

St Paul's College Raheny

Anti-Bullying Policy

Document Control:

Date Policy Adopted:	September 2025
Date for Review:	

1. Introduction:

- 1.1. The Board of Management of St. Paul's College has adopted the following 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.
- 1.2. This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying*,¹ and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*² and should be read in conjunction with those documents.
- 1.3. 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.
- 1.4. 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.
- 1.5. 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:

- 2.1. 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.³
- 2.2. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for

¹ See <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/cinealtas-action-plan-on-bullying.pdf>

² See <https://oide.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Bi-Cinealta.pdf>

³ See chapter 2 of *Bí Cineálta*.

within the school's Code of Behaviour.

- 2.3. 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.

3. The Core Elements of the Definition

Targeted behaviour:

- 3.1. 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 the 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:

- 3.2. 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, and which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

Imbalance of power:

- 3.3. In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing the 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.

- 3.4. 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.

4. Behaviour That is not Bullying Behaviour:

- 4.1. 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 wider audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behavior.
- 4.2. 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.
- 4.3. 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.
- 4.4. 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.
- 4.5. 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.

5. Criminal Behaviour:

- 5.1. 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.
- 5.2. 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 non-consensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images.

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

5.4. 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.

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

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

6. Preventing Bullying Behaviour:

6.1. The Board of Management is responsible in ensuring that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

6.2. A pro-active approach is encouraged during periods of supervision. Supervision is provided before and after school and at morning and lunch breaks. Students are assigned designated areas in which to socialise and eat. We offer a Games Room and Reading & Recreation Space at designated lunchtimes. Every base class has a Tutor with whom they meet every morning for roll call and check-in. There is a Student Support Team in place which comprises Principal, Deputy Principals, Year Heads, Chaplains, Guidance Counsellors and AEN Coordinators.

6.3. The school community aims to prevent cyberbullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying, racist bullying, sexist bullying and sexual harassment as outlined in sections 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 of the Bí Cineálta procedures. These include:

- Promotion of a positive school climate and culture where RESPECT is key
- Effective Leadership
- Whole-school approach

- Fair and transparent Code of Positive Behaviour
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Digital Awareness through Digital Media Literacy classes
- Encouraging Peer Support
- Celebrating diversity
- Support for EAL students
- Promote awareness of bullying (CSPE, SPHE AND RSE Programmes)
- Anti-Bullying workshops/guest speakers
- Effective supervision and monitoring of students
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow-up of bullying behaviour
- On going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Cineáltas Procedure

7. Prevention Strategies:

7.1. This section sets out the specific 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.⁴ This list is not exhaustive but instead serves to illustrate the many ways the school aims to prevent bullying behaviours occurring. The following are the strategies to be used linked to the key areas of wellbeing promotion.

Culture and Environment	Curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Door Policy • Active Student Support Team • 1st year Buddy System • 1st Year Induction Programme • Establishment of a Safe Telling Environment • Seating Plans • Visible Displays around the school • Display of student's work • Empowerment of student voice- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various awareness weeks throughout the school calendar e.g. Friendship Week, Stand Up against Bullying, • Internet Safety Week, Culture Week • Variety of programmes are run in SPHE and Wellbeing/Guidance Classes e.g. Lockers, Fuse, The Respect Effect, Be in Ctrl etc... • Peer Teaching

⁴ See Chapter 5 of Bí Cineálta



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' Council, Class Captains, Prefects, Head Boy • Designated areas for students at breaktimes • Separate toilets for each year group, • Breakfast Club for Juniors • Culture Week • Show Racism the Red Card Week • School sports teams • School clubs e.g. Green Schools promoting a cleaner environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing is at the Centre of all subject plans • Wellbeing indicators addressed in all areas of Teaching & Learning • 1st year transition programme through SPHE/Wellbeing • Musical/Talent Show • Gaisce Programme in TY • AEN/ASD: Primary school visits, weekly AEN meetings, school, culture of inclusion, updates to staff from management & AEN meetings, regular staff meeting updates. • Staff CPD on area of anti-bullying • Whole school survey regarding bullying each year
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Relationships and Partnerships	Policy and Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Support Team • Linking with external services e.g. NEPS, • CAMHS, Tusla, Gardaí • Linking with student Council, Parents Association • Volunteering for Local clubs & Community Activities for TY & CSPE Action Projects • Fundraising events • Vincentian Mission to Kenya- Vincentian Lay Missionaries • Guest Speakers • Garda Visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bí Cineálta Policy • Code of Behaviour Policy • Acceptable Use Policy • Child Safeguarding • Data Protection • Internet Acceptable use policy • Wellbeing Policy • Guidance Policy • Staff aware that they are all mandated persons, child protection procedures handed out each year as reminder and complete Children First E-Learning Programme. • Principal & Deputy Principal

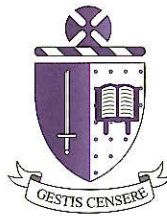
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extra-Curricular personnel- Coaches, Choreographers, musical director etc. 	complete DLP/DDLP training and refreshers
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8. Supervision and Monitoring:

- 8.1. The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour.
- 8.2. In addition to all the practices identified above under Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Planning and Policy and Relationships and Partnerships, St. Paul's College has the following supervision and monitoring policies to prevent and address bullying behaviour:
- 8.3. Yard and Corridors and in class - A weekly schedule of student supervision on corridors and yard is developed to monitor student behaviour and wellbeing. Any causes for concern are dealt with and reported to school management.
- 8.4. All staff are watchful and observe relationships between students in class, note absence patterns and let it be known that high standards of behaviour are always expected
- 8.5. Survey of Students - Students are surveyed through an online form regularly throughout the year regarding bullying behaviour as part of the school's mentoring sessions.
- 8.6. Student Support Team – the student support team meet weekly and operate a check and connect system where teachers meet students where concerns may have been brought to their attention

9. Addressing Bullying Behaviour:

- 9.1. 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, chaplains, Deputy Principals, principal) 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.
- Take action in a timely manner.
- Inform parents of those involved.
- Identifying if Bullying Behaviour has occurred.

9.2. To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the following questions should be asked:

- Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
- Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
- 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 these 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.

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

9.4. 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?

9.5. 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)

10. Where Bullying Behaviour has Occurred:

- 10.1. 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.
- 10.2. The school is obliged to fully investigate any alleged incidents of bullying which are reported by parents.
- 10.3. 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.
- 10.4. 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 known⁵, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.
- 10.5. The record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behavior.

11. Follow-up Where Bullying Behaviour has Occurred:

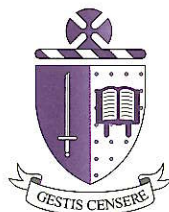
- 11.1. The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement.
- 11.2. Important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
- 11.3. 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.
- 11.4. 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.

⁵ See Section 2.5 and 2.7 of Bi Cineálta.

- 11.5. Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
- 11.6. 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.
- 11.7. If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the 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.
- 11.8. If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures.
- 11.9. 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.

12. Supports:

- 12.1. The school may seek the support of any of the following when working with students affected by bullying:
- Counselling service (through guidance or chaplain).
 - Building self-esteem and developing social skills.
 - Use of restorative practices to re-build and maintain relationships.
 - Co-operation with parents.
 - Referral to outside agencies (if necessary) in co-operation with parents.
 - National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS).
 - Oide.
 - Webwise.
 - National Parents Council.
 - Dublin City University (DCU) Anti-Bullying Centre.



- Tusla.

13. Record-Keeping:

- 13.1. All bullying behaviour will be recorded on the 'Bullying Incident Report Form' (Appendix 1). 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.

14. Oversight:

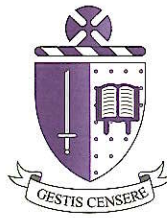
- 14.1. The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year.
- 14.2. 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.⁶ procedures.
- 14.3. 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.
- 14.4. 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:


(Chairperson of Board of Management)

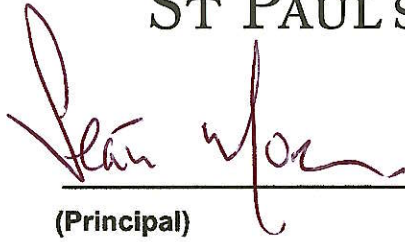
⁶ See Chapter 7 of Bí Cineálta.

ST PAUL'S



COLLEGE


Signed:


(Principal)

Date:


24 September 2025





**STAND UP
SPEAK OUT**


ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE BÍ CINEÁLTA 'BE KIND' ANTI- BULLYING POLICY



If you think **you** or someone else is being bullied- please tell a teacher.

Bullying behaviour is when someone repeatedly hurts, upsets or excludes another- it can be in person or online.

We want everyone at our school to feel safe & happy.



IF A STUDENT CONFIDES IN A STAFF MEMBER ABOUT FEELING BULLIED, WE WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

1. HAVE A CONVERSATION WITH THE STUDENT
2. ASK THE STUDENT WHAT THEY WANT TO HAPPEN
3. WORK OUT A PLAN TOGETHER
4. COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR PARENTS
5. SPEAK WITH THE OTHER STUDENT(S) INVOLVED
6. TALK WITH THE OTHER STUDENT'S PARENTS

