

St Peters National School, Snugboro, Bí Cineálta

Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of St Peters National School, Snugboro 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		• ½ day closure • Croke Park/Haddington Road Hours • Lunch time meetings • Google docs • Seminars/webinars
Students		• Assemblies throughout the year • Anti-bullying/Friendship week • SPHE lessons • Senior Students speak about kindness and friendship to the younger students. • SEN: -Pupil clipboards
Parents		• Website • Surveys/emails • Newsletters • Parents Association
Board of management		• Report from Principal at Board Meetings • Seminars/webinars • Policy ratification
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		• As appropriate - Bus Driver - Coaches - Visitors - Student teachers - Students on work experience
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

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:

- * We are a telling school- The children are encouraged to speak up. We build strong relationships between teacher/SNA/Ancillary staff and the students. We have visual displays to encourage the children to tell.

- *'Trusted adults'- the children are supported by adults they trust in the school.

- *Creating Safe physical spaces in school.

- *Respectful atmosphere is cultivated in the school.

- *Providing appropriate and adequate supervision.

- *Greeting children at the gate/door in the mornings.

- *Giving due consideration to seating arrangements

Curriculum:

- *Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Curriculum. We have a number of initiatives which are directly related to anti bullying behaviours: Fun Friends, Friends, A Lust for Life.

- *Relationships and Sexuality Education

- *We are a school that promotes inclusion and respect for all. These ideals are instilled from day one in Junior Infants with our school motto being ***'Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself'***

- *We work specifically on the development of Social and Emotional Learning

- *We use the ideals from Restorative Practice to help heal relationships in so far as is possible.

- *We encourage and promote body awareness and safety through a robust PE curriculum

- *We host internet safety talks and webinars for the children and parents.

- *We use Webwise to teach about safety on line.

Relationships and Partnerships:

Good relationships are the cornerstone of our school:

- *We are constantly working on strong interpersonal relationships amongst all of our school community.

- *We encourage active participation in school life for students and parents.

- *We host workshops and awareness promoting seminars on issues that may arise in school life e.g. internet safety

- *We acknowledge and encourage Acts of Kindness.
- *We connect and communicate with the students through Assemblies.
- *We have an active and supportive Parents Association.
- *We participate in Creative School projects.
- *We inform parents and guardians of the activities in the school through the Aladdin Connect App and regular newsletters.
- *We encourage the older children to mentor and model good behaviour to their younger peers.
- *We will establish a Student Council.

Policy and Planning:

The following **Policies**, Documents and Procedures are directly concerned with the prevention of bullying behaviour:

- Bí Cineálta
- Safeguarding Statement
- Children's First Document
- Code of Behaviour
- Well-Being Policy Statement and Framework
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Special Education Policy
- Supervision Policy
- SPHE plan
- RSE Plan

Planning:

- Teacher Professional Learning and Continued Professional Development
- Whole staff meetings for Croke Park/Haddington Road Hours.
- Informal and formal meetings between staff members.
- Meetings of the ISLM team

Our school will use the above strategies but are not confined to these and this list is not exhaustive.

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):

*Morning and evening supervision

*Yard rota for supervision at break times and lunch times.

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

We will take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of our students and to supervise students when students are attending school or attending school activities.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Class Teacher

Class Support Teacher

Assistant Principal

Deputy Principal

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

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):

- (1.) 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.

To **determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour** we 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.

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.

(2.) Approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour:

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

(3.) Review:

Determining of bullying behaviour has ceased:

- ☐ Teacher must engage with students and parents involved no more than **20 days** after the initial discussion to review progress following initial intervention.
- ☐ **Factors to consider** include
 - The nature of the bullying behaviour
 - The effectiveness of the strategies used
 - The relationship between the students.
- ☐ On-going **supervision and support** will be available to both sides
NOTE: relationships may not be restored
- ☐ If the bullying has **NOT** ceased:
 - Review strategies with students and parents
 - Meet parents and students over an agreed time frame

- If the behaviour persists, then we will refer to and invoke the procedures from the 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):

- *Each person involved will be engaged with individually at first
- *If appropriate, all students will meet as a group.
- *Each person will be asked to give their account of what has happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views.
- *Each student, those experiencing the bullying behaviour and those displaying the bullying behaviour, will be supported, as appropriate following the meetings.
- *Each student will be asked to give a written account of the incident.
- *They will be given a safe space in which to do this and the emphasis will be on restorative practice.
- *Parents/Guardians of both parties will be informed at an early stage

NOTE: 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 the school is required to support the student but not investigate.

External Agencies/Supports:

- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Tusla
- Oide
- NCSE
- CDNT
- As I Am
- An Garda Síochána
- Webwise
- Bodywhys
- Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)

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: _____ Date: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Principal)