# St. Kilian's Senior National School

### Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour:

### Introduction:

The Board of Management of St. Kilian's SNS has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy is developed in line with the Bí Cineálta procedures and the school's ethos of promoting a positive and inclusive environment. The aim is to prevent and address bullying behaviour through a whole-school approach that involves students, staff, parents, and the broader community.

We confirm that we will take all steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent all bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated. Catholic schools have a distinctive understanding of the human person, recognising that every person is created in God's image and likeness and has inherent dignity as a child of God. This the basis for ensuring that everybody in our school is treated with respect and care, in accordance with the Catholic schedule.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to respecting the dignity of every individual. No human person is to be devalued and everybody has a part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

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 as targeted behaviour, either online or offline, that causes harm. The behaviour is deliberate, repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power.

This includes physical, verbal, relational, and cyberbullying as outlined in the Bí Cineálta Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

## 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 | 28/03/25 | Half day school closure for procedures to prevent document review and analysis for policy formulation |
| Students | 07/04/25 | Pupil questionnaire |
| Parents | 07/04/25 | Parental questionnaire |
| Board of Management | 10/06/25 | BOM meeting |
| Wider School Community | 10/06/25 | Published on website |

Date policy was approved:11/11/25

Date policy was last reviewed:11/11/25

# Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour:

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school to address all forms of bullying behaviour,in whatever form and however motivated ,including online bullying behaviour,homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour,racist behaviour,sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school to address all forms of bullying .In developing the preventative strategies which this school will use to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour, we come from the context of our Catholic ethos, where inclusivity permeates our school in a real way. This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at our board of management and staff meetings.

Culture and Environment:

● positive and inclusive school culture

 ● Positive relationships

 ● Effective leadership

 ● Positive culture and environment

 ● A telling environment

● A trusted adult

 ● Safe physical access

 ● Supervision

● concern box/ worry monster in classrooms

● opportunities to participate in class and whole school activities to raise self - esteem

## Curriculum:

● Teaching and Learning in SPHE/ RSE Curriculum

● Student participation

● SPHE Methodologies

● Promoting inclusion and diversity

● Extra - curricular activities to develop positive self – worth

● Group work/ Collaboration

● Role - play, acting out scenarios

● Circle time

● Morning and pre/ post-yard discussions

## Policy and Planning:

● Bí Cineálta policy

● Student friendly Bí Cineálta policy

● Code of behaviour

● Child safeguarding statement

● Acceptable use policy

● Supervision

● RSE Policy

● SEN policy

● SSE Wellbeing in education

● Appropriate TPL ( Teacher Professional Learning)

## Relationships and partnerships:

● Strong interpersonal connections

● Student and parent participation

● TPL ( Teacher Professional Learning)

● Critical thinking Skills

● Promoting peer support

● Supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience

promoting digital citizenship

● implementing SPHE curriculum

● open conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online

● holding internet safety day

**Preventing cyber bullying behaviour:** (Note - 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 date. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16.Children between 13 and 16 must have parental permission to sign up to social media services. Most social media platforms have a minimum age requirement and for the majority of these, it is 13 years old. *Therefore children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account*

**Preventing homophobic/ transphobic bullying behaviour :**

● maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as displaying relevant posters

● encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities

● challenging gender-stereotypes

**Preventing racist bullying behaviour:**

● fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment

● encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities

● encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour

● providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents

● ensuring 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:**

● ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex

● ensuring all student have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex

● celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contribution of all students

● encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home

**Preventing sexual harassment:**

● promoting positive role models within the school community

● challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

**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):**

- Bí Cineálta Policy
- Acceptable usage policy
- Restorative practice strategy
- Code of conduct
- Teacher and SNAs present to supervise at small break and lunch time
- Children are accompanied by at least one staff member on school trips teachers bear in mind children who may have recently clashed when organising groups for collaborative work/ teams etc with a view to giving a time out to all parties

The Board of Management confirms 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.

The dignity and wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a mutual relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence.

In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will listen to young people and parents ,to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and further engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour:

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

**class teachers. Principal and Deputy Principal will provide support and advice and will become involved when appropriate.**

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):

**Identify if bullying behaviour has occurred:**

- Teacher will engage with children involved individually

● Two staff members can be present when engaging with children individually initially without parents' notification and presence.

● Two staff members can be present when engaging with a group of children to investigate what happened. Teacher's discretion can be used with this approach about when best to use it.

● A group meeting will provide the opportunity for the children to give 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 also be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident.

The following three questions should be considered to determine if bullying has occurred.

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.

If the answer is No, then the behaviour is not bullying and is dealt with under the Code of behaviour.

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

The school does not 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 ,our school will support the involved parties.

**Requests no action taken:**

A student who reports bullying behaviour may ask a member of staff not to do anything and just "look out" for them due to not wanting to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They might 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 behaviour. It must be made clear to the pupil that other parties may need to be informed for their welfare and the bullying behaviour may have to be addressed.

Parents may also make the school aware of bullying behaviour and specifically request that no action is to be taken by the school. Parents should put this in writing to the school. However, schools may decide that based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour through the Bí Cineálta procedures and/or the Code of Behaviour where appropriate.

Determining if the bullying behaviour has ceased:

The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress. Factors to consider in the review include:

● the nature of the bullying

● the effectiveness of strategies use to address the bullying behaviour

● the relationship between the students involved

Ongoing supervision of both the child experiencing bullying behaviour and the child displaying bullying behaviour may be required as well as continued support. It can take time for relationships to settle and for supports to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behaviour occurred.

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

Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school should consider 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 school.

**Recording bullying behaviour:**

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded. The following details should be included on the record:

● form ( see section 2.5 of Bí Cineálta procedures)

● type ( see section 2.7 of Bí Cineálta procedures)

● where and when ( if known)

● the date of initial engagement with the students and their parents

● the views of the students and their parents* regarding the action to be taken to address the bullying behaviour (*only in relation to their own child)

● when review takes place, it should be noted if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of the students and parents in relation to this.

● note the date of reviews and engagements

● note the date that the bullying behaviour has ceased

● any engagement with external services/ supports should also be noted

● if a SSF exists for a pupil involved, schools are encouraged to place a copy of the record on the student's support file

**Complaint process:**

If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school complaints procedure. In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied following the complaints procedure, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for children.

**Supports:**

NEPS

Oide

Webwise

National Parents Council

DCU Anti bullying centre

Tusla

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 (see Appendix B). 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 :                                                       Date: 11/11/25

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed:                                                        Date: 11/11/25

Principal