



St Brigid's Infant School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of St Brigid's Infant School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineálta: 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	5 th March 2025 12 th March 2025 20 th March 2025	Introduction to Bí Cineálta Half day training Ancillary staff training
Students	28 th March 2025	Staff complete questionnaires with sample of students
Parents	2 nd April 2025	Parent focus group with HSCL
Board of Management		Policy presented to BOM
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		Published on school website
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

St Brigid's Infant School will adopt the following strategies to prevent bullying behaviours and consider the following to be key elements of a positive school culture:

Culture and environment

- ❖ Warm and welcoming environment
- ❖ Good communication with parents/stakeholders
- ❖ Human values
- ❖ Open and clear yard
- ❖ A telling environment
- ❖ Positive relationships
- ❖ Inclusive school culture
- ❖ Well-being week
- ❖ Anti-bullying week
- ❖ Nurture room
- ❖ Well-supervised yard/indoor yard
- ❖ HSCL
- ❖ Early Start
- ❖ Effective leadership
- ❖ Dignity at work
- ❖ Children-first focus

Curriculum

- ❖ Social/emotional groups
- ❖ Teaching and learning in SPHE
- ❖ RSE curriculum
- ❖ Stay Safe programme
- ❖ Circle time
- ❖ Aistear
- ❖ Well-being week
- ❖ Anti-bullying week
- ❖ Human values
- ❖ Nurture room
- ❖ Student participation
- ❖ Group work/collaboration

Policy and Planning

- ❖ Child protection and safeguarding
- ❖ Code of behaviour
- ❖ Bí Cineálta policy
- ❖ Child friendly Bí Cineálta policy
- ❖ Anti-bullying policy
- ❖ Acceptable use policy
- ❖ Communication policy
- ❖ Nurture policy
- ❖ School ethos
- ❖ Mission statement
- ❖ Dignity at work
- ❖ Supervision policy

- ❖ DFL (Incredible years rules)
- ❖ SEN policy
- ❖ SSE well-being in education
- ❖ CPD
- ❖ Staff meetings

Relationships and Partnerships

- ❖ Good communication with parents (Dojo)
- ❖ HSCL
- ❖ Supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience
- ❖ After-school initiatives
- ❖ Links with community groups
- ❖ Nurture room
- ❖ NEPs
- ❖ Grandparents' day
- ❖ Parents initiatives
- ❖ Tusla
- ❖ Links with Better Finglas, Barnardo's, school completion
- ❖ Pre-school handover
- ❖ Open days

St Brigid's Infant School will adopt the following strategies to prevent bullying behaviours and increase awareness of:

Preventing Cyberbullying

- ❖ Supervised access to tablets (with restrictions)
- ❖ Phones/smart watches not allowed in school
- ❖ Promoting digital citizenship
- ❖ Holding internet safety day
- ❖ Cyber safety and awareness discussed in SPHE lessons
- ❖ Cyberbullying addressed as part of SPHE and Anti-bullying week
- ❖ Parents informed of relevant internet safety/awareness Webinars
- ❖ Parents informed of relevant App/social media age restrictions and recommendations
- ❖ Children encouraged to be respectful and kind if engaging in online/social media activities
- ❖ Acceptable use policy for technology is in place and communicated
- ❖ Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards in the Code of behaviour
- ❖ Disabled comments on Dojo

Preventing Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying

- ❖ Creating an inclusive school environment
- ❖ Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as displaying relevant posters and stories
- ❖ Challenging gender stereotypes
- ❖ Fostering a 'telling environment' where children feel safe to report homophobic/transphobic bullying

Preventing Racist Bullying

- ❖ Fostering a school where diversity is celebrated and where children 'see themselves' in their school environment
- ❖ Having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
- ❖ Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
- ❖ Providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of children with EAL and to encourage communication with their families
- ❖ Providing resources to school staff to support children from ethnic backgrounds (including Traveller and Roma communities)
- ❖ Teaching children about a variety of different countries and cultures as part of a varied curriculum
- ❖ Ensuring that the library materials and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- ❖ Celebrate worldwide events/festivities from other cultures and countries

Preventing Sexist Bullying

- ❖ Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex
- ❖ Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex
- ❖ Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home
- ❖ Celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contribution of all students

Preventing Sexual Harassment

- ❖ Educating children about their bodies and safety through SPHE and the 'Stay Safe' program
- ❖ Promoting positive role models within the school community
- ❖ Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

Appropriate supervision is an important measure to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. At Saint Brigid's Infant School, we will adopt the following preventative strategies:

- ❖ A teacher is assigned to each yard (upper and lower).
- ❖ The teachers will monitor children and record any events in the yard books and communicate these to class teachers
- ❖ 1:1 teaching, door left open/glass panel
- ❖ SNA's will support yard supervision and aid the behaviours of their assigned children
- ❖ Children from the AS classes will wear high visibility jackets to aid their location and identification
- ❖ School and yard rules are standardised and well communicated
- ❖ Areas in the yard with reduced visibility are restricted by a yellow line which children are not allowed to cross
- ❖ Children are not permitted to access the school gardens or woodland areas during yard time
- ❖ Children move around the school/go to the toilets with adult supervision
- ❖ SNA's stay with their assigned children for indoor yard. A teacher monitors each corridor (top and bottom). Doors are open and children must remain seated
- ❖ Children are collected from their lines in the morning and handed over to parents/guardians directly in the yard at the end of the day. Children are not permitted to leave the grounds unaccompanied

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- ❖ Class teachers

At Saint Brigid's Infant School, the following steps will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred.

- ❖ The following three questions should be considered to ascertain if bullying has occurred;
 - a. Is the behaviour targeted at a student/group of students?
 - b. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
 - c. Is the behaviour repeated?

If the answer to all questions is yes, then the behaviour is bullying and the Bí Cineálta procedures should be followed. If no is answered to any questions; then the Code of behaviour procedures should be used. A record of the allegation should be recorded as

appropriate.

The following procedures will be employed to investigate allegations of bullying:

1. The 'Relevant teacher(s)' will initially speak individually to each child involved in a bullying allegation. They will identify the what, when, where and why of the events.
2. The 'Relevant teacher(s)' may need to speak to the children as a group, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's viewpoint. Each student should be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting. (A restorative practices approach should be adopted, if trained.)
3. If it is established that bullying has occurred, the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must follow the designated written records which will assist his/her/their efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
4. While all reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the 'Relevant teacher(s)', they will use their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding the same.
5. Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, caretaker and cleaners are encouraged to report any incidences of bullying behaviour witnessed by them to the class teacher or Principal.

Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour are as follows:

1. The 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must record the bullying incident following the Bf Cineálta procedures. The 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must inform the Principal and the pupil's parents of this. The BOM are also informed of each incident of bullying.
2. If a child requests teachers 'take no action', the child will be supported in order to feel safe. They will be made aware of the necessary actions and their parents will be informed. If a parent requests that the school 'take no action' to alleged bullying, this should be put in writing and they should be made aware that the school must do what is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.
3. The student who is experiencing the bullying should be supported in a way that they feel heard, supported and reassured.
4. The 'Relevant Teacher(s)' should identify the support needed for the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

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

To Determine if bullying behaviour has ceased, the school will:

- ❖ The Teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention. This review identifies the nature of the bullying, the effectiveness of the strategies used and the relationship between the students involved.
- ❖ Ongoing supervision and support may be required for the student who experienced the bullying and the student who displayed the bullying behaviour.
- ❖ If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again in a set period of time.
- ❖ When the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, the school will consider further strategies outlined in the Code of Behaviour.

Recording bullying behaviour:

- ❖ The 'Relevant Teacher(s)' will complete the appropriate form in line with Bí Cineálta procedures. This will detail:
 1. The type(s) of bullying behaviour displayed
 2. The form(s) of bullying behaviour displayed
 3. The date of initial engagement with students/parents and their viewpoints
 4. Details of the incident/allegations including where and when it occurred
 5. Notes of steps taken and engagements with parents
 6. Date and notes from any reviews
 7. Date determined when bullying has ceased or details of further necessary steps

Complaints process

The school will follow these procedures in the case of any parental complaints regarding the schools handling of bullying cases:

- ❖ Where a parent/Guardian is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
- ❖ In the event that a student/parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a

student and/or parent 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.

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: Frank Reedy
(Chairperson of board of management)

Date: 26/5/25

Signed: Sidhán Ryan
(Principal)

Date: 26/5/25