



St Patrick's GNS, Hollypark RN: 19259W

Bí Cineálta Policy

Policy ratified: May 2025

Review: This policy is subject to regular review and updates.

Signed: *Arthur Hutchinson*

Arthur Hutchinson, Chairperson BOM

At the time of drawing up this policy, all details and the enclosed information are correct. It is possible that between now and the review date, changes may have to be made to the provisions, policies and procedures of the school. This may be due to external changes required by the Department of Education, the school patron or other agencies. Mandatory policies will be published on the school website and up to date information will be posted regularly.

Contents

Introduction.....	4
Rationale	4
Aims	5
Definition of Bullying	5
Is your child being bullied?	5
Types of Bullying Behaviour	5
Direct bullying behaviour:.....	6
Indirect bullying behaviour:	6
Online bullying behaviour:.....	6
This form of bullying behaviour can include:.....	6
Where bullying behaviour can occur	7
Coming to and from school	8
Online Bullying	8
Section A: Development/Review of our Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour	9
Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour.....	11
Culture and Environment.....	11
A Telling Environment.....	12
Relationships and partnerships	12
A Trusted Adult	12
Creating safe physical spaces in our school	13
Supervision.....	13
School culture.....	13
Preventing racist bullying behaviour	14
Cyber Awareness.....	14
Curriculum	14
Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour.....	15
Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred	15
Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased	17
Recording bullying behaviour.....	17
Complaints Process	18

Supports.....	18
Oversight	19
Communication	19
Appendix A - Summary document shared with the PA	20
Bí Cineálta Key messages PA	20
Aims	20
Definition of Bullying.....	20
Is your child being bullied?	20
Hollypark GNS is a “Telling School”.	20
Preventative culture and environment	21
When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:	21
Recording bullying behaviour.....	21
Appendix B	23
Appendix C: Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour	24
Approach	24
Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred	24
Where bullying behaviour has occurred.....	25
Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred	26
Appendix D: Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update	28
Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management Meeting	28
Appendix E: Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy	29
Bí Cineálta Policy Review	29
Appendix F: Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the school’s Bí Cineálta Policy.....	35

Introduction

The Board of Management of St. Patrick's GNS, Hollypark, 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 pupil as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to working 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 pupils 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.

Rationale

This policy was established to clearly outline the following:

- Formally state our whole school community commitment to the prevention of bullying behaviours
- Document the positive whole school strategies that are in place in every classroom to prevent bullying behaviours.
- Outline the support, investigative and reporting steps in place for pupils who experience bullying.
- Outline the support, investigative and reporting steps in place for pupils who engage in bullying behaviours.
- Identify strategies for a shared way forward for both parties.
- Clarify procedures for pupils, staff and parents.

Aims

Through the successful implementation of this policy, we hope to:

1. Prevent and address bullying behaviours
2. Create a whole school community awareness of our bullying prevention strategies.
3. Ensure all stakeholders have clarity around the reporting procedures.

Definition of Bullying

The core definition of bullying behaviour as outlined in Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying is as follows:

Bullying is 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.

Is your child being bullied?

If you think your child is being bullied, ask yourself these three important questions:

1. Is it repeated?
2. Is it targeted?
3. Is it hurtful?

If the answer to ALL three questions is YES, please contact the school immediately.

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
- exceptionally able bullying
- gender identity bullying
- homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying
- physical appearance bullying
- racist bullying
- poverty bullying

-
- religious identity bullying
 - sexist bullying
 - sexual harassment

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together.

These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Direct bullying behaviour

1. Physical bullying behaviour
2. Verbal bullying behaviour
3. Written bullying behaviour
4. Extortion

Indirect bullying behaviour

1.Exclusion

2.Relational

Online bullying behaviour

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.

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.

In St. Patrick’s GNS, Hollypark we acknowledge that the school’s physical environment has a significant influence on social relationships among students and can impact on the ability of school staff to effectively prevent and address bullying. The physical environments in our school are well-designed to preventing bullying behaviour and promoting inclusion, positive relationships, and a safe and supportive learning environment.

1. **School yard:** Bullying behaviour can take place in the school yard. Our school play areas are open with attention given to ensure no hidden or obscured parts which could provide an environment where bullying behaviour is more likely to occur. Our sixth-class pupils act as yard buddies supporting collaborative playground games as required. The Active Committee leads the active breaks in the senior classes. Staff are rotated for daily yard duty to ensure adequate supervision of all pupils.
2. **In every classroom** a positive, pupil centred culture of respect and belonging is created to ensure our pupils feel safe, happy and valued. Class contracts are established in every classroom and revisited throughout the school year. Each classroom has SPHE specific posters and visuals on display. Calm corners are established in many classrooms. Teachers use five key restorative practice questions to resolve conflict as required. All class levels complete the Weaving Wellbeing and mandatory Stay Safe programmes. Morning meetings take place as a soft start in many classrooms and worry boxes and wellbeing journals are in use to support pupils.
3. **Other areas:** Bullying behaviour can take place in other areas such as toilets, corridors, astro and assembly hall. In all areas of our school there are clear expectations around appropriate behaviours, and these are supported by visual prompts such as posters and signs throughout the building. Our sensory spaces are made available to pupils are needed to help with regulation and behaviour management. Whole school assemblies with a behaviour and social skills focus are held frequently throughout the school year.
4. **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

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

Section A: Development/Review of our Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development of this policy.

Stakeholder	Date Consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	Tues 15 th Oct. 2024 Surveys online 1 week 10 th to 14 th Feb 2025 Bí Cineálta full Day training BEC M Marnell and O Carroll 4 th Dec. 2024 Wed. 19 th Feb 2025 2nd April 2025	Webinar school leaders Staff surveys Staff meetings updates In service TPL Half day closure webinar and group discussion. Staff sub-committee meeting
Students	Surveys online 1 week 10 th to 14 th Feb 2025 Focus Group 20 th Mar 2025	Pupil survey Focus group – Amber Flag and Student Council.
Parents	Surveys online 1 week 10 th to 14 th Feb 2025 Wed 30 th April @8.15am	Parent Surveys Focus group collaboration all stakeholders
Board of Management	20 th Mar 2025 Wed 30 th April 2025 @ 8.15am	Feedback given to BOM regarding survey Parent nominees from the BOM participated in the parental focus group.
Wider school community – secretary/ SNAS, caretaker	Surveys online 1 week 10 th to 14 th Feb 2025 Wed. 19 th Feb 2025	Staff surveys Staff meeting updates In service TPL Half day closure webinar and group discussion.
Date policy was ratified:	May 2025	The Policy was brought to the BOM for discussion and ratification May 2025.

		Signed by Arthur Hutchinson Chairman BOM
Date policy will be reviewed:	May 2026	Board of Management meeting

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

In St. Patrick's GNS, Hollypark, we understand that the most effective strategy is to prevent bullying behaviour.

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
--

Culture and Environment

In St. Patrick's GNS, Hollypark we promote and embrace a culture of respect, courtesy, inclusion and acceptance. A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. There are clear expectations outlined for the girls regarding acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. These are revisited regularly at whole school assemblies and daily principal announcements. Our school environment is 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 positive 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. The student voice is central to daily life in St. Patrick's GNS, Hollypark. The student voice is valued and harnessed through The Student Council, The Amber Flag Committee and other pupil leadership teams.

In our school community, parents are active partners in their child's education. Our parent body, particularly through the work of the PA, help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect. Parent information evenings are organised annually through the school to support parents with cyber awareness, building resilience and the Smartphone Code.

A Telling Environment

In St Patricks GNS, Hollypark, we are a “telling school” and our whole school community supports a telling environment. It is important that the school community supports a ‘telling’ environment.

Schools should take these reasons for not reporting into account when developing their strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour. St Patricks GNS, Hollypark is a safe environment where reporting of bullying behaviour is encouraged.

Staff work in close partnership with parents. If you have a concern regarding your child, please contact your daughter’s class teacher by email or simply phone the office to schedule an in-person meeting. We would encourage our parents to be proactive and reach out to the school.

Relationships and partnerships

In our school we build strong interpersonal connections with all stakeholders as we believe this is 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 staff curricular teams, student committees, school clubs and teams, links with local sports clubs.

We support that active participation of pupils in all aspects of school life. We support activities that build empathy, respect and resilience. We encourage peer support such as peer mentoring, paired reading and buddy systems. We promote acts of kindness and teach problem solving skills.

A Trusted Adult

The concept of “a trusted adult” is an effective strategy to encourage students to report if they or another student is experiencing bullying behaviour. In St Patricks GNS Hollypark all staff are approachable and proactively foster positive relationships with their pupils. For example, in many classrooms teachers have “Worry boxes”, “What id like teacher to know boxes”. This is only one of the strategies in place to encourage our pupils to share with their teachers. ‘Check and connect’ sessions are offered by Support teachers if resources allow.

Students who witness bullying behaviour are supported and encouraged to report the behaviour to a trusted adult in the school so that the behaviour can be addressed. Students who witness bullying behaviour on social media have an important role in helping to address the behaviour by reporting the witnessed behaviour to a trusted adult.

Creating safe physical spaces in our school

In St Patricks GNS, Hollypark, pupils experience a safe and happy school environment. In our school we take the following measures to create safe physical spaces:

- ensure good lighting is present to avoid dark corners or spaces
- remove visual barriers from windows such as posters
- ensure adequate supervision at break times including during yard duty
- murals, artwork and signage can help schools to promote the school's values such as equality, diversity, inclusion and respect

In our school pupils have a great sense of belonging. For example, there are posters in every classroom with the motto "You belong here." Pupils also have a strong sense of school identity and are proud to be "Hollyparkers". This helps students to identify and to feel a sense of responsibility for their school environment. The inclusion of spaces within schools for collaborative learning can also play a part in fostering a sense of belonging. It is important that the school grounds are well maintained to promote a sense of ownership and respect in the school community.

Supervision

Appropriate supervision is an important measure to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. Schools are required to take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of their students and to supervise students when students are attending school or attending school activities.

School culture

A positive and inclusive school culture is established in our school. This is essential to prevent and address bullying. The school leadership team play an active role in promoting and modelling this school culture and set the standards and expectations for all pupils. The school staff, including auxiliary staff, support and model these standards and expectations.

We have an established culture of respect in the school. The key messages are visible throughout the school and addressed at each whole school assembly. Relationships between all members of the school community are based on respect, care, integrity and trust.

Each staff member is responsible for developing and maintaining a school culture where bullying behaviours are not tolerated. A consistent approach is taken to addressing bullying behaviours.

In St. Patrick's GNS, Hollypark, we celebrate acts of kindness. The staff explicitly "notice" and reference them both individually and in groups.

Preventing racist bullying behaviour

In our school community we welcome students from diverse backgrounds with many different cultures being celebrated. Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include:

- 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

Cyber Awareness

To address the challenges faced by young people regarding cyber-bullying and unacceptable online behaviour we in Hollypark GNS implement the following:

- Explicitly teach the SPHE curriculum
- Participate in Cyber Awareness workshops (including a Parents evening)
- Encourage our parents to access Webwise
- Smart Phone Contract
- Local Community Garda delivers workshops on Cyber safety
- We develop and communicate an acceptable use policy for technology
- We refer to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the code of behaviour
- We have regular conversations with pupils about developing respectful and kind relationships online.

Curriculum

Teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful is promoted in our school. Our pupils have regular opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which can help build sense of connection, belongings and empathy. The curriculum subjects offered to students provide opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity.

The Social Personal (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 skills can be improved through the SPHE curriculum.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

In St. Patrick's GNS, Hollypark, the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviours:

- Child Safeguarding
- Bí Cineálta
- Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Communication Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- School Development Plan

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

- Individual class teachers
- Principal Bernadette Gunning
- Deputy Principal Michaela Marnell

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

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

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:

- When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred, the teacher should consider the following: what, where, when and why?
- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first. 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 view. Each student should be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting. It may also be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident.

Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful, but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

The staff of St. Patrick's GNS are not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where a bullying behaviour has an impact in school, teachers are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, the school team will 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 will support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what actions can be taken.

All staff in St. Patrick's GNS, Hollypark, will be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour. The staff acknowledge that the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support. Staff will engage without delay so that pupils feel listened to, supported and reassured. Staff will identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

It is important that a student's agency is enhanced, therefore staff will actively listen to pupils and involve them in deciding on the actions that will be taken. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, it is acknowledged that no one approach works in all situations.

In St. Patrick's GNS, Hollypark, we value our parent body as an integral part of our school community and the staff work in close partnership with parents as the primary educators of their children.

Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will 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. The school will consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents e.g. literacy, language and digital literacy.

In the case where parents make the school aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action, parents must put this request in writing to the school. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, schools may decide that based on the circumstances it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased

The teacher will engage with the student and parents involved no more than twenty school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.

Important factors to consider as part of the review 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.

Even if the bullying behaviour has ceased, the school is committed to ongoing supervision and support as required to the student who has experienced bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed bullying behaviour. The school team acknowledge that it may take time for relationships to settle and for supports to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behaviour occurred (as per our culture of respect- If you expect respect be the first to show it and our school motto "United in Friendship Together We Strive").

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher will review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed time frame until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

When it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour, is continuing to display the behaviour, then the inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with using strategies outlined within the school's code of behaviour. e.g. disciplinary sanctions may need to be considered, this will be dealt in a case-by-case matter.

Recording bullying behaviour

All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded. The record will document the following:

- Type of bullying behaviour.
- Form of bullying behaviour.
- When it took place (if known).
- Where it took place (if known).
- Date of the initial engagement with students and their parents.

The written record will include:

- The views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.
- The document will detail if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this.
- The date of each of these engagements will be documented.
- The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased will be documented.
- Any engagement with external services/ supports will also be documented.

These records will be retained in accordance with the school's record keeping policies and in line with data protection regulations.

Where a student support file exists, a hard copy of the record will be kept on the student support file. Where a student support plan exists, the plan will be updated to incorporate response strategies and associated supports to provide a consistent and holistic response to support the wellbeing of students involved.

Complaints Process

In the event that a parent is not satisfied, they will be referred to the school's complaints procedure.

Supports

Schools may seek support from NEPS, Túsla and the DCU Anti -Bullying Centre.

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include:

- The type of behaviour
- Where it took place
- When it took place
- The date of the engagement with students and parents
- The actions and supports agreed 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.

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 incidents of bullying behaviour that is ongoing.
- The number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year.

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which will include the following information where relevant:

- The trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred.
- The strategies used to address the bullying behaviour.
- Any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour, if any serious incidents have occurred which have had a adverse impact on a student.
- If a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour.
- If any additional support is needed from the board of management.
- If the schools Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review.

This update does not contain personal or identifying information.

Communication

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and on hard copy upon 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.

Appendix A - Summary document shared with the PA

Bí Cineálta Key messages PA

Aims

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

Through the successful implementation of the Bí Cineálta Policy, we hope to:

4. Prevent and address bullying behaviours.
5. Create a whole school community awareness of our bullying prevention strategies.
6. Ensure all stakeholders have clarity around the reporting procedures.

Definition of Bullying

The core definition of bullying behaviour as outlined in Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying is as follows:

Bullying is 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.

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.

Is your child being bullied?

If you think your child is being bullied, ask yourself these three important questions:

4. Is it repeated?
5. Is it targeted?
6. Is it hurtful?

If the answer to ALL three questions is YES, please contact the school immediately.

Hollypark GNS is a “Telling School”.

Staff work in close partnership with parents. If you have a concern regarding your child, please contact your daughter’s class teacher by email or simply phone the office to schedule an in-person meeting. We would encourage our parents to be proactive and reach out to the school.

The school has two distinct roles under the Bí Cineálta policy:

1. A supportive role (of all parties involved)

2. An investigative role (of all parties involved)

Preventative culture and environment

In St. Patrick's GNS, Hollypark we promote and embrace a culture of respect, courtesy, inclusion and acceptance. A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. There are clear expectations outlined for the girls regarding acceptable and unacceptable behaviours

In our school community, parents are active partners in their child's education. Our parent body, particularly through the work of the PA, help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect. Parent information evenings are organised annually through the school to support parents with cyber awareness, building resilience and the Smartphone Code.

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 or if there are additional needs.
- 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.

Recording bullying behaviour

All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded. The record will document the following:

- Type of bullying behaviour.
- Form of bullying behaviour.
- When it took place (if known).
- Where it took place (if known).
- Date of the initial engagement with students and their parents.
- **The teacher will engage with the student and parents involved no more than twenty school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.**

Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will 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. The school will consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents e.g. literacy, language and digital literacy.

In the case where parents make the school aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action, parents must put this request in writing to the school. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, schools may decide that based on the circumstances it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Even if the bullying behaviour has ceased, the school is committed to ongoing supervision and support as required to the student who has experienced bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed bullying behaviour. The school team acknowledge that it may take time for relationships to settle and for supports

to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behaviour occurred (as per our culture of respect- If you expect respect be the first to show it and our school motto “United in Friendship Together We Strive”).

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher will review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed time frame until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

When it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour, is continuing to display the behaviour, then the inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with using strategies outlined within the school’s code of behaviour. e.g. disciplinary sanctions may need to be considered, this will be dealt in a case-by-case matter.

The staff of St. Patrick’s GNS is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where a bullying behaviour has an impact in school, teachers are required to support the students involved.

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each Board of Management meeting.

Appendix B: Pupil Friendly Policy



Appendix C: Guide to 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.

This appendix is intended as a guide to addressing bullying behaviour. It is based on the information contained in Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Approach

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.

When addressing bullying behaviour teachers should:

- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured
- Seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- Conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- Consider the age and ability of the students 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

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

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 you should 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: A one-off incident 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.
--

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider what, where, when and why?

- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first
- 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
- It may be helpful to ask the students involved 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 Bí 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

Appendix D: Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management Meeting

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous Board of Management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which should include the following information where relevant:

- The trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc
- The strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- Any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- If any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- If a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- If any additional support is needed from the board of management
- If the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review
- This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.

Appendix E: Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual (calendar) review of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and its implementation in consultation with the school community.

As part of the review, this document must be completed.

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school.

____/____/20 ____

1. Where in the school is the student friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?

2. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student friendly policy on the school website? ____/____/20 ____

3. How has the student friendly policy been communicated to students?

4. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student friendly policy been communicated to parents?

-
5. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post- Primary Schools*? ☐Yes ☐No
6. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour? ☐Yes ☐No
7. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year? ☐Yes ☐No
8. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour? ☐Yes ☐No
9. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy? ☐Yes ☐No
10. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented? ☐Yes ☐No
11. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour? ☐Yes ☐No
12. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

13. Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:

14. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?

15. Does the student friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

16. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour?

☐ Yes ☐ No

17. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?

☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour?

☐ Yes ☐ No

19. Does the student friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

☐Yes ☐No

20. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour?

☐Yes ☐No

21. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?

☐Yes ☐No

22. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour?

☐Yes ☐No

23. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year?

☐Yes ☐No

24. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour?

☐Yes ☐No

25. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy?

☐Yes ☐No

26. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?

☐Yes ☐No

27. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour?

28. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

29. Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:

30. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?

31. Does the student friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they

have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying
behaviour?

☐ Yes ☐ No

32. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the
school due to reported bullying behaviour?

☐ Yes ☐ No

33. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or
completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an
incident of bullying behaviour?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Appendix F: Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management confirms that the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of _____.

This review was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education's Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(School Principal)

Date of next review: