their race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, it may be considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989¹¹, and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges. If bullying behaviour involves sexual harassment or sexual assault, this may also be considered criminal behaviour. An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour.

Where bullying behaviour can occur

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

- Bullying behaviour can take place in the **school yard**. School grounds with hidden or obscure parts may provide an environment where bullying behaviour is more likely to occur. Many common school yard games present opportunities for bullying behaviour because of their physical nature. Continuing provocation may lead to a physical fight and in some cases the student experiencing bullying behaviour may appear to be the aggressor as they give vent to their frustration.
- **In the classroom:** Bullying behaviour can take place in class. It may occur subtly through glances, looks, sniggers or may take the more overt form of physical intimidation or deliberate isolation. Bullying behaviour may also occur between class periods when the students or the teacher moves.
- **Other areas:** Bullying behaviour can take place in other areas such as toilets, corridors, cloakrooms, changing rooms, showers, and assembly hall.
- **Outside School:** **A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school.** However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy. See Section 6.2 of these procedures.
- **Coming to and from school:** Bullying behaviour can occur in the area immediately outside the school, the local shops and the wider local area. Bullying behaviour can take place at the bus stop or on the journey to and from school whether the students are walking, cycling or on school buses.
- Bullying behaviour can also take place in organised clubs and groups outside of school such as sports clubs.
- **Online bullying** (cyberbullying) behaviour, along with all other types of bullying behaviour, can cause significant harm and can have a lasting impact on students who experience this behaviour. Access to technology means that online bullying behaviour can happen anytime, and the student's home is no longer a safe place. The nature of these technologies means that digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and the content is almost impossible to delete permanently.

Types of bullying behaviour

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

- **Disablist bullying behaviour:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of a perceived or actual disability or additional need.
- **Exceptionally able bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their high academic ability or outstanding talents.
- **Gender identity bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual gender identity.
- **Homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual membership of the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Physical appearance bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their physical appearance. Students who “look different” can be mocked or criticised about the shape, size or appearance of their body.
- **Racist bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their race or ethnic origin which includes membership of the Traveller or Roma community.
- **Poverty bullying:** behaviour that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources.
- **Religious identity bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity.
- **Sexist bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex.
- **Sexual harassment:** any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of the student.

Behaviour that is Not Bullying Behaviour

A one off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is **not** bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media **can** be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour. Disagreement between students, or instances where students don’t want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups. 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 can’t control.

Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying. These behaviours, while not defined as bullying can be distressing. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school’s Code of Behaviour.

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	September 2024, March + May 2025	Bí Cineálta In-service training, collaborative planning using Bí Cineálta procedures, resources and templates.
Students	May 2025	Questionnaires
Parents	May 2025	Questionnaires
Board of Management	September 2024+ June 2025	Examination of the Bí Cineálta procedures and guidelines. Consultation and ratification of the new policy.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	June 2025	Distribution of the Bí Cineálta policy.
Date policy was approved: 10 th June 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 2013 Based Anti- Bullying Policy was reviewed at annual review in June 2024.		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice provides the following four key areas that are essential for a holistic, whole school approach to wellbeing promotion: Culture and Environment; Curriculum (Teaching and Learning); Policy and Planning; and Relationships and Partnerships.

Culture and Environment

A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The school environment in Cabra Central National School strives to be a space where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging

and feel safe, connected and supported. Relationships between all members of the school community should be based on respect, care, integrity and trust. Open communication between the patron, boards of management, school staff, students and their parents help to foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibilities in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

The school leadership team influences the school culture and set the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. Each member of school staff has a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour. Students can shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all. Parents, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.

A Telling Environment

It is important that the school community supports a 'telling' environment. Students should feel comfortable to talk about concerns regarding bullying behaviour. Schools should be safe environments where reporting of bullying behaviour is encouraged.

The reasons why students may not report include the following:

- Fear of retaliation from the student displaying the bullying behaviour or their friendship group.
- Concerns about being seen as a "tell tale" for reporting bullying behaviour.
- Fear that the adult may make the situation worse.
- Fear that the adult doesn't have the knowledge and skills to deal appropriately with the bullying behaviour.
- Fear that the adult may deny access to their smart phone.
- Not knowing what will happen when they report bullying behaviour
- Fear that they will not be believed.
- Concerns about "getting into trouble" for reporting bullying behaviour.
- Not having evidence to back up the allegation of bullying behaviour, this can be seen particularly with relational bullying behaviour.

Creating a Culture of Telling

- The staff of Cabra Central National School repeatedly reinforces the message that all incidents that could be deemed bullying behaviour must be reported.
- Reassurance is given that all incidents will be dealt with in a safe manner. Pupils will gain confidence in telling which is of vital importance.
- Bystanders can be the key to resolving bullying. It is made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Teachers will ensure that pupils know who to tell and how to tell: - Talk to teacher at an appropriate time, e.g. after class or at break/ lunch time.
- Written note in their copybook or Worry Box in the classroom.

- Ask a parent/guardian to tell on their behalf.
- Ask a peer/friend to tell on their behalf.

A Trusted Adult

The concept of “a trusted adult” can be an effective strategy to encourage students to report if they or another student is experiencing bullying behaviour. The staff of Cabra Central National School will support this strategy by letting students know that they can talk to them.

Students who witness bullying behaviour should be supported and encouraged to report the behaviour to a trusted adult in the school so that the behaviour can be addressed.

Creating Safe Physical Spaces in Schools

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

Cabra Central National School endeavours to:

- Ensure good lighting is present to avoid dark corners or spaces.
- Remove visual barriers from windows such as posters.
- Maintain the visibility of school staff who are supervising at break times including during yard duty.
- Encourage the display of murals, artwork and signage. This can help to promote the school’s values such as equality, diversity, inclusion and respect. Students can feel a greater sense of belonging to a school community when they are given ownership of their own space through art and creativity.
- Use the outdoor classroom and library/ computer suite for collaborative learning.
- Maintain the school’s grounds to promote a sense of ownership and respect in the school community.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

Teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful will be promoted in Cabra Central National School. Students will have regular opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which can help build sense of connection, belonging and empathy among students. The curricular subjects The Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curricula at primary level aim to foster students’ wellbeing, self- confidence and sense of belonging and to develop students’ sense of personal responsibility for their own behaviour and

actions. Students' social and emotional learning (SEL) skills can be improved through the SPHE curriculum.

Policy and Planning

Cabra Central National School regularly reviews our school policies for staff and pupils to ensure that they are current and in accordance with the school's vision and ethos. All aspects of the school planning and self-evaluation process in our school incorporate a health and wellbeing dimension. Wellbeing promotion is addressed in school policies and plans including but not limited to:

- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- SPHE
- RSE
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding
- Critical Incidents
- Health and Safety
- Anti-bullying
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Special Educational Needs
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Homework Policy

Relationships and Partnerships

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. These interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as student councils, school clubs, parents' associations and student support teams. The following, which is not an exhaustive list, is promoted in Cabra Central National School to strengthen relationships and partnerships between members of the school community:

- Raising awareness of wellbeing promotion through display boards in the school.
- Regular review and development of policies relating to wellbeing such as critical incidents, bullying, child protection etc.
- Encouraging professional development for school staff in wellbeing promotion.
- Implementing the SPHE curriculum which includes a focus on whole school approaches to wellbeing and health promotion.
- Implementing universal evidence based programmes and interventions.
- Establishing school structures for supporting staff and students including the school support team.

- Establishing mechanisms such as student councils to ensure that the voices of children are heard.
- Planning, collaborating and appropriate sharing of information between schools when children are making the transition into primary school or moving into post-primary school.
- Liaising with appropriate external agencies and services eg NEPS psychologists, NCSE etc.
- Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework which encourages collaborative learning.
- Continuum of Support SEN Model.
- Student Council, Green School Committee.
- Internet safety training.
- Use of a communal quiet zone and collaborative learning area.
- Buddy benches in the playground
- Movement breaks to promote wellbeing.
- Rainbow moments (Weaving Wellbeing)
- Weekly whole-school assemblies.
- Themed weeks (e.g. Maths Week, Science Week etc)
- Christmas Concerts, Beetle Drives, cake sales, summer fêtes.
- Entry into art competitions (Texaco & Credit Union)
- Killinkere Cross Country competition.
- Links with local sports organisations.

Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying recognises the importance of positive relationships across the whole education community to promote empathy, understanding and respect. The meaningful involvement of the board of management, staff, students and their parents in the development, implementation and review of their school's Bí Cineálta policy and student friendly version is essential to effectively prevent and address bullying behaviour.

Preventing Specific Types of Bullying Behaviour

It should be noted that there is a variety of prevention strategies that can be implemented. A school's Student Support Team can support the development, implementation and review of the school's strategies to prevent bullying behaviour. When implementing a prevention strategy schools should consider engaging with members of the wider school community who are in regular contact with students, such as the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- School bus drivers
- Education welfare officers
- Local businesses that are close to the school
- These members of the wider school community can be encouraged to report any bullying behaviour to the school as appropriate.

Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of life that can impact even the youngest members of society. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour. Schools should proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments.

Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour in Cabra Central National School include the following (which is not an exhaustive list):

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum.
- Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
- Developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology.
- Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour.
- Promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online.
- Holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.

The digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their data. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. For the purposes of data collection, students between the age of 13 and 16 years old must have parental permission to sign up to social media services where companies use the legal basis of consent to collect process and store users' data. Most social media platforms and services have a minimum age requirement and for the majority of these services it is 13 years' old. Therefore technically, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account. It is important for their child's safety, that parents are aware of their children's use of technology including smartphones and gaming consoles.

Preventing Homophobic/transphobic Bullying Behaviour

All students have a right to feel safe and supported at school.

Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour in Cabra Central National School include the following (which is not an exhaustive list):

- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment in the school.

- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- Challenging gender stereotypes.
- Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.

Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

Students from diverse backgrounds may face discrimination and prejudice and may be subject to racist bullying behaviour. Students attending Cabra Central National School come from many different cultures and backgrounds. As a school we will promote the following (which is not an exhaustive list) to prevent racist bullying behaviour:

- Fostering 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.
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of racism.
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour.
- Providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents.
- Providing supports 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 lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour

Schools should focus on gender equality as part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment. Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour in Cabra Central National School include the following (which is not an exhaustive list):

- Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex.
- Celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students organising awareness campaigns, workshops and presentations on gender equality and respect.
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home.

Preventing Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. Schools must make it clear that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

Strategies in Cabra Central National School to prevent sexual harassment include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Using SPHE to teach students about healthy relationships and how to treat each other with respect and kindness.
- Promoting positive role models within the school community.
- Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment.

Supervision and Monitoring:

Appropriate supervision is an important measure to help prevent and address bullying behaviour.

Cabra Central National School will:

- Provide effective supervision of classrooms, corridors, playgrounds, school tours etc
- Encourage non-teaching staff to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.
- Provide strict supervision of use of technology in the classroom and computer suite.

Section C: 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. 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.

The teachers with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are as follows:

Janine O'Neill, Principal and Helen Brady, Deputy Principal

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.

Bullying is defined at the beginning of this policy.

A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved.

Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy. Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in the school, but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school should support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken.

It is important for school staff to be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour. Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support. It is important that the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour is engaged with without delay so that they feel listened to, supported and reassured. School staff should identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour teachers with responsibility will 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.

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.

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.

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

1. When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher should consider the following: what, where, when and why?
2. If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first.
3. 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. The students should also be asked to write down their account of the incident(s).

Where Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

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

Follow up Where Bullying Behaviour has Occurred:

- The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement.
- Important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
- The teacher should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this.
- The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.
- Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.
- Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.
- If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures.
- If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student.

The following supports are available to help prevent and address bullying behaviour:

- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Oide
- Webwise
- National Parents Council
- Dublin City University (DCU) Anti -Bullying Centre
- Tusla

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: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Principal