



Clonaslee College

Bí Cineálta

Policy and Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Contents

1. Statement of our school's commitment to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

The Board of Management of Clonaslee College has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024* and in line with our mission statement which states that “*We are committed to creating a caring environment fostering respect for self, for others, and our community*”

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.

2. Definition of Bullying Behaviour.

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 within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Building on many years of international research, the core definition above sets out clear criteria to help school communities to prevent, correctly identify and address bullying among students. Alleged incidents of bullying are, however, often complex and must be considered on a case by case basis.

There are many different methods of bullying behaviour, including physical, verbal and relational forms, and it can take place online and offline. There are also many different motives for bullying behaviour which can be understood on an individual level (for example, desire for dominance, status, revenge) and/or on a societal level (for example, identity-based bullying such as racist, disablist, sexist or LGBTQ+ bullying). Bullying behaviour in schools is often strongly influenced by attitudes, behaviours, norms and power dynamics that are deeply engrained in our society.

2.1 The core elements of the definition are further described below:

▪ Targeted behaviour

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the student displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example, personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example, withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and long-term negative impact on the student experiencing bullying behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying but, importantly, must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

• Repeated behaviour

Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online, which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

• Imbalance of power

In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity, technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted student to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

- **Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour**

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.

Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups.

Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control.

Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying.

These behaviours, while not defined as bullying can be distressing.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

- **Criminal behaviour**

Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years.

Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, criminalises the nonconsensual sharing of intimate images and criminalises threatening to share these images.

If bullying behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence, it may be considered assault.

If bullying behaviour involves discrimination or hate speech targeting a student based on their race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, it may be

considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989¹¹, and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges.

If bullying behaviour involves sexual harassment or sexual assault, this may also be considered criminal behaviour.

An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour.

- **Child protection**

Section 10 of the Children First Act, 2015 places a statutory obligation on schools, as a “provider of a relevant service” to ensure, as far as practicable, that each child attending the school is safe from harm while attending school or otherwise participating in school activities.

Teachers registered with the Teaching Council are Mandated Persons under the Children First Act. They have a legal obligation under the Act to report harm of children that meets or is above a defined threshold to Tusla, and also to assist Tusla if requested, in assessing a concern which is the subject of a mandated report. If the concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but a teacher feels that it is a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child, a report should be made to Tusla under the Children First National Guidance. The Children First National Guidance applies to everyone. All school staff and volunteers must report reasonable concerns to Tusla.

The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Revised 2023) provide that all school staff should report reasonable concerns to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) who may take advice and/or report the concerns to Tusla. If the staff member is a registered teacher and the concern is at or above the threshold of harm at which a mandated report must be made the concern shall be submitted as a mandated report to Tusla jointly by the DLP and the registered teacher. See Chapter 5 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Revised 2023).

The Children First Act defines harm as assault, ill treatment, neglect or sexual abuse and covers single and multiple instances.

The threshold of harm is reached where the mandated person believes that a child’s health, development or welfare have been, or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected.

The Children First National Guidance document 2017 is the national, overarching guidance with regard to child safeguarding. The Guidance provides that in cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive, a referral may need to be made to Tusla or An Garda Síochána as appropriate.

Generally, bullying behaviour can be addressed without the involvement of Tusla. However, bullying behaviour may become a child protection concern when it results in significant physical or emotional harm, or where it becomes a persistent and severe problem and measures taken to address it are not effective.

In determining when bullying behaviour should be reported to Tusla the following factors should be considered:

- the impact on the child
- protective/appropriate action taken by the parents
- protective/appropriate action taken by the school
- engagement of child/family with support services such as NEPS

If there is doubt about whether bullying behaviour is a child protection concern schools should contact Tusla's social work department for advice. This will enable the social worker to explore the situation with school staff and provide advice on the best course of action.

2.2 How bullying behaviour occurs

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

General behaviours which apply to all	• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g., sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed. • Exclusion • No innocent bystander
Cyber	• Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images

	• Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call/ Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls. • Abusive text messages/Abusive email/Abusive communication on social networks e.g., Facebook/Instagram/Tik Tok/Be Real/Twitter/You Tube etc. or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
Identity Based Behaviours	• Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).
Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g., gay, queer, lesbian ... used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Use of language in a derogatory way
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment • Non-consensual sharing or posting of images of a sexual nature.
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs

– Learning Difficulties and Gifted	• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule
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2.3 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. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Inside School

- School physical environments can have a significant influence on social relationships among students and can impact on the ability of school staff to effectively prevent and address bullying. Well designed school environments play a vital role in preventing bullying behaviour and promoting inclusion, positive relationships, and a safe and supportive learning environment.
- School yard: Bullying behaviour can take place in the school yard. School grounds with hidden or obscure parts may provide an environment where bullying behaviour is more likely to occur. Many common school yard games present opportunities for bullying behaviour because of their physical nature. Continuing provocation may lead to a physical fight and in some cases the student experiencing bullying behaviour may appear to be the aggressor as they give vent to their frustration.
- In the classroom: Bullying behaviour can take place in class. It may occur subtly through glances, looks, sniggers or may take the more overt form of physical intimidation or deliberate isolation. Bullying behaviour may also occur between class periods when the students or the teacher moves.
- Other areas: Bullying behaviour can take place in other areas such as toilets, corridors, cloakrooms, locker areas, changing rooms, showers, gym, canteen and assembly hall.

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.

- 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 (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.

2.4 Impact of experiencing bullying behaviour

When students experience bullying behaviour, it can have a severe and profound impact on them in both the short and long term. Students may develop feelings of stress, insecurity, humiliation and anxiety and therefore become more vulnerable. Experiencing bullying behaviour can have a detrimental effect on their experience of education and education outcomes. The student's self-confidence may be damaged with a resulting lowering of their self-esteem which can continue into adulthood. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering can be indicated through changes in mood and behaviour. Extreme cases of bullying behaviour may contribute to mental health difficulties.

Online or cyberbullying can be a hidden form of bullying behaviour. It can often go unnoticed as much online activity is not subject to adult supervision and the student who displays the behaviour can be offered a degree of anonymity that could protect them from being detected. It can also involve a wider audience and can be difficult to have offensive comments or material removed.

2.5 Signs of when a student may be experiencing bullying behaviour

Signs that may indicate that a student is experiencing bullying behaviour include but are not limited to the following:

- anxiety about travelling to and from school; for example, physical illnesses; for example, anxiety or distress; for example, requesting parents to drive or collect them, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school
- not wanting to go to school, refusal to attend
- a change in how the student performs in school, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school
- pattern of physical illnesses for example; headaches, stomach aches

- unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or after school holidays
- visible signs of anxiety or distress for example; stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting
- spontaneous out-of-character comments about either students or teachers
- possessions missing or damaged
- increased requests for money or stealing money
- unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing
- reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling them

The above signs do not necessarily mean that a student is experiencing bullying behaviour. However, if these signs occur over a period of time or if a number occur together, it may be an indication that the student is experiencing bullying behaviour.

2.6 Students who may be more at risk of experiencing bullying behaviour

It is important to note that bullying behaviour can be experienced by anyone. Bullying behaviour can be directed at individuals for no obvious reason, or it can be more overt based on a student's identity or societal issues.

Some students with special educational needs may have difficulties recognising bullying behaviour has occurred. Some students with complex needs may lack awareness of social dynamics leading them to trust others implicitly. Consequently, these students may be more at risk of experiencing bullying behaviour.

Schools should consider the composition of their student population when identifying who may be more at risk of experiencing bullying behaviour so that preventative strategies can be tailored to support students at risk.

At risk groups can include:

- students who have additional learning needs
- students with disabilities
- students from an ethnic minority background and migrant students
- students who are members of the Traveller and Roma communities
- students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+)
- students who practice or display a religious faith
- students experiencing homelessness
- students experiencing health or mental health issues

2.7 Impact of witnessing bullying behaviour

Students who witness bullying behaviour can also be impacted in a similar way to those who experience bullying behaviour. These students may be afraid to tell someone because of a fear of reprisals for telling or a fear of making the situation worse.

Students who witness bullying behaviour may feel guilt or anxiety for not helping the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour. For example, they can feel vulnerable particularly in the case of racist or identity-based bullying behaviour if they share the same race or identity as the student who is experiencing the behaviour.

2.8 Impact of engaging in bullying behaviour

There can also be a negative impact on those who engage in bullying behaviour. Those who engage in bullying behaviour can display aggression, antisocial behaviour and lower academic achievement. Students who display bullying behaviour often fail to recognise the impact of their actions and may lack empathy. They may avoid responsibility and deny or minimise their actions when confronted.

Long term, these students may find it hard to form long term relationships and they may express feelings of isolation and depression. The lived experience of some students may cause students to engage in bullying behaviour. Some students who engage in bullying behaviour have learned attitudes and behaviours which can undermine their ability to integrate themselves into their peer group. They may suffer from low self-esteem or insecurity and may have been bullied themselves. Students may also display or engage in bullying behaviour out of ignorance or because they are uncomfortable with another student's perceived difference.

The lived experience of some students may cause students to engage in bullying behaviour. Some students who engage in bullying behaviour have learned attitudes and behaviours which can undermine their ability to integrate themselves into their peer group. They may suffer from low self-esteem or insecurity and may have been bullied themselves. Students may also display or engage in bullying behaviour out of ignorance or because they are uncomfortable with another student's perceived difference.

3. Development of our Bí Cineálta Policy to prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	19/05/2025	Staff survey through Microsoft forms
	21/08/2025	
	22/09/2025	Staff presentation and workshop Staff review of policy

Students	19/05/2025 03/09/2025 09/09/2025	Student survey through Microsoft forms Schoolwide presentation to all classes at 10.00. Anti-Bullying committee formed Meeting of student anti-bullying committee for policy review
Parents	19/05/2025 09/09/2025	Parent survey through Microsoft forms Parents notified of information session delivered by the National Parents Council through school app and website
Board of Management	21/11/2025	Sent to the Board before Board meeting on the 24th of Nov.
Date policy was approved: 24/11/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: NA		

4. Policy Implementation

4.1 How Clonaslee College prevents bullying behaviour

Culture and Environment	Curriculum (teaching and learning)
• Fostering a sense of belonging to feel safe, connected and supported • Active student council • Extra-curricular activities and clubs • A safe-telling culture • Sensory room and designated space for students with AEN	• Programmes in SPHE, Religious Education • Wellbeing class with My Friends Youth Resilience Programme • Themed Awareness weeks • First year Transition programme • Aen meeting to promote inclusion for all • Staff CPD

• Student friendly Bí Cineálta policy • 3 Cs displayed in all classrooms • Referral system to Guidance, Year Head, AEN department • Student Support Team • Break time supervision	
<i>Policy and Planning</i>	<i>Relationships and Partnerships</i>
• Code of Conduct • Child Safeguarding • Critical Incident • Safe Use policy • Medical notes updated	• LOETB schools • Parents • Local community • Local Parish • Links with external services, i.e. NEPS, CAMHS, Tusla, Jigsaw, Gardaí. • BOM • Student Support Team • Student Council • Anti- Bullying Committee • Work Experience Partnerships • Guest Speakers • Local primary schools

Supervision and Monitoring

The school has the following supervision and monitoring procedures in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

- All staff are watchful and observe relationships/ interactions between students in class, courtyard and school grounds
- All staff are watchful and observe students while transitioning to the next class in the courtyard and social areas
- Students are expected to have their journal with them to explain the reason for being out of class
- Break and lunch times are supervised
- ASD class have designated area and supervising teachers
- Clubs offered for students who wish to attend
- Supervised areas for sport and games are available to students

4.3 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 is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

The School reserves the right, in accordance with Section 6 Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools to seek the assistance of agencies such as NEPS, the HSE, and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary to dealing effectively with bullying behaviour. In any case, where the School deems bullying behaviour to be potentially abusive (Section 2 Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools) it will consult with the HSE's Children and Family Services to assist it in drawing up an appropriate response or to obtain advice or to make a formal child protection report to the HSE or the Gardaí (as appropriate) in accordance with the DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary (revised 2023)

In Clonaslee College, the Year Heads have the responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour supported by the Deputy Principal, Principal, Guidance Counsellor and AEN Coordinator.

The level of involvement of other staff members, including but not limited to: class teachers, supervising teachers, SNAs, ancillary staff, will be dependent on the incident(s) involved.

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/guardians of those involved*

*Parents are an integral part of our school community and play an important role in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties 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. In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the school will develop an appropriate plan to support the student in how their parents will be informed.

The school will take into consideration communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents, for example, literacy, digital literacy, or language barriers.

4.3 Steps in Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

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 will be engaged with individually at first.
- Thereafter, all students involved will meet as a group.
- At the group meeting, each student will be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views. Each student will be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting. The students involved may be asked to write down their account of the incident.
- The definition of bullying provided in Chapter 2 BÍ Cineálta guidelines will be used here to identify if bullying behaviour has occurred. The questions included in Appendix C can further assist in this regard.
- 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.

Where bullying behaviour has occurred

- All incidents of bullying behaviour that are reported will be recorded using the Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour (Appendix C) and submitted to the principal/ Year Head.
- This report will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents/guardians.
- The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will also 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*.

Given the complexity of bullying behaviour it is generally acknowledged that that no one approach works in all situations. International and national research also continues to evolve in this area, and the effectiveness of particular approaches continues to be reviewed. The school must therefore decide on an approach that is best suited to each circumstance.

Possible Approaches may include:

Sanctions in line with the code of conduct

Restorative practice

Guidance counsellor support

AEN support

Monitoring records

No Action*

Other

* A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than “look out” for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them. Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school or be facilitated to do so where there are literacy, digital literacy, or language barriers. 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 Year Head will engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.
- Factors to Consider:
 - The nature of the bullying behaviour.
 - The effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
 - The relationship between the students involved.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the Year Head will review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

Recording bullying behaviour

All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded. The record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students and their parents.

The record will include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour. It will 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. It is important to document the date of each of these engagements and the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased.

Any engagement with external services/supports will also be noted. These records will be retained in accordance with data protection guidelines.

Where a Student Support File exists for a student, a copy of the record will be added to the student's support file.

4.4 Complaints Process

If a parent is not satisfied with how the bullying has been addressed, they should refer to the school's complaints procedures, as outlined in the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

If a parent remains dissatisfied after the complaint process, they can contact the Ombudsman for Children if they believe the school's actions negatively affected the student.

4.5 Support

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- The students involved may be offered an opportunity to engage with the guidance counsellor
- The students will be monitored by the student support team seeking updated from teaching staff and supervising staff
- The students may be offered small group learning support groups to work on self-esteem, resilience, confidence, social skills
- Other

5. Oversight

At each meeting of the board of management, the Principal will present an update on the number of incidents of bullying behaviour and the measures taken to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

The purpose of the update is to inform discussion at board level on the effectiveness of the measures that the school is taking to prevent and address bullying behaviour and the effectiveness of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy.

The update will include the following:

- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting
- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that are currently ongoing
- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported 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 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
- 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.

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The minutes of the board of management meeting will document the number of new incidents of bullying behaviour, the number currently ongoing and the total number of incidents of bullying behaviour since the beginning of the school year as reported by the principal. The minutes will also note where the board has considered the bullying behaviour verbal update and document when the board has decided that an urgent review of the school's Bi Cineálta policy is required.

6. Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

The school's Bí Cineálta policy will be reviewed each calendar year or as soon as practicable where the board of management determines that a review is warranted.

The Bí Cineála Policy is available to the school community on the school's website, and a student friendly version of the policy is displayed throughout the school and on the website.

