# COLÁISTE IOGNÁID S.J.

Bóthar na Mara, Gaillimh, H91 N732


**Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**

**Mission Statement**

Coláiste Iognáid is a Jesuit, Catholic school dedicated to accompanying young people as they strive for excellence in all things.

We support the development of competent individuals of conscience and compassion who are committed to being people for others.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.

**Rationale**

Prevention is the cornerstone of effectively managing bullying behaviour in schools. Research by the Department of Education shows that schools with positive, inclusive cultures are more likely to prevent bullying incidents (Department of Education, 2023). Bullying prevention strategies include fostering empathy and promoting respect for diversity through the curriculum, especially through Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Wellbeing programmes, which are informed by the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2019). The introduction of these topics early in education, supported by clear behavioural expectations, will contribute to a decrease in bullying incidents.

Despite preventive measures, bullying behaviour may still occur. Therefore, robust reporting and intervention procedures are essential. This policy integrates a clear, step-by-step process for identifying and responding to bullying behaviour, guided by the Cineáltas framework.

Coláiste Iognáid is a Jesuit, Catholic school committed to accompanying young people as they strive for excellence in all aspects of their lives. In keeping with this mission, our Bí Cineálta Policy is grounded in the core principles of Jesuit education, particularly:

- Cura Personalis – care for the whole person, recognising the dignity, uniqueness and needs of each student
- People for and with Others – forming students to live in right relationship, grounded in compassion, empathy and justice
- Magis – seeking the greater good through thoughtful, reflective and restorative responses to harm
- A Faith that Does Justice – responding to bullying behaviour in ways that promote fairness, accountability and reconciliation

Bullying behaviour is understood not only as a breach of the school Code of Behaviour but as behaviour that can damage relationships and undermine human dignity. In responding to bullying behaviour, the school seeks to accompany all students involved — those who experience bullying, those who display bullying behaviour, and those who witness it — in ways that are supportive, educational and restorative, while always prioritising student safety and wellbeing.

This approach reflects the mission of Coláiste Iognáid to form competent individuals of conscience and compassion, committed to being people for others, for the greater glory of God (*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*).

Student Support Teams, as outlined in the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, will play a crucial role in this support, coordinating interventions, liaising with parents, and ensuring that students feel safe and understood. The policy also prioritises early intervention and continuous monitoring to mitigate long-term effects. Preventing bullying behaviour and intervention strategies are most effective when the entire school community is involved. Coláiste Iognáid promotes the active participation of students, parents/guardians, and school staff in developing anti-bullying measures, emphasising the importance of school culture. As a shared responsibility, regular engagement with parents/guardians, student councils, and staff is essential for fostering an environment that encourages open dialogue

**Introduction**

The Board of Management of Coláiste Iognáid 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.

This compliance is guided by a range of relevant legislation which includes the following:

- The Education Welfare Act 2000
- The Equal Status Acts 2000-2018
- The Children First Act 2015
- The Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 *(Coco's Law)*

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.

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**Culture and Environment**

A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The school environment should be a space where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported. Relationships between all members of the school community should be based on respect, care, integrity and trust. Open communication between the trustee, board of management, school staff, students and their parents help to foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibilities in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

The school leadership team influences the school culture and set the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. Each member of school staff has a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.

Students contribute in shaping the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer groups and maintaining a positive and supportive school environment for all.

Parents and guardians, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated by promoting empathy and respect.

**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.

In line with Circular 0055/2024 Coláiste Iognáid 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.

The core definition outlined above establishes clear criteria to assist school communities in preventing, identifying, and addressing bullying among students. While alleged incidents of bullying behaviour can be complex, each situation must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The key elements of the definition are explained in detail below:

***Targeted Behaviour***

Bullying involves intentional and harmful actions directed at others. It occurs when a student knowingly engages in unwanted behaviour that causes harm and is aware that their actions are perceived as harmful by the affected individual. This behaviour is neither accidental nor reckless. The harm caused can take various forms and can have severe and long-lasting effects on those targeted:

- Physical (e.g., injury, damage to property)
- Social (e.g., isolation, exclusion)
- Emotional (e.g., low self-esteem, anxiety, depression)

***Repeated Behaviour***

Bullying is characterised by a repeated pattern of harmful behaviour over time. A single, intentional negative act offline, even if involving a power imbalance, is not considered bullying behaviour but should still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

In contrast, a single harmful message, image, or video posted online can qualify as bullying behaviour if it is likely to be reshared or widely circulated.

***Imbalance of Power***

In bullying incidents, the targeted student often struggles to defend themselves due to a real or perceived imbalance of power. This power imbalance can manifest in various ways, including but not limited to:

- Differences in physical factors such as size, strength, or age
- Social or economic factors including peer influence, status, or financial situation
- Personal attributes including race, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability
- Experience in care systems or receipt of special education

In cases of online (cyber) bullying, power imbalances may arise from factors including online anonymity, technological expertise, or control over harmful content. The targeted student may feel powerless to remove offensive material or escape harassment.

***Behaviour That Is Not Bullying***

A single instance of negative behaviour, while harmful, does not constitute bullying behaviour. However, a hurtful message posted on social media may still be considered bullying behaviour if it is likely to be shared and cause ongoing harm. This may be visible to a wide audience and is likely to be shared multiple times, thereby becoming repeated behaviour.

Disagreements between students, or situations where students do not want to be or remain friends, are not considered bullying unless they involve deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude, or manipulate others, including efforts to influence friendship groups negatively.

Some students with additional educational needs may have social communication difficulties, which can lead to behaviours that inadvertently cause harm to themselves or others. It is important to recognise that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned; in some situations, they are automatic responses beyond the student's control. Bullying is not characterised by accidental or reckless behaviour.

If a student experiences repeated harm but the behaviour causing it is unintentional, this does not qualify as bullying behaviour. Nevertheless, such behaviours, while not defined as bullying behaviour, can still be distressing. Coláiste Iognáid will address these situations through strategies outlined in the Code of Behaviour.

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***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 (Coco's Law), criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and also 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 1989, 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.***

**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 | 27th March 2025<br>01st May 2026 | Staff Workshop<br>Staff Email |
| Students | 9th January 2025<br>16th January 2025<br>23rd January 2025 | Student Focus Groups |
| Parents | 28th May 2025 | Parents Council Review |
| Board of Management | 17th June 2025<br>18th May 2026 | BOM Meeting<br>BOM Meeting |
| Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers | N/A | |
| Date policy was approved: 17th June 2025 | | |
| Date policy was last reviewed: 18th May 2026 | | |

**Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour**

Coláiste Iognáid is committed to fostering and supporting a positive and inclusive school environment, one in which students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported. The Board of Management recognises the impact bullying behaviour can have on the lives of students and is committed to following key principles of best practice in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. Coláiste Iognáid maintains a positive school culture and climate which:

- is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity
- encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a nonthreatening environment
- promotes respectful relationships across the school community

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***Fostering a Positive School Culture***

Central to the prevention of bullying behaviour in Coláiste Iognáid is the promotion of a positive and respectful school culture. We aim to create an environment where inclusion and respect are central to all interactions. The school leadership team, staff, students, and parents work collaboratively to build an atmosphere of trust and support. We promote this culture in the following ways:

- *Open Communication*: Regular communication between staff, students, and parents/guardians is encouraged ensuring that any concerns related to bullying behaviour are addressed early and effectively
- *Student Leadership*: Students are encouraged through the school mission to promote kindness, respect, and inclusion in their daily interactions. Student Council campaigns reinforce this.
- *Parental Support*: Parents are encouraged to engage with the school and to become involved with the Parent's Council.
- *Safe Physical Spaces*: We maintain physical safety by ensuring that areas including bathrooms, stairwells, the Atrium, the school yard, and sports hall are monitored by staff while on supervision.

***A 'Telling' Environment***

Research consistently shows that a strong sense of connection between students and trusted adults is essential for bullying prevention. Coláiste Iognáid encourages students to speak out if they experience or witness bullying behaviour. Staff are encouraged to be approachable and responsive to concerns, ensuring that all students feel heard and supported. The concept of a trusted adult is promoted throughout the school, where students know they can approach any member of staff if they feel threatened or witness bullying behaviour.

Students who witness bullying behaviour on social media have an important role in helping to address the behaviour by reporting the witnessed behaviour to a trusted adult. The trusted adult should reassure the student that they have done the right thing by reporting the behaviour. The trusted adult should, without delay, inform the member of staff who has responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour. Coláiste Iognáid has clear structures in place including care teams, year heads and the deputy principal. If unsure who to inform, the trusted adult should inform the principal or deputy principal. The trusted adult should continue to support the student, as appropriate, while the behaviour is being addressed by the relevant member of staff.

Year Heads, the Chaplain and the Guidance department maintain regular, informal contact with students to develop strong personal relationships and monitor student wellbeing.

***Supervision***

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. Coláiste Iognáid has a Yard Break and Supervision policy that supports the prevention of bullying behaviour through active supervision. A pro-active approach is encouraged during periods of supervision. Supervision is provided before school and at morning and lunch breaks. The school offers a range of different organised sports and clubs, which accommodate a wide variety of preferences and interests, during break times and which accommodate a range of preferences and interests.

***Curriculum and Educational Programmes***

In Coláiste Iognáid we use the curriculum as a key tool to develop students' understanding of respect, empathy, and the impact of bullying behaviour.

Teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful is promoted. Students have regular opportunities to work in groups with their peers, which can help build sense of connection, belonging and empathy among students. The curricular subjects (including CSPE, SPHE, history, religion, ethos, RSE, PE) incorporate lessons on building healthy relationships, the importance of inclusion, and strategies for standing up to bullying behaviour. Extra-curricular clubs (including debating, mock trial) offered to students in Coláiste Iognáid provide opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity.

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. These interpersonal connections are supported in our school through a range of formal and informal structures including student councils, school sports and extra-curricular clubs, parents' associations and student support teams.

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***Promoting Positive Messages***

Posters highlighting the importance of kindness and reinforcing the mission of the school are visible on school corridors and in classrooms. Posters and artwork, co-created with students, promote inclusion, empathy, and respect.

| **Bullying Behaviour Prevention Strategies** | |
|---|---|
| ***Culture and Environment*** | ***Curriculum*** |
| • Updated mission statement<br>• Annual student retreats<br>• Kairos<br>• Spirituality Room<br>• Church on school campus<br>• Displaying student artwork - murals<br>• Autism Awareness Week<br>• Friendship Week<br>• Anti-bullying Week<br>• Mental health awareness week<br>• Open door policy<br>• Promote and highlight a safe telling environment<br>• Safe spaces for students at lunch time – games clubs in multimedia room<br>• Retreats, bonding days and events throughout the year for all year groups<br>• Positive behaviour tags on Compass | • Emphasis on Jesuit language and *Cura Personalis*<br>• SPHE/RSE/CSPE<br>• Ethos classes<br>• Student assemblies<br>• Workshops<br>• Wellbeing indicators included in all subject plans and addressed in all areas of teaching and learning<br>• Team teaching |

| *Relationships and Partnerships* | *Policy and Planning* |
|---|---|
| • Peer support<br>• Team teaching<br>• Care teams<br>• Chaplain<br>• Guidance counselling<br>• Psychotherapy support<br>• Wide variety of clubs and societies<br>• Social outreach<br>• SNA support<br>• Student council<br>• Student focus groups<br>• Buddy system in the ASD Classrooms<br>• Positive teacher-student relationships<br>• Parent Teacher Student meetings for leaving cert. students<br>• School musical<br>• School tours for all year groups<br>• TY Credit system | • Encourage self-expression with no uniform policy<br>• Wellbeing indicators included in all subject plans and addressed in all areas of teaching and learning<br>• Teacher based classrooms<br>• Team teaching<br>• Acceptable usage policy<br>• School tour policy<br>• Compass reporting system<br>• Code of behaviour<br>• Mobile Phone Use Guidelines<br>• All staff are aware that they are all mandated persons and have completed Children First e-learning programme |

**Preventing cyberbullying behaviour**

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour. Coláiste Iognáid proactively addresses these challenges in the following ways, which is not an exhaustive list:

- promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments
- implementing the SPHE curriculum
- engaging students in conversations about developing respectful and kind relationships online
- communicating the school's internet acceptable use policy to stakeholders
- referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour
- promoting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online
- engaging in a process of consultation regarding mobile phone use in school

**Preventing sexist bullying behaviour**

Coláiste Iognáid is a co-education school and we place a strong focus on gender equality as part of our measures to create a supportive and respectful environment. 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

**Preventing sexual harassment**

Preventing sexual harassment requires a holistic approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear policies. Coláiste Iognáid has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, which is never 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, respectful relationships and how to treat each other with respect and kindness
- promoting positive role models within the school community
- challenging harmful gender stereotypes that contribute to sexual harassment

**Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour**

All students including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students, have a right to feel safe and supported at school.

Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour 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
- encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour

**Preventing racist bullying behaviour**

Schools today are culturally diverse environments with students from many different backgrounds. At Coláiste Iognáid racist bullying behaviour is not tolerated and the following strategies, which is not an exhaustive list, are used to prevent racist bullying behaviour:

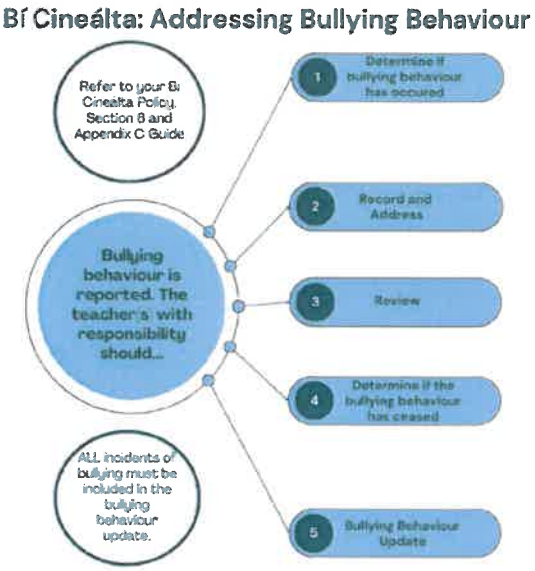
- fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment
- having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
- encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist bullying behaviour
- inviting speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds

**Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

All teachers have the responsibility for 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 practicable, the relationships of the students involved, rather than to apportion blame.

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

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Year Heads
- Chaplain
- Guidance Counselling Department




Non-teaching staff including secretaries, SNAs, ancillary staff, volunteer coaches, those taking extra-curricular activities and those driving school buses will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them to either a teacher, year head, the Deputy Principal or the Principal.

***Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred***

Bullying behaviour is defined in Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineáltas: 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.
To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the following questions must be considered:

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.

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.

If the answer to any of these questions is ***no***, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. 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?

***Where bullying behaviour has occurred when students are under the care or responsibility of the school***

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 appropriate action in a timely manner
- inform parents of those involved

The person, to whom the incident has been reported, should refer to the relevant Year Head.
The Year Head when informed, will talk to the student(s) involved and document the incident.
All reports of bullying will be noted, investigated and dealt with by those with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour in Coláiste Iognáid (as outlined in this policy).

Parents are an integral part of the Coláiste Iognáid school community and play an important role, in partnership with the school, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will 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 as outlined in this policy.

The Board of Management recognises that both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support. Where appropriate those responsible for addressing bullying behaviour may identify a need for support for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour in order to help them better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

***Where bullying behaviour has occurred when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school***

Coláiste Iognáid 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, the school will support the students involved.
Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, the school will deal with it in accordance with the procedures listed in this policy. Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in the school, but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school should support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken.

***Approaches to address bullying behaviour***

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 support agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If 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*.

In accordance with the Jesuit ethos of the school, approaches to addressing bullying behaviour are guided by principles of formation rather than solely sanction. Where appropriate and safe to do so, restorative practices are used as an expression of *cura personalis* and a commitment to justice, helping students to:

- understand the impact of their behaviour on others
- take responsibility for harm caused
- repair relationships where possible
- grow in self-awareness, empathy and moral reasoning

Disciplinary sanctions, where required, are applied in line with the Code of Behaviour, but always with a focus on learning, personal growth and the long-term wellbeing of all students involved.

Where bullying behaviour has been identified, 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 specific cases are as follows:

1. A bullying report form, Bí Cinéalta Stage 1, will be filled in by the staff member that was approached or witnessed the incident on Compass. The report form will include the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known. (See Appendix A)

2. The Year Head will have access to the bullying report form.

3. The Year Head will investigate the incident, interview the parties involved and any witnesses. This will follow a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach. Incidents will be investigated outside of the classroom to ensure privacy. Students may be asked to write an account of their version of events. Interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard for the rights of all pupils concerned.

4. The students concerned will be interviewed individually and as a group thereafter, where appropriate.

5. Those responsible for addressing bullying behaviour in the school will complete, on Compass, the Bí Cinéalta Stage 2 form. (See Appendix B)

6. Where bullying behaviour has been identified the parents of the student experiencing the behaviour and the parents of the student displaying bullying behaviour will be contacted.

7. Where appropriate, disciplinary sanctions may be applied in line with the Coláiste Iognáid Code of Behaviour.

8. The principal will be made aware of all incidences of bullying behaviour.

9. Those responsible for addressing bullying behaviour in the school will complete, on Compass, the Bí Cinéalta Stage 3 form. (See Appendix B)

10. A case that is deemed an emergency by the reporting staff member may report directly to the Deputy Principal/ Principal or proxy on the given day.

11. Cases may be referred to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána where deemed appropriate.

If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged with individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved will be met 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.
In circumstances where a student expresses a concern about their parents being informed, the school will develop an appropriate plan to support the student and for how their parents will be informed. The school will consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents, for example, literacy, digital literacy or language barriers.

***Requests to take no action***

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 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 the relevant teacher, school management and parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

Staff members will always act in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action.

Parents must 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***

Those responsible for addressing bullying behaviour (as outlined in this policy) must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.

The following factors will be considered as part of the review:

- the nature of the bullying behaviour
- the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- the relationship between the students involved

Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour.
It can take time for relationships to settle and for support 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 relevant 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 the school.
This review should be recorded, on Compass, in the Stage 3 form.

***Recording Bullying Behaviour***

All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded as outlined above, using the Compass system. The record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour, as defined in this policy, 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
- 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
- document the date of each of these engagements and the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased
- note any engagement with external services/supports

Records will be retained in accordance with the school's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations and GDPR. Where a Student Support File exists for a student, the school will place a copy of the record on the student's support file. This will assist the school's student support team in providing a consistent and holistic response to support the wellbeing of the students involved.
Where a Student Support Plan exists, the plan will be updated to incorporate response strategies and associated support.

***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's complaints procedure.
Additional Information relating to schools' complaint procedures are available at the following link https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/parental-complaints/

In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and/or parent 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.
The Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie

***School Programme of Support***

The school's programme of support for working students who have experienced, displayed or witnessed bullying behaviour:

- The situation will be monitored by those responsible with addressing bullying behaviour and, where appropriate and possible, the teacher who reported the incident on an on-going basis until the school is reasonably satisfied that:
    - bullying behaviour has ceased
    - issues have been resolved as far as is practicable
    - the relationship of parties is restored as far as is practicable
- Students who have experience bullying behaviour will be encouraged to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, develop friendship and social skills to improve their resilience.
- The existing pastoral care structures allow for support to be offered by the Year Head and classroom teacher in the first instance.
- Referrals can also be made by the Year Head and/or reporting staff member to the Guidance Counsellors and/or Chaplain and/or Care Team.
- After discussion within the Care Team referrals to an outside agency will be facilitated, where possible, and when deemed necessary and appropriate by the DLP and/or DDLP.
- Students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour will be encouraged to discuss them with their teachers, Year Heads and their parents and to avail themselves of counselling where they feel it may assist them to cope effectively with what they have experienced.
  Please see Appendix D for details on some of the further support that is available to all stakeholders in helping to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

**Section D: Oversight**

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting (Appendix E). 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.

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.

Student voice and reflection are central to the Ignatian tradition of discernment. Students will be meaningfully consulted through structured opportunities, including the Student Council and focus groups, as part of the ongoing review and evaluation of this policy and the school's wider approach to wellbeing and relationships.

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 (Appendix F). The Board of Management will issue a notification of annual review to the school community following this. (Appendix G)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Principal)

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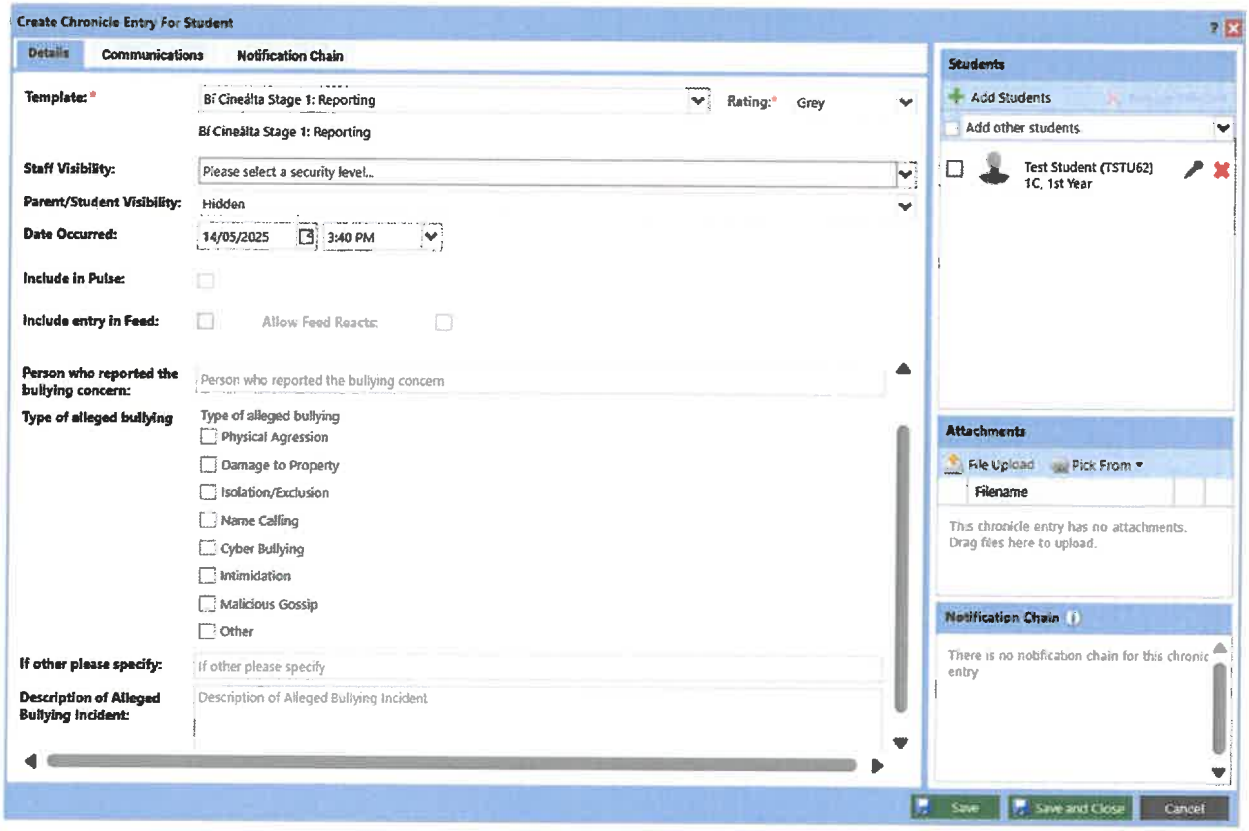
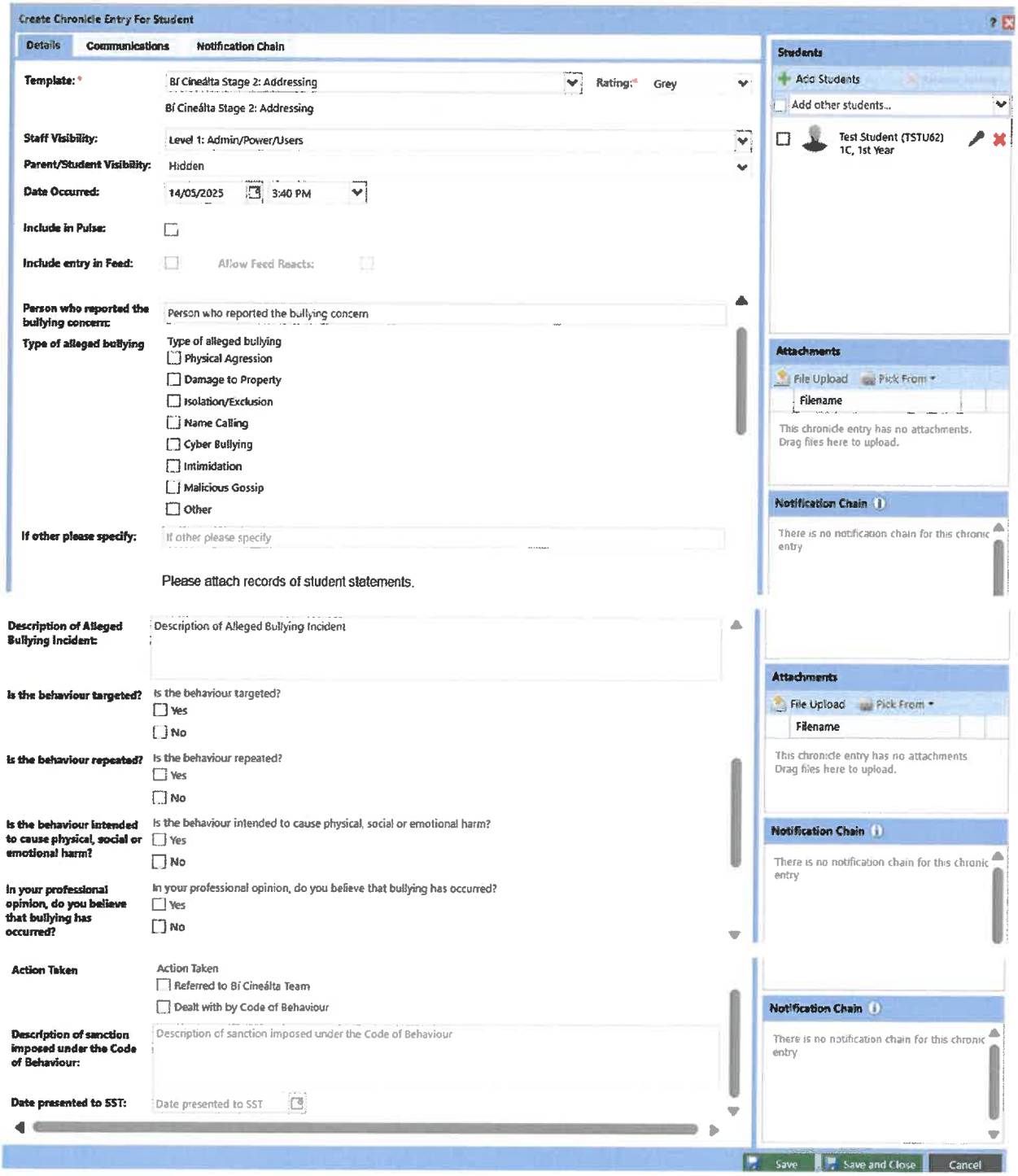
## Appendix A – Bí Cinéalta Stage 1 - Reporting Bullying Behaviour

## Compass



## Appendix B – Bí Cinéalta Stage 2 - Addressing Bullying Behaviour

## Compass



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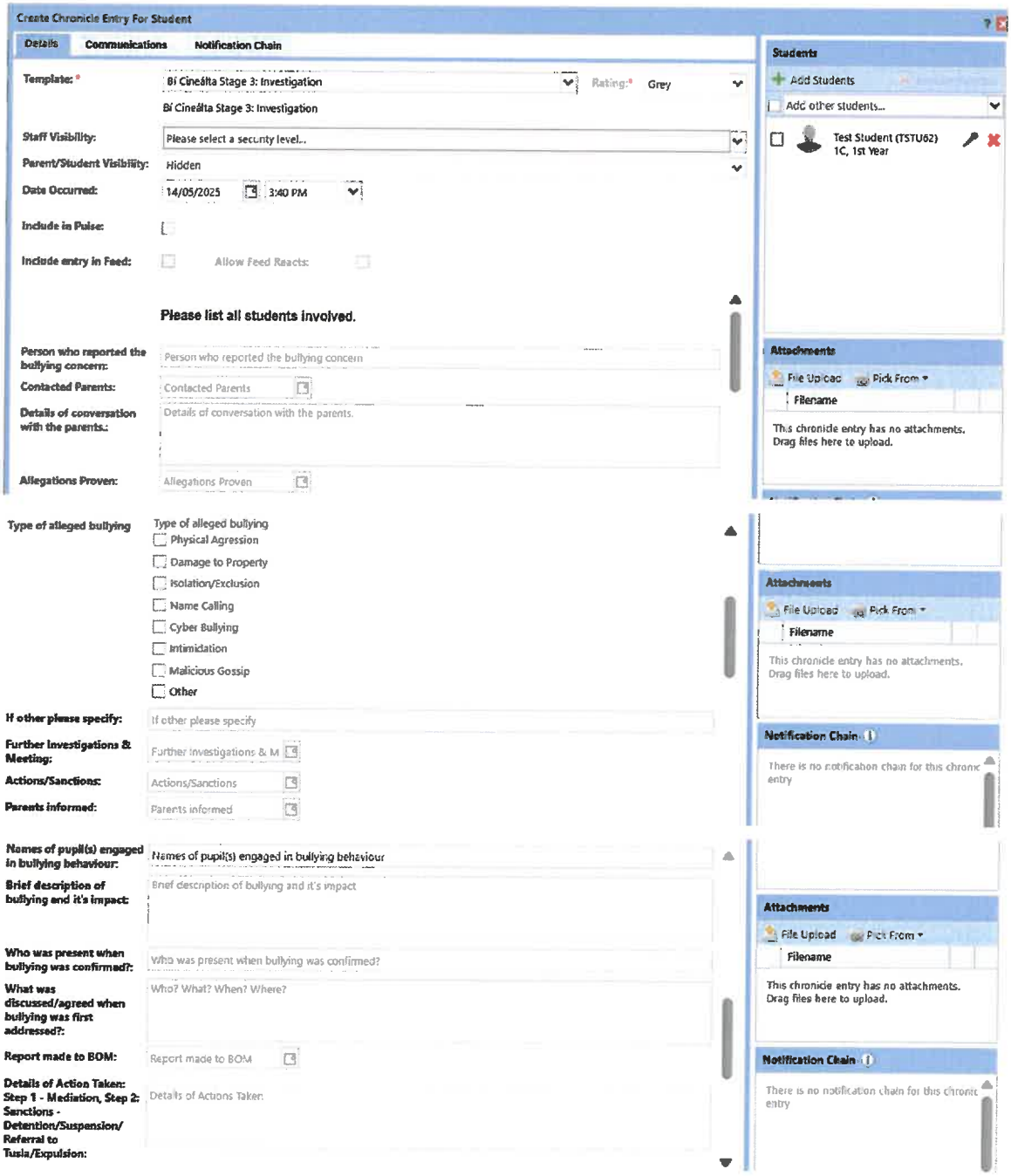
## Appendix C – Bí Cinéalta Stage 3 - Investigating Bullying Behaviour Compass






## Appendix D – Supports for Preventing and Addressing Bullying Behaviour

### National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) of the Department of Education provides a comprehensive, school based psychological service to all primary and post primary schools to support the wellbeing, academic, social and emotional development of all students. The NEPS model of service is a consultative, capacity building model, in which there is a balance between casework and support and development work. The psychological services which NEPS provides for students are differentiated in terms of whether the service involves the psychologist's direct involvement with the student, known as Direct Casework, or involves the psychologist working through teachers or teachers/parents to provide a psychological service for a student, known as Indirect Casework. NEPS staff can support schools with issues around bullying through this direct or indirect case work service. In relation to bullying, NEPS psychologists often advise schools on best practice to prevent and address bullying when issues arise in schools and/or provide training in preventative initiatives, such as developing social and emotion skills, social skills, executive function skills, promoting resilience and skills in relationship repair between peers as appropriate. More information on the support provided by NEPS is included in the Resources Guide which accompanies these procedures.

### Oide

Oide is the Department of Education's support service for schools, and it supports professional learning for primary and post primary school leaders and teachers in recognised schools and centres for education. Oide fosters a culture of continuing professional learning among school leaders and teachers encouraging lifelong learning, reflective and enquiry-based practices. The work of Oide contributes to school improvement by providing high quality professional learning experiences, supports and resources relating to curricular developments, broader educational goals and national priorities, such as wellbeing which includes preventing and addressing bullying. Oide provides continuing professional learning support to schools to support implementation of these procedures.

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**Webwise**

Webwise is the online safety initiative of the Department of Education and is co-funded by the European Commission. Webwise promotes safer, better internet use through awareness raising and education initiatives targeting teachers, students and parents. Webwise develops and disseminates resources that help teachers integrate digital citizenship and online safety into teaching and learning in their schools. Webwise also provides information, advice, and tools to parents to support their engagement in their children's online lives. With the help of the Webwise Youth Advisory Panel, Webwise develops youth-oriented awareness raising resources and training programmes that promote digital citizenship and address topics such as online wellbeing and cyberbullying.


T : 091 501 550 E : admin@colaisteiognaid.ie W : www.colaisteiognaid.ie RCN : 20007713

**Appendix E – Bullying Behaviour Update to Board of Management**

**Bullying Behaviour Update to Board of Management**
**Meeting Date: __/__/__**

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous board of management meeting, the following information is provided:

| | |
|---|---|
| Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting | |
| Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing | |
| Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school year | |

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update included a verbal report which includes, where relevant, the following information:

- 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 etc.
- 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

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

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Principal)

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**Appendix F – Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy**

**Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy**

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual (calendar) review of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and its implementation in consultation with the school community.
As part of the review, this document must be completed.

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 the 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 (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

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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 has 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

_____

Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour?

Yes/No

_____

Signed: Bernard Kirk Date: 22/6/2026.

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: David O'Sullivan Date: 22/6/2026

(Principal)

Date of next review: 31/5/2026

**Appendix G – Notification of Annual Review**

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

The Board of Management of confirms that the 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 _____/_____/20_____
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: _____ Date: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)
Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Principal)