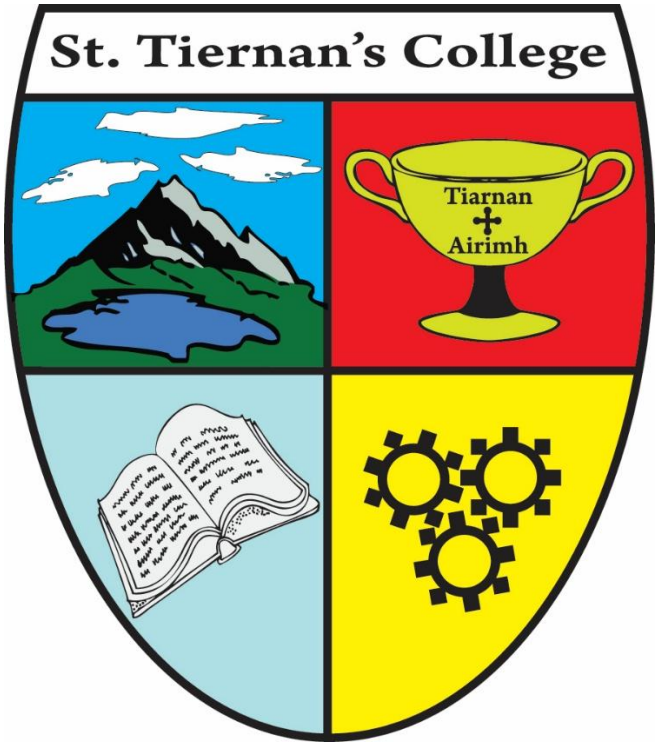
Saint Tiernan's College Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour



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The Board of Management of St Tiernan's College 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 Bí Cineálta: 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 Positive Behaviour.

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 patron, boards 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 sets 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 can shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all. Parents, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.

	Date Consulted	Method of Consultation
School Staff	April 2025	Forms survey
Students	April 2025	Forms Survey
Board of Management	April 2025	Board of Management Meeting
Wider School community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers, sports club etc	May 2025	Email
Date policy was approved	24-09-2025	Board of Management Meeting

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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. A pro-active approach is encouraged during periods of supervision. Supervision is provided before and after school and during morning and lunch breaks. Students are assigned designated bathrooms with limited occupancy and areas in which to socialise and eat. We offer a Games Room and Reading & Recreation Space at designated lunchtimes. Every class has a Tutor with whom they meet weekly for check-in. There is a Student Support Team in place which comprises Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, HSCL and SCP Project worker. The school community aims to prevent cyberbullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying, racist bullying, sexist bullying and sexual harassment as outlined in sections 5.5, 5.6, 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

These include:

- Promotion of a positive school climate and culture where RESPECT is key
- Effective Leadership
- Whole-school approach
- Fair and transparent Code of Positive Behaviour
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Digital Awareness
- Encouraging Peer Support
- Celebrating diversity
- Support for EAL students
- Promote awareness of bullying (CSPE, SPHE AND RSE Programmes)
- Anti-Bullying workshops/guest speakers
- Effective supervision and monitoring of students
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow-up of bullying behaviour
- On going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta procedure

Section C: 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. All staff (class teachers, class tutors, year heads, guidance counsellor, caretaker, cleaning staff, clerical staff, canteen staff, HSCL, Deputy Principals, Principal, SNA staff and student teachers) have a responsibility to report suspected incidences of bullying. These should be brought to the attention of the Year Head who will complete a Bullying Incident Report Form. When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured
- Seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- Conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- Consider the age and ability of those involved
- Listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- Act in a timely manner
- Inform parents of those involved
- Views of all stakeholders will be sought yearly.

Identifying if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

Bullying is defined in 'Bí Cineálta: 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. To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour you should consider the following questions:

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 school staff should consider what, where, when and why.

If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group, at the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views. Each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting. It may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

Section 4: Where Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour.

The school is obliged to fully investigate any alleged incidents of bullying which are reported by parents. It is important to listen to the views of the student who is

experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation. A record should be kept of the engagement with all involved including the initial 'Bullying Incident Report Form' (Appendix 1). This record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures), where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.

The record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.

Follow-Up Where Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

The Deputy Principal and Year Head must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement

Important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved

The Deputy Principal and Year Head should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this.

The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.

Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.

Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the Deputy Principal and Year Head should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.

If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures

If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student supports, the school may seek the support of any of the following when working with students affected by bullying:

- Counselling service (through guidance or HSCL) School Completion Project worker
- Building self-esteem and developing social skills
- Use of restorative practices to re-build and maintain relationships
- Co-operation with parents
- Referral to outside agencies (if necessary) in co-operation with parents
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Oide
- Webwise
- National Parents Council
- Dublin City University (DCU) Anti-Bullying Centre
- Tusla Record-Keeping All bullying behaviour will be recorded on the 'Bullying Incident Report Form' (Appendix 1).

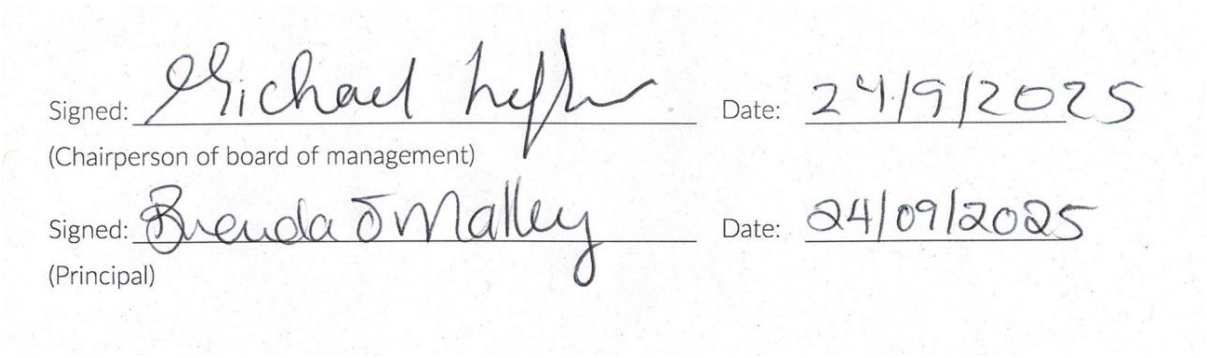
This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented.

If 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 5: 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.



Link to Bí Cineálta Procedures: https://tinyurl.com/yef5y7p2