

Bí Cineálta St Peters School Anti Bullying Policy

The Board of Management of St Peter's 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 *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

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	13/06/25 16/06/25	Bi Cinealta training w/ discussion Posted in staffroom
Students	26/05/25	Survey & Student Council
Parents	26/05/25	Survey
Board of Management	17/06/25	BoM meeting to discuss
Date policy was approved: 17/06/25		
Date policy was last reviewed: 17/06/25		

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 has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Culture and Environment: We strive to:

- Create a positive school environment that is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity, promoting respectful relationships across the school community.
- Create a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable.
- Demonstrate a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.
- Involve parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated.
- Support the idea that our school is a telling environment, to encourage pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Promote the concept of a trusted adult – stay safe linkage – who to tell.
- Create safe spaces in our school building and yards – through visibility and supervision.
- Display the student created Bí Cineálta poster to highlight student voice and remind students of our policy.
- Encourage a sense of belonging with ownership over their own space through art and creativity.
- Provide opportunities for all students to feel seen and included.

Ways in which we work to achieve these goals are as follows:

- The uniform approach in which St Peter's deals with all reports of bullying has been created collaboratively by staff and made available for referral in the staff room and on the school website.
- Ensuring that our library and textbooks reflect a diverse population of different national, ethnic, cultural and sexual identities.
- Our Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy was formed with pupil and parent input and is distributed to parents, children and staff to discuss.
- The student created Bí Cineálta poster is displayed around the school to highlight student voice.
- Parents receive information at times regarding useful information on Anti Bullying.
- Stay safe and SPHE lessons focusing on positive behaviour form part of curricular content in all classes.
- Challenge gender stereotypes.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
- Making clear that our school has a zero-tolerance policy to sexual harassment, as evidenced in our School Code of Behaviour.

Curriculum (teaching and learning): We strive to:

- Provide teaching and promote learning which is collaborative and respectful, fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Deliver the necessary curricula in an engaging and empathetic way.

- Display a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.
- Foster positive habits of respect, responsibility and kindness among all members of our school community.

Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- Teach SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe content which fosters student's well-being and self-confidence as well as promoting personal responsibility for their own behaviours and actions.
- Deliver the Junior Cycle SPHE and Digital Media Short Courses, as well as the Level 2 Priority Learning Units: Personal Care and Living in a Community, to their full extent.
- Ensuring that when delivering the aforementioned curricula laws regarding digital use cyberbullying are made clear e.g. Digital age of consent in Ireland is 16, Coco's Law etc.
- Model respectful behaviour towards colleagues, pupils and visitors in our school environment.
- Curricular and Extra-curricular activities can help to develop a sense of self-worth, working together, inclusion and respect.
- Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.
- Acknowledgment of our diverse school population – celebrating diversity and culture in our school through art, books, displays, photographs, international events.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and to explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Annual talks from outside agencies, such as the Gardaí, Zeeko and CyberSafe Kids in to discuss issues surrounding cyber-bullying etc.
- Clear policies on Acceptable Use of technology and Mobile Phone use which are supported by the school Code of Behaviour.
- Promote online safety events and materials for Parents/ Guardians.
- Supports for staff;
 1. Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
 2. On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy and it's procedures.

Policy and planning: The aim of St Peter's Bí Cineálta policy is:

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
- To promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.

This policy in practice:

- The Acceptable Use Policy, Mobile Phone Policy and Code of Behaviour all support the implementation of the Bí Cineálta policy.
- Effective leadership is a key component with Principal, Deputy Principal, DLP, DDLP, and all middle management focused on supporting the implementation of this policy.
- All staff discuss, agree and submit supervision rotas each academic year which are reviewed regularly to ensure effectiveness.
- Implementation of strategies to reduce identified risks such as behaviour support plans, etc.
- Identification and risk assessing 'Hot Spots' – buses, playground, transitions from one activity to another, visiting other classrooms or areas of the school where the presence of another child causes anxiety and home time
- Close liaison with bus escorts, drivers, parents and school staff regarding behaviours on school transport

Relationships and Partnerships

- Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as our student council and parents' support group.
- Age and stage appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the student body in looking at their own behaviour – promoting acts of kindness and friendship, being an active help to others and looking at the causes of and impact of bullying during SPHE lessons.
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying and cyberbullying.
- Peer mentoring and peer support programmes.
- Supporting active participation of students in school life and active participation of parents in school life also.
- Engaging parents and students in actively contributing to the formation of our Bí Cineálta policy.

Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of life that can impact even the youngest members of society.

However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour.

St Peter's School will implement strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour which will include the following:

- implementing the SPHE curriculum at primary and post-primary levels.
- implementing the level 3 Digital Media Literacy short course which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship
- having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
- developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology.
- referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour.
- promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online.
- holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.

The digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their data. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. Most social media platforms and services have a minimum age requirement and for the majority of

these services, it is 13 years old. Therefore technically, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account.

It is important for their child's safety, that parents are aware of their children's use of technology including smartphones and gaming consoles.

Preventing Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying Behaviour

All students including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students, have a right to feel safe and supported at school. St. Peter's School will implement strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour where appropriate. These include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters.
- encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- challenging gender stereotypes.
- conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour.
- encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.

Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

Schools have become much more culturally diverse over the last number of decades. Students attending St Peter's School come from many different cultures and backgrounds. Students from diverse backgrounds may face discrimination and prejudice and may be subject to racist bullying behaviour.

St. Peter's School will implement strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour. These will include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- foster a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment
- have the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
- encourage peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- encourage bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
- provide supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
- provide supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents
- ensure that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour

As part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment, St Peter's School will focus on gender equality. Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- 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.
- celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students.
- organising awareness campaigns, workshops and presentations on gender equality and respect as appropriate.
- encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home.

Preventing Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. St. Peter's School will make it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- using the updated SPHE specifications at post primary level to teach students about healthy relationships and how to treat each other with respect and kindness
- promoting positive role models within the school community
- challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- All staff, parents, drivers & bus escorts, must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or reported to them.
- The class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form on Aladdin, see Appendix 1.
- The DLP/DDLP will follow up after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased.
- All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.
- Principal will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.

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

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 (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame). With this in mind the school's procedures are as follows:

- In investigating and dealing with bullying the teacher(s) will exercise their judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type of bullying it is and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the class teacher(s) of the student being targeted and the student accused of

bullying them. This may involve two teachers collaborating.

- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs and caretakers are encouraged to report any incidences of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to the relevant Class Teacher.

- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

- On being informed of an alleged incident of bullying, the teacher dealing with the report will first interview the victim(s) and discuss the feelings which the victim(s) experienced because of the bullying behaviour.

- Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom to ensure the privacy of all involved.

- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher(s) should seek answers to questions of what, where, who, when and why.

- If a group is involved each member should be interviewed individually at first.

Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about the other's statements.

- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.

- Where the teacher(s) have determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, the incident will be referred to the school principal.

- A report of bullying behaviour to the principal should be supported by evidence from within the school's Code of Behaviour, i.e. 3 incident reports detailing similar behaviours, directed towards the same student. This will highlight the repetitive, targeted and unwanted nature of the behaviour of concern.

- It should be made clear to the student that has engaged in this behaviour that they are in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the perspective of the pupil being bullied.

- It should be emphasised that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter. However, depending on the behaviour that has occurred e.g. physical violence, the school Code of Behaviour may be enforced.

- The parents/ guardians of the pupils involved will be informed of the outcomes of the investigation, the consequences and the potential consequences should the behaviour continue.

- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the teacher(s) will complete a report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. This may be recorded on Aladdin by uploading a "Bullying Behaviour Report", as shown in appendix 1.

- If a pupil chooses to continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a one-off occurrence. In this event parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted again. The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for the pupil.

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with

a view to bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.

- Should the bullying behaviour continue St Peter's will, again, refer to the Code of Behaviour. This will be made clear to all parties throughout the process.
- All incidents of bullying are reported to the BoM at the regularly scheduled meetings.

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 school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.

Supporting Bullied pupils:

- Ending the bullying behaviour.
- Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils.
- Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils.
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes.
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations.
- Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

Supporting Bullying pupils:

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet'.
- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this.
- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth,
- In dealing with negative behaviour in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child.
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. 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. 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:



Mr Eoin Ó Donnagáin
Chairperson
St Peters School
Date: 17th June 2025

Signed:



Ms Rosemary Fahy
Principal
St Peters School
Date: 17th June 2025

Appendix 1: Template for Bullying Behaviour Report

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group.

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour.

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3. Source of bullying concern/report

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))

(tick relevant box(es))

Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other	

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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6. Form and type of bullying behaviour. *tick where applicable

Forms of Bullying		Types of Bullying	
Physical		Disablist	
Verbal		Exceptionally able	
Written bullying		Gender identity	
Extortion		Homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+)	
Exclusion/isolation		Physical appearance	
Relational		Racist	
Cyber-bullying		Poverty	
Other		Religious identity	
		Sexist	
		Sexual harassment	

7. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

8. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____