SS. Peter and Paul's N.S.

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of SS. Peter and Paul's N.S. 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.

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	19th February 2025	Staff meeting discussion
Students	26th February 2025	Questionnaire
Parents	12th March	Questionnaire
Board of Management	26th February 2025	Discussion at BOM meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	Not applicable	Not applicable
Date policy was approved: 2nd April 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 19th June 2024		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Culture and Environment:

- School Ethos and mission statement
- Positive school atmosphere
- Bí Cineálta child friendly policy
- Clear and consistent rules
- Supervision – pupils are supervised from 9.10am until they are collected at home time.
- Playground supervision – all teachers supervise the yard at break times.
- Regular communication with parents on email / website / newsletters.
- Kindness and inclusion are modelled.
- Pupil voice is valued.
- Induction for parents and pupils starting school
- A 'telling' environment is cultivated
- Sense of belonging to school community is cultivated through creative activities both in the classroom and on school grounds and through participation in extra-

curricular events.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- SPHE lessons
- Religion lessons
- Stay Safe programme
- RSE programme
- Webwise lessons
- Respectful communication between teachers and pupils
- Small group and pair work
- Circle time
- Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their self-esteem through nurturing their talents in curricular and extra-curricular areas.

Relationships and Partnerships:

- Positive relationships are promoted.
- School assemblies
- Pair work / group work in each classroom
- Whole school activities such as cooking, board games, active school flag activities
- Playground leaders
- School outings
- Parent – teacher meetings
- Staff meetings
- Board of Management meetings
- Christmas concert
- Catholic Schools Week
- Grandparents Day
- An Taisce Spring Clean
- Active School Week
- Green flag / active school flag awards
- Empathy, understanding, respect and resilience are valued and promoted in our school.

Policy and Planning:

- Code of Behaviour
- SPHE Policy
- Special Education Policy
- RSE Policy
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- GDPR
- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Safer Internet Day is celebrated each year.
- Stay Safe programme is implemented every second year.

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Pupils may enter the school from 9.10am and are supervised by teachers in their classrooms.
- Pupils are supervised until they are collected at home time.

All staff members supervise outside during break times paying particular attention to the playground and sensory garden areas.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Class Teachers

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

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

The teachers will consider **What, Where, When and Why.**
The teachers will engage with pupils individually at first and then as a group if necessary.
The teachers may request a written account from individuals or group.
These three questions will be used to identify if bullying has occurred:

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 these questions is 'Yes', then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour will be addressed using the Bí Cineálta procedures.
If 'No', the behaviour will be addressed using the school's Code of Behaviour'

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Where bullying behaviour has occurred (Section 6.2)
- The school will support students affected by bullying, even if it occurs outside school, but is not required to investigate bullying occurring outside school.
- The school addresses both the bullied and the bully fairly and consistently.
- No one approach works in all situations.
- The school will act carefully on requests to 'take no action' from students and parents.
- The school will review progress within 20 school days and take further action if bullying continues.
- All bullying incidents, actions taken and outcomes are recorded on template devised by school staff.
- Communication barriers are considered when a support plan is being put in place.
- Support plans are drawn up for both the bullied and bully and added to the Student Support File. A range of strategies are used to support students involved. These may include daily/weekly check in with the teacher / principal, support from Special Education Teacher, activities to nurture self-esteem and foster friendships, small group / pair work.
- Students who witness bullying behaviour are encouraged to discuss it the teacher / principal. The teacher may use circle time, picture books, art, drama etc. to explore the theme of bullying in the classroom and give students an opportunity to respond.

Requests to take no action (Section 6.3)
- Student reporting the bullying asks for no action except for increased 'look out'.
- Teachers will show empathy and ensure that the child feels safe.
- Teacher contacts parents of the reporter.
- If parents agree to no action, school requires a written acknowledgement from parents.
- The school may however still decide to address the bullying behaviour.

Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased (Section 6.4)
The school will review no more than 20 school days after the initial intervention with students and parents.
The review will include:
- Nature of bullying / behaviour
- Effectiveness of strategies utilized
- Relationship between students now

The school will continue to provide support and supervision for both parties.
Strategies may be reviewed and further meetings scheduled.

Recording bullying behaviour (Section 6.5)
All incidents of bullying behaviour are recorded in template devised by teachers.
The views of students and parents regarding action to be taken are also recorded.

Following a review with students and parents, the following question is answered:
- Has the bullying behaviour ceased?
- If so, the date is recorded.

Engagement with external services and supports is noted. Records are kept in the Student Support File in the office.

Complaints Procedures (Section 6.6)
- Parents are advised of school's complaints procedures if they are dissatisfied with how the bullying was addressed.
- Parents are made aware of where they can access links to additional information.

If parents are still dissatisfied, they can contact the Ombudsman for Children at ococomplaint@oco.ie

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.