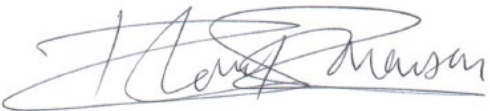




ST RAPHAEL'S
SPECIAL SCHOOL



Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour *Bí Cineálta*

Policy Identification	
Policy Title:	Bí Cineálta (Be Kind) Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour
Strategic Owner:	St Raphael's Special School
Version/Date:	Version 1
Next Review Date:	23 rd September 2026
Date of approval for this version:	23 rd September 2025
Signature:  Chairperson St Raphael's Special school	Date: 23 rd September 2025

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Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of St Raphael's Special School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of 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*.

Anti-bullying Policy

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- A positive school culture and climate which-
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - supports pupils if incidents of bullying behaviour occur in a non-threatening environment; and
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- Effective leadership;
- A school-wide approach;
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact through emphasis of our school rules;
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that
 - build empathy, respect and;
 - address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying if necessary.·
 - All computers/iPads used by pupils are fully supervised.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;
- Supports for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the *Bí Cineálta* Policy

In accordance with the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

In any case where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred the school will;

- Contact the parents of the parties involved at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy); and
- Ensure the Pupil Experiencing the bullying behaviour will be reassured
- Seek to ensure the privacy of those involved.
- Conduct all conversations with sensitivity.
- the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

The relevant teacher must record the bullying behaviour in the standardised recording template at Appendix 2 (and a copy must be provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal) in the following circumstances:

- In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
- Where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The procedures include oversight arrangements which require that, at each Board of Management meeting, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

- the overall number of bullying cases reported to the Principal or Deputy Principal since the previous report to the Board
- the number of ongoing incidents
- the total number of incidences since the beginning of the school year.
- Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred confirmation that all these cases have been, or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary schools.

As part of the oversight arrangements, the Board of Management must undertake an annual review, or as soon as practicable after, of the school's anti-bullying policy and its implementation by the school.

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
- cyber-bullying, and
- identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the schools code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

Principal
or
Deputy Principal

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber- bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows

- Only supervised use of computers/iPads is allowed in the school
- Only restricted sites are available to pupils
- Each pupil is seen as an individual and their individuality is encouraged and celebrated.

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools):

- Reported to Principal by staff
- Behaviour incident forms are completed
- Adverse incident forms are completed where necessary
- Parents are informed
- Positive behaviour management strategies are reviewed
- Risk assessments are completed/reviewed
- Strategies for dealing with behaviours that challenge as contained on pages 7 and 8 of Code of Behaviour policy are implemented.

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows (see chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Principal & deputy principal will work closely with the class staff, the student experiencing the behaviour, the student with the bullying behaviour and both students' parents.
- The principal & deputy principal through discussions with all parties involved determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased. This will be reviewed within 20 days and continue to monitor once it has stopped.
- The bullying behaviour will be recorded (template for recording bullying behaviour will be found in appendix 2 of this policy).
- Complaints procedures as per *Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying | Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools Section 6.6*
- The school will link with NEPS, Oide, Webwise, National Parents Council, DCU anti-bullying centre and Tusla where needed.
- The clinical team/Community Network Team will be informed by the Principal/Deputy Principal working with class staff and as necessary support will be provided to pupil and family

Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

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

- Adult anti – bullying policy
- Child protection policy
- Code of behaviour policy
- Critical incident policy
- Data protection and record keeping policy
- Intimate and personal care policy

- IT policy
- RSE policy
- Social training, school events and fundraising policy
- Supervision and individual programmes policy
- Wellbeing policy

Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website, is readily accessible to parents and pupils on request, and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

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 (Appendix 5)

Review of this policy

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel, published on the school website, be readily accessible to parents and pupils on request and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available to the patron and the Department if requested.

Appendix 1

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		
Students		
Parents		
Board of Management		
Wider school community as appropriate, Student Council, bus escorts, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Appendix 2

Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

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

3. Source of bullying concern/report
(tick relevant boxes)

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Location of incidents

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant boxes)

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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Signed _____ (Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 3

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post – Primary Schools*? Insert date when Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school. ___/___/20___

2. Where in the school is the student friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?

3. What date did the board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student friendly policy on the school website? ___/___/20___

4. How has the student friendly policy been communicated to students?

5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student friendly policy been communicated to parents?

6. Have all school staff been made aware of the school’s Bí Cineálta policy and the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools*?
Yes No

7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour? Yes No

8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year?
Yes No

9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour?
Yes No

10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school’s Bí Cineálta Policy? Yes No

11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?
Yes No

12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour? Yes No

13. How have the (a) Parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

14. Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and /or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:

15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?

16. Does the student friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

17. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school addressed bullying behaviour? Yes No

18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour? Yes No

19. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has address an incident of bullying behaviour? Yes No

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of board of management) (Principal)

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Appendix 4

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

The Board of Management of St. Raphael's Special School confirms that the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of _____ (Date).

This review was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education's *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed: _____	Signed: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)	(Principal)
Date: _____	Date: _____

Appendix 5 Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy

St Raphael's Special School Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy

Bí Cineálta!

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

- We use Kind Hands
- We use Kind Feet
- We use Kind Words
- We use Kind Hearts
- We use Kind Ears
- We use Kind Eyes

Get Help!

Tell Someone!

If a student tells a staff member that they think they are being bullied, we will:

- > talk with the student
- > ask the student what they want to happen
- > work out a plan together
- > talk to their parents
- > talk to the other student(s) involved
- > talk with the other student's parents

Our School has a Bí Cineálta policy to try to stop bullying behaviour.

Bullying behaviour is when someone keeps being mean or hurtful to others on purpose over and over again.

When it happens a lot.
Not just once.

Please tell someone if you think that you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied.

Our school has a Bí Cineálta policy to try to stop bullying behaviour.

We look at this policy every year to see what is working well or what could work better.

We will ask you what you think.

Be Kind