# St. Kevin's College



# Bí-Cineálta

# Anti-Bullying Policy

# A Whole School Approach

Ratified by the school Board of Management on June 24th, 2025

# School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

## Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of **St. Kevin's College, Ballygall Road East, Dublin 11** 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 | Sent 9th April 2nd May | Survey Workshop |
| Students | Sent 10th April | Survey Focus Group (Two reps from each year group) |
| Parents | Sent 31st March | Survey sent via email |
| Board of Management |  |  |
| Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers |  |  |
| Date policy was approved: |  |  |
| Date policy was last reviewed: |  |  |

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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

The school will work proactively to ensure as far as it can that bullying does not take place.

Bullying can be prevented by raising awareness of all in the school community about the detrimental effects of bullying.

**To prevent bullying the school uses a number of strategies:**

- ✓ A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community
- ✓ The use of the care-team system with dedicated time daily to meet the form teacher
- ✓ The Student Support Team meets weekly to discuss individual cases and issues that affect the whole-school community

- ✓ The schools Code of Behaviour is fair and transparent
- ✓ The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping through events such as multi-cultural day
- ✓ The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities
- ✓ Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions
- ✓ Professional development with specific focus on the training of relevant teacher(s)
- ✓ Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school
- ✓ Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. 4th Year Mentoring, Chess Club, Library time and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support
- ✓ Students have a voice in the school through the Student Council, class representatives, focus groups and answering surveys which helps identify areas of concern for students
- ✓ Development and promotion of a Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Code for the school to be included in school journals and displayed publicly in all classrooms, the bathroom and corridors with a dedicated notice board within the school
- ✓ The schools Bí Cineálta Policy is discussed with pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school
- ✓ The Bí Cineálta Policy is referenced at the first-year induction night and used at the beginning of the year with all other school groups to ensure that all students are reminded of the anti-bullying policy in the school
- ✓ The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures e.g. classroom and notice board promotion for bullying prevention and friendship, Stand-up/Friendship Week, year assemblies with year heads, etc.
- ✓ Consistent recording, investigation and follow-up of bullying behaviour
- ✓ Encouragement of a culture of telling with particular emphasis on the importance of by-standers. In that way pupils will gain confidence in informing. This confidence factor is of vital importance, and it should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales, but are behaving responsibly
- ✓ Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:

    a. Direct approach to staff member at an appropriate time, for example after class

    b. Hand up a note with homework

    c. Make a phone call to the school or a trusted staff member in the school

    d. Sending an email or private message to a teacher via Teams

    e. Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on their behalf

    f. Confidential questionnaire administered in an appropriate subject e.g. CSPE, SPHE, RSE, etc.

- ✓ Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. This should be done through the school office or by an arranged meeting with the teacher
- ✓ The Acceptable Usage Policy in the school includes the necessary steps to ensure that access to technology is monitored within the school, as is student's use of mobile phones
- ✓ Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the Bí Cineáltas Procedures

## Implementation of Curricula

- ✓ Whole school use of the behaviour lessons at the beginning of the school year
- ✓ The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula along with RSE and cyber bullying programmes
- ✓ Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes
- ✓ School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes e.g. FUSE, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet, etc.
- ✓ School wide delivery of lessons (SPHE, CSPE, RSE) on relational aggression, cyber bullying, homophobic & transphobic bullying and bullying linked to diversity & interculturalism
- ✓ Use of specific programmes such as Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme, The Trust Pack, Mind-Out. A list of all programmes available through SPHE and CSPE are included on the subject plans
- ✓ Consideration is given to the students with additional needs with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately

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 Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

## Links to other policies:

Code of Behaviour, Wellbeing Policy, Child Protection Policy, Child First Guidelines, Acceptable Usage Policy

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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.

**All staff (class teachers, class tutors, year heads, guidance counsellor, Deputy Principals, principal, support teams) have a responsibility to report suspected incidences of bullying.**

These should be brought to the attention of the Year Head who will complete a Bullying Incident Report Form. 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

- ✓ Act 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:

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: One-off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

If the answer to any of these questions is No, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider what, where, when and why?

## 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

✓ the school is obliged to fully investigate any alleged incidents of bullying which are reported by parents

✓ 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 including the initial 'Bullying Incident Report Form' (Appendix 1)

✓ this record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bi 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 Year Head 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 Year Head 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 (Appendix 2)

✓ 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 Year Head 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 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

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The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

**Supporting the victim and counselling the perpetrator:**
Pupils involved in bullying need assistance on a regular basis. Perpetrators may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.

Victims may need counselling and opportunities to develop their friendship and social skills. The school SET and guidance team may be involved.

In some situations, it may be necessary to get in touch with Gardai, Health Board or other external agencies. Parents may request contact numbers of same.

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### Record-Keeping

All bullying behaviour will be recorded on the 'Bullying Incident Report Form' (Appendix 1) and if it is determined bullying has occurred the Bullying Follow Up Report (Appendix 2). 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.

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)

**Appendix 1 Bullying Incident Report Form**

| Form to be used for investigating any allegations of bullying behaviour |
|---|

| Name of student (allegedly) being bullied: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name: | | Class: | |

| Name(s) of student(s) (allegedly) engaged in bullying behaviour: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name: | | Class: | |
| Name: | | Class: | |
| Name: | | Class: | |
| Name: | | Class: | |

| Name(s) of person(s) who reported the bullying concern: | |
|---|---|
| Name: | |

| Details of Bullying Behaviour (alleged): | | |
|---|---|---|
| Type: | Tick: | Brief description: *(Please attach any additional information/statements)* |
| Physical Aggression | | |
| Intimidation | | |
| Isolation/Exclusion | | |
| Relational Bullying | | |
| Cyber-bullying | | |
| Name-Calling | | |
| Damage to property | | |
| Homophobic/Transphobic | | |
| Sexist / Sexual Harassment | | |
| Other – please specify | | |

| Impact of Bullying Behaviour (alleged): |
| --- |
| |

| Brief Description of Investigation: |
| --- |
| |

| Deduction based on the investigation of the alleged bullying behaviour: *(Please tick)* | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| It is the opinion of the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred? | Yes | |
| | No | |

*Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher)*

*Date: _____*

## Appendix 2 Bullying -Follow up report form

**Form to be used for dealing with and following up on bullying behaviour**

Please attach to the record of initial Bullying Incident report form (Appendix 1)

| Name of student being bullied: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name: | | Class: | |

| Name(s) of student(s) engaged in bullying behaviour | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name: | | Class: | |
| Name: | | Class: | |
| Name: | | Class: | |
| Name: | | Class: | |

| Details of the communication(s) with Parent/Guardian of student being bullied: | |
|---|---|
| | |
| Date(s) of communication(s): | |
| Signed: | |

| Details of communication(s) with Parent/Guardian of student(s) engaged in bullying behaviour: | |
|---|---|
| | |
| Date(s) of Communication(s): | |
| Signed: | |

| Impact of Bullying Behaviour: |
| :--- |
|  |

| Details of Actions taken to date: |
| :--- |
|  |
| Brief description of situation now: <br> *(Please attach any additional information)* |
| Date: _____ |

| Monitoring of Progress: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Date: | Action: | Response: | Signed: |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

*Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher)*

*Date: _____*

## Appendix 3 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.

| Review Year _____ /_____ | |
| --- | --- |
| 1. 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. | |
| 2. Where in the school is the student friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed? | |
| 3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student friendly policy on the school website? | |
| 4. How has the student friendly policy been communicated to students? | |
| 5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student- friendly policy been communicated to parents? | |
| 6. 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 _____ |
| 7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour? | Yes _____.    No _____ |
| 8. 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 _____ |
| 9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour. | Yes _____.    No _____ |
| 10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy? | Yes _____.    No _____ |
| 11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented? | Yes _____.    No _____ |
| 12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour? | Yes _____.    No _____ |

| | |
|---|---|
| 13. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy? | |
| 14. 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: | |
| 15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed? | |
| 16. Does the student friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why? | |
| 17. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour? | Yes _____.   No _____ |
| 18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour? | Yes _____.   No _____ |
| 19. 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 _____ |

**Signed: _____**          **Date: _____**

**(Chairperson of Board of Management)**

**Signed: _____**          **Date: _____**

**(Principal)**

**Date of next review: _____**

**Appendix 4 – Annual Review Board of Management**

Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy.

The Board of Management of 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 Board of Management)

Signed: _____     Date: _____

(Principal)

Date of next review: _____

**Appendix 5 – <u>Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach</u>**

- ✓ In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teachers will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation may be resolved

- ✓ Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist that school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as it practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible

- ✓ Teachers will take a calm, professional, problem-solving approach

- ✓ Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved

- ✓ All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way, in some instances

- ✓ When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, why, how and who. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner

- ✓ If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter all those involved could be met as a group, where the teacher has deemed appropriate

- ✓ If the teacher has deemed a group meeting appropriate, each member of the group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview. It may also be appropriate/helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

- ✓ In cases where it has been determined by the teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions that have been undertaken and will be undertaken (as per the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils

- ✓ Where the teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's antibullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied

- ✓ It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school