



St. Brogan's College

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of St. Brogan's College 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	14 th March 2025	Bi Cinealta planning day. Input and feedback received from all staff.
Students	2 nd May 2025	Draft given to all students to give feedback to class representatives. Two meetings with Student Council
Parents	2 nd May 2025	Draft policy sent to all parents and a request for feedback on a form.
Board of Management	20 th May 2025	Reviewed in March and approved at Board meeting on 20 th May.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved: 20 th May 2025		
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):

Prevention Strategies to Address Bullying Behaviour

The school is committed to fostering a safe and inclusive environment by implementing a range of preventative strategies to combat bullying, including online bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying, racist bullying, sexist bullying, and sexual harassment. These strategies align with the Bí Cineálta Procedures and reflect a whole-school approach to promoting respect, inclusion, and positive behaviour.

1. Whole-School Prevention Strategies

Implementing a whole-school awareness programme that educates students, staff, and parents about bullying, its impact, and the school's response.

Promoting a positive school culture through regular events, awareness campaigns, and participation in initiatives such as **Anti-Bullying Week, Stand up Awareness and Safer Internet Day**.

Ensuring all staff receive training on bullying prevention and intervention.

Integrating respect, diversity, and inclusion into the **Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), and Wellbeing curricula.**

Where necessary provide space in Tuition time for students with AEN to discuss concerns around bullying.

Embedding anti-bullying principles into school policies and codes of behaviour.

Encouraging student leadership and peer support structures, such as **student councils and buddy systems**, to promote inclusion and support.

2. Preventing Online (Cyber) Bullying

Educating students on responsible digital citizenship and safe online behaviour through **SPHE, Digital Media Literacy, and Wellbeing lessons.**

Hosting workshops for students, staff, and parents on the risks of online bullying and strategies to stay safe online.

Implementing an **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)** that clearly outlines expectations regarding online conduct within and outside school hours.

Monitoring school devices and internet usage to detect and prevent online bullying.

Partnering with external organisations such as **Webwise** to enhance digital safety education.

3. Preventing Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying

Promoting a school culture that values diversity and explicitly supports **LGBTQ+ students through policies, displays, and inclusive language.**

Embedding LGBTQ+ inclusivity in **RSE, SPHE, and Wellbeing education.**

Ensuring staff are trained to address homophobic and transphobic language and behaviour promptly and effectively.

4. Preventing Racist Bullying

Celebrating cultural diversity through **intercultural events, language weeks, and curriculum content** that reflects a range of ethnic backgrounds.

Providing specific lessons on racism, discrimination, and inclusion within CSPE and Wellbeing programmes.

Ensuring representation of diverse voices and experiences in learning materials and school initiatives.

Encouraging student-led discussions and projects that promote intercultural understanding and anti-racism.

Ensuring staff are trained to address racist language and behaviour promptly and effectively.

5. Preventing Sexist Bullying and Sexual Harassment

Embedding gender equality and respectful relationships education within **SPHE, RSE, and Wellbeing programmes**.

Educating students on the definitions of **sexual harassment, consent, and gender-based discrimination**, ensuring they understand what constitutes unacceptable behaviour.

Ensuring that policies and staff training emphasise a zero-tolerance approach to sexist language, harassment, and discriminatory behaviour.

Encouraging student-led initiatives that promote gender equality and challenge harmful stereotypes.

Ensuring staff are trained to address sexist language and behaviour promptly and effectively.

6. Ongoing Monitoring and Review

The school will regularly review the effectiveness of these prevention strategies through:

- **Student and parent surveys** to assess perceptions of bullying and inclusivity.
- **Analysis of incident reports** to identify trends and address emerging issues.
- **Feedback from student councils and peer mentors** to evaluate the impact of school initiatives.
- **Staff training updates** to ensure all staff are equipped with current best practices in bullying prevention.

By implementing these prevention strategies, the school aims to create a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment where all students feel valued and protected from bullying and harassment. These strategies align with our mission statement – *“We strive to be a happy, safe, caring and inclusive community where everyone is supported to reach their potential.”*

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):

The school is committed to ensuring a safe and inclusive environment by implementing effective supervision and monitoring policies to prevent and address bullying behaviour. These policies align with **the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour** and support a proactive approach to safeguarding students.

1. Supervision and Monitoring of Student Behaviour

Active Supervision: Staff members actively supervise students in **classrooms, corridors, common areas, toilets, school entrances/exits, and outdoor spaces** during and between lessons, including break and lunchtime periods.

Increased Supervision in High-Risk Areas: Areas identified as potential hotspots for bullying behaviour (e.g. toilets, secluded corridors) are regularly monitored. Staff are assigned to patrol these locations to prevent bullying incidents.

Before School Monitoring: Supervision is in place before school to ensure student safety.

CCTV Monitoring: Where appropriate and in compliance with **GDPR and data protection regulations**, CCTV is used to monitor key areas of the school to deter bullying behaviour and investigate reported incidents.

2. Online and Digital Behaviour Monitoring

Digital Safety Policies: The school has an **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)** in place that sets out clear guidelines for appropriate online conduct on school devices and networks.

School Wi-Fi and Device Monitoring: Internet usage on school devices in school is monitored to prevent misuse, including cyberbullying, inappropriate content access, and online harassment.

Education on Digital Citizenship: Students are educated on safe and responsible online behaviour through **SPHE, Wellbeing, Digital Media Literacy, and Cyber Safety workshops** delivered in collaboration with external organisations such as **Webwise**.

3. Reporting and Communication Mechanisms

Student Reporting Channels: Students are encouraged to report bullying incidents through multiple safe and confidential channels, including:

Digital reporting platforms where students can report concerns online.

Staff Communication and Collaboration: Staff members are trained to recognise and report bullying behaviour, ensuring incidents are **logged, reviewed, and acted upon promptly**.

Regular staff meetings include discussions on student well-being and bullying prevention strategies.

The **Principal** is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the school's anti-bullying response.

4. Engagement with Parents and Guardians

Regular Communication: Parents are informed about bullying prevention policies through **the school website, and parent information sessions**.

Reporting Procedures: Parents are encouraged to report bullying concerns directly to the school.

Workshops and Support Sessions: Information sessions for parents on recognising bullying behaviour, supporting their children, and fostering positive peer relationships are provided.

5. Student Involvement in Supervision and Peer Support

Student Leadership and Peer Mentoring: Senior students are trained as **Big Brothers/Big Sisters** to support younger students, particularly in **First Year transition programmes**.

Student Council members contribute to anti-bullying initiatives and provide feedback on school climate.

Friendship and Inclusion Programmes: Initiatives such as **buddy systems, lunchtime clubs, and structured activities** provide students with safe and supportive environments to build positive relationships.

6. Ongoing Review and Evaluation

To ensure the effectiveness of these supervision and monitoring policies, the school will:

- **Conduct regular reviews of supervision procedures**, identifying areas that may require additional oversight.
- **Gather feedback from students, parents, and staff** through surveys and meetings.
- **Analyse bullying incident reports** to detect patterns and implement targeted interventions.

These strategies help maintain a **safe, respectful, and inclusive** learning environment where all students feel protected from bullying and harassment.

These strategies align with our mission statement – *“We strive to be a happy, safe, caring and inclusive community where everyone is supported to reach their potential.”*

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- Year Heads for each year group
- Deputy Principals
- 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):

Steps to Determine if Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred, Approaches to Address It, and Reviewing Progress

In accordance with **the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**, the school follows a structured approach to identifying, addressing, and reviewing bullying incidents. These steps ensure a fair, consistent, and effective response to bullying behaviour while prioritising the well-being of all students involved.

1. Steps to Determine if Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

The school follows a clear process to **assess and establish whether bullying has taken place**, ensuring that all reports are investigated fairly and thoroughly.

Receiving Reports

Students, parents, or staff can report concerns through multiple channels, including:

- **Direct reporting to a member of staff, teacher, Year Head, or Deputy Principal.**
- **Anonymous reporting mechanisms** (e.g. reporting boxes or online forms).
- **Peer reports** through student mentors or friendship groups.

All reports, whether verbal or written, are taken seriously and documented appropriately.

Initial Inquiry

The relevant staff member will **speak privately with the student(s) involved** (including the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses) to gather information.

Questions are framed in an **open, non-judgmental manner** to ensure students feel safe sharing their experiences.

The staff member will assess:

- The nature of the reported behaviour.
- The frequency and duration of incidents.
- Whether there is a **power imbalance** or ongoing pattern of behaviour.
- The impact on the target(s).

Assessment and Decision

If the behaviour **meets the definition of bullying** as outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Bí Cineálta Procedures, it is formally recorded and addressed accordingly.

If the behaviour does not meet the criteria for bullying but is still inappropriate, the school will take **disciplinary or restorative action** as needed.

Parents/guardians of the students involved may be informed at this stage, depending on the severity of the case.

2. Approaches to Address Bullying Behaviour

Once bullying behaviour has been identified, the school implements a response that prioritises **support, education, and corrective action**.

Support for the Target of Bullying

Immediate reassurance and protection are provided to the student affected.

A designated staff member (e.g. Guidance Counsellor or Year Head) provides **ongoing support** and checks in regularly with the student.

The student is offered **counselling services** and access to support groups if needed.

Where necessary, the school implements **interim safety measures** (e.g. adjustments to seating plans, class transitions, or break-time supervision) to ensure the student feels secure

Intervention with the Student Engaging in Bullying Behaviour

The student responsible is given an opportunity to **explain their actions**, and a **restorative approach** is prioritised where appropriate.

Clear expectations for behaviour are **reinforced through discussion, contracts, and structured interventions**.

The student may be required to participate in **talks on empathy, respect, and conflict resolution**.

If behaviour continues, **disciplinary measures** are applied as per the school's Code of Behaviour, including:

- Detentions
- Report Cards
- Suspension
- Temporary withdrawal of privileges.
- Formal Warnings
- Increased supervision or movement restrictions within the school.
- Referral to external support agencies (if necessary)

Engagement with Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians of both the **target and student responsible** are contacted as appropriate and informed of the school's response.

A meeting may be held to discuss next steps and provide guidance on how parents can support their child.

In cases of severe or persistent bullying, external agencies (e.g. the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) or Tusla) may be involved.

Restorative Approaches

Where appropriate, **restorative conversations or mediation** sessions are facilitated between the students involved, **provided the target is comfortable** and agrees to participate. This may involve:

- A guided discussion where the student responsible acknowledges the impact of their behaviour.
- An agreed plan for future behaviour and improved interactions.
- A follow-up review to ensure commitments are upheld.

Formal Recording of Incidents

All confirmed cases of bullying are recorded in accordance with the **Bí Cineálta procedures**.

Records are kept confidential but may be reviewed by school leadership to track patterns and assess policy effectiveness.

3. Reviewing Progress and Follow-Up

The school ensures that all bullying incidents are followed up and progress is reviewed to prevent recurrence.

Short-Term Follow-Up

A **designated staff member** checks in with the target **within 20 school days** of the intervention to assess their well-being.

Staff continue to monitor interactions between the students involved and remain alert for signs of ongoing issues.

Parents are updated on progress where necessary.

Long-Term Monitoring

Regular check-ins take place at intervals (e.g. one month, three months) to ensure a sustained resolution.

The school maintains **anonymised records of incidents** to identify trends and inform future preventative measures.

Feedback from students, staff, and parents is used to **evaluate the effectiveness** of interventions.

Whole-School Reflection and Policy Review

The school reviews its **Anti-Bullying Policy and Bí Cineálta procedures annually**, using:

- Incident data analysis.
- Student and staff feedback.
- External best-practice recommendations.

Adjustments to supervision, curriculum content, or intervention strategies are made as needed to strengthen anti-bullying measures.

By implementing these structured steps, the school aims to **create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment**, ensuring that bullying is addressed effectively and that all students feel respected and valued.

These strategies align with our mission statement – *“We strive to be a happy, safe, caring and inclusive community where everyone is supported to reach their potential.”*

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):

The school is committed to providing **comprehensive support** to all individuals involved in bullying incidents, including **those who experience bullying, those who witness it, and those who engage in bullying behaviour**. These approaches align with **the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour** and reflect a whole-school commitment to **well-being, respect, and restorative practice**.

1. Supporting Students Who Experience Bullying Behaviour

Students who experience bullying require **immediate, ongoing, and tailored support** to help them regain confidence, feel safe, and move forward in a positive manner.

Immediate Support and Reassurance

A designated staff member (e.g. Year Head, Class Tutor, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor) meets with the student to **listen, reassure, and validate their experience**.

The student is reminded that **bullying is not their fault** and that the school takes their report seriously.

Safe Spaces and Well-Being Support

The student is given access to a **safe space/person** within the school where they can go if they feel anxious.

If necessary, adjustments to **seating arrangements, break-time activities, or school routines** are made to ensure the student's comfort and safety.

The student may with their consent be paired with a **peer buddy or mentor** to provide additional support.

Counselling and Emotional Support

The student may be offered **one-to-one support with the school Guidance Counsellor**. or advised on where to access external supports through agencies such as Tusla, NEPS, or child and adolescent mental health services.

The school may work if necessary with parents to explore additional **therapeutic interventions** for the student's emotional well-being.

Restorative Practices

If appropriate and **only with the consent of the student and parents**, a **restorative conversation** may be facilitated between the student and the individual(s) responsible for the bullying.

This process helps the student **express their feelings, regain their voice, and set clear expectations for future interactions**.

Ongoing Monitoring and Follow-Up

The school maintains regular check-ins with the student (e.g. **after two weeks, one month, and three months**) to ensure continued well-being. If concerns persist, further interventions are implemented.

2. Supporting Students Who Witness Bullying Behaviour

Students who witness bullying behaviour (bystanders) play a crucial role in preventing and addressing incidents. The school ensures that witnesses feel **empowered to act responsibly and safely**.

Encouraging Reporting and Safe Intervention

Students are educated on the importance of **reporting bullying incidents**, with clear procedures in place for anonymous and direct reporting.

The school promotes '**upstander**' behaviour, encouraging students to safely intervene by:

- **Offering support** to the student experiencing bullying.
- **Reporting incidents** to a trusted adult.
- **Discouraging bullying behaviour** by not participating in or reinforcing it.
- **Building Empathy and Awareness**

Students are engaged in **anti-bullying workshops, discussions, and role-playing activities** to enhance their understanding of bullying's impact.

Lessons in **SPHE, Wellbeing, and CSPE** focus on **bystander intervention strategies** and responsible digital citizenship.

Providing Emotional Support

Some students may feel **guilt, distress, or fear** after witnessing bullying. Staff members are available to discuss their concerns and provide reassurance.

If needed, students can access **the Guidance Counsellor** to process their experiences.

3. Supporting Students Who Display Bullying Behaviour

Students who engage in bullying require **intervention, education, and support** to address the root causes of their behaviour and prevent recurrence. The school focuses on **accountability, behaviour change, and personal growth** rather than punishment alone.

Behavioural Interventions

The student is given the opportunity to **explain their behaviour and reflect on its impact**.

They may be required to engage in **structured reflection exercises**, such as completing a **restorative thinking sheet** or writing about the effects of their actions.

Restorative Approaches

Where appropriate, a **restorative meeting** may be facilitated to help the student understand the harm caused and commit to positive behaviour changes.

Clear **agreements and behavioural expectations** are set, with a staff member monitoring progress.

Targeted Support and Counselling

If there are **underlying issues contributing to the behaviour** (e.g. self-esteem difficulties, family issues, social struggles), the student may be referred to the **Guidance Counsellor, Wellbeing Coordinator, or external support agencies**.

Parents are involved in discussions on how best to support the student in making positive behavioural changes.

Monitoring and Accountability

The student's behaviour is monitored over time, with **follow-up meetings to track progress**.

If the bullying behaviour persists, **escalated interventions** are implemented in line with the **school's Code of Behaviour**.

4. Whole-School Strategies to Strengthen Support

Annual Anti-Bullying Campaigns

The school organises **awareness weeks and workshops** to reinforce anti-bullying messages.

Student Leadership and Peer Mentoring

Senior students are trained as **Big Brothers/Big Sisters** to support younger students and promote a culture of kindness.

Staff Training

Teachers and staff receive **training** on identifying and supporting students involved in bullying incidents.

Parental Involvement

Parents are provided with **information sessions and guidance** on supporting their children in addressing bullying issues.

Conclusion

By implementing these support approaches, the school ensures that:

- **Students who experience bullying feel safe, supported, and empowered.**
- **Witnesses of bullying understand their role and feel confident in reporting incidents.**
- **Students who display bullying behaviour receive structured intervention to promote positive change.**
- **The entire school community fosters a culture of inclusion, respect, and accountability.**

These measures contribute to a **safer, more inclusive, and respectful school environment** for all students.

These strategies align with our mission statement – *"We strive to be a happy, safe, caring and inclusive community where everyone is supported to reach their potential."*

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)