



**St. Dymphna's National School**  
**Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**

The Board of Management of St. Dymphna's National School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

### **Definition of bullying**

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

The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures.

Each school is required to develop and implement a *Bí Cineálta* policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

### **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 <sup>th</sup> April 2025 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2025 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026	<p>2025: School Half Day Closure Staff Meeting Provided staff with the opportunity to discuss the new Bí Cíneálta action plan and staff were informed of the important points in relation to dealing with an incidence or report of bullying. Staff were given time to discuss and relay feedback. Sharing of draft policy with staff to consult and make any amendments to the draft policy. Completion of staff feedback on Bullying prior to the half day closure via discussion and email sent.</p> <p>2026: Staff issued email to include any input feedback as part of the review of the policy from the previous year.</p>
Students	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026 17 <sup>th</sup> April 2026	<p>2025: Student Council met with principal to gather feedback on anti-bullying and policy. Classes from Junior Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> were held classroom based discussions re anti bullying and new policy. Students from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class were given a Bullying questionnaire to seek their input in developing our school's Bí Cineálta policy. Records kept on hard copy file in SET room.</p> <p>2026: Senior Classes issued questionnaire's again (3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>) to complete April 13<sup>th</sup>. Results kept on file in SET room. Junior classes (J infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> class) held discussion during Assembly on April 17<sup>th</sup> regarding anti-bullying and new policy/student version.</p>
Parents	9 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	2025:

	17 <sup>th</sup> April 2026	Parent Questionnaire online – parents were given a Bullying questionnaire to seek their input in developing our schools Bí Cineálta policy. 2026: Parent Questionnaire online – parents were given a Bullying questionnaire to seek their input in reviewing our schools Bí Cineálta policy
Board of Management	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2025 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2026	2025: Review of new policy draft – leading to consultation and final ratification after amendments made where necessary. 2026: Review of Policy and discussion at Board meeting prior to ratification.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	13 <sup>th</sup> May 2025 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026	2025: Consultation with relevant non-teaching staff and school bus driver to discuss expectations in relation to behavior for students. 2026: Consultation with relevant non-teaching staff and school bus driver to discuss expectations in relation to behavior for students.
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

### Preventing Bullying Behaviour

St. Dympna's National School employs several prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate  
(See Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures)

Culture and Environment

- Through our Code of Behaviour, School Ethos and Philosophy, the school promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect, connection and belonging.
- There is a strong sense of community and cooperation between Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents, and each has a clear role in the prevention of bullying.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences/achievements, by acknowledging and rewarding good behavior and by providing opportunities for success.
- To foster an atmosphere of togetherness, cooperation, and mutual respect, our school utilises a dedicated Wellbeing Wall- “Change Your Mindset” that highlights key initiatives such as the *Student Council*, *Wellbeing Work*, *Green Schools* program. We also have a WOW wall where we share the achievements of all of our students in our corridor for both in school and outside of school achievements. These initiatives serve to celebrate student achievements, promote positive contributions to the school community, and ensure that every child feels valued and respected.
- School assemblies serve as a platform to recognise and celebrate the achievements of students, fostering a sense of pride within the school community. During these assemblies, the school’s *Bí Cineálta* Policy is regularly referenced to remind students of the importance of respect, kindness, and empathy and that bullying behavior is unacceptable.
- We actively promote the concept of a 'trusted adult'—a reliable and caring staff member that students can turn to for guidance, support, and reassurance. This trusted adult helps ensure that students feel safe and confident in expressing their concerns and seeking help when needed. By nurturing a culture of trust and communication, we aim to provide a space where every student feels supported.
- Our school grounds are carefully maintained to foster a sense of ownership and respect within the school community, including classrooms, play spaces and our school sensory garden.
- All school staff consistently model respectful behavior towards colleagues, students, and visitors, demonstrating professionalism, courtesy, and consideration in all interactions.
- Consistent supervision strategies and ongoing monitoring of students are implemented throughout the school day, including during transitions, break times, and extracurricular activities. These efforts are designed to ensure a safe and supportive environment, effectively prevent bullying, and quickly identify and address any concerns related to student behavior, well-being, or safety.
- Relationships between all members of the school community are based on respect and trust. Open communication between the patron, board of management, school staff, students and their parents helps foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibilities in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behavior.

- The school leadership team influences the school culture and set the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing and addressing bullying behavior.
- Each member of school staff has a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying behavior is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behavior.
- Students shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all. The school's *Student Council* is an important voice in this process.
- Parents, as active partners in their child's education, help foster an environment where bullying behavior is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.

#### Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- The SPHE Curriculum, including the *Walk Tall, Stay Safe and RSE* programmes, is used throughout the school to support the *Bí Cineálta* policy.
- Each year, every class will cover the topic of 'Bullying' with lessons facilitated through the curricular area of 'Social, Personal Health Education/SPHE' with the support of resources such as *The Stay Safe Programme* and *RSE Programmes* and the *Walk Tall Programme*. The topic will also be referred to, where appropriate, in Religious Education and the use of the *Grow in Love* Programmes.
- *The Amber Flag* programme, which develop wellbeing and resilience, are implemented across the school.
- The use of circle time and the Drama curriculum may also be an avenue through which bullying may be explored with the children.
- St. Dymphna's National School provides opportunities for students to participate in both curricular and extracurricular activities to develop a sense of self-worth, team work inclusion and respect.
  - GAA,
  - Soccer – FAI
  - Badminton
  - Athletics
  - Swimming
  - Green Schools
  - Chess
  - Music – Tin Whistle Club, Choir.
  - Art projects
  - Drama- school plays etc.

- Gardening

- Students are provided with regular opportunities to engage in small group work, fostering the development of friendships, interpersonal connections, and a supportive school environment.
- Social and Emotional skills groups are implemented and led by Special Education teachers based on student needs or requirements. These groups aim to build students' confidence and self-esteem, foster meaningful friendships, and provide regular opportunities for staff to check in on students' well-being. By doing so, they help create a supportive environment where students can grow emotionally and socially.
- The school acknowledges and values the rich cultural diversity within our community, actively fostering an environment where inclusivity, respect, and understanding thrive, and where students “see themselves” in the school environment.
- Students' cultural backgrounds are actively incorporated into classroom activities, discussions, and learning experiences to promote inclusivity and respect.

#### Policy and Planning

- The wellbeing of the school community will be at the heart of school policies and plans. Our *Bí Cineálta* policy will be reviewed annually along with the range of other policies that contribute and support the implementation of our *Bí Cineálta* policy.
- A variety of policies such as the *Acceptable Usage Policy*, *Digital Learning Policy (under review)*, *Supervision policy (under review)*, *Special Education Policy*, *Code of Behaviour* and *Child Safe Guarding* all support the implementation of the *Bí Cineálta* policy.
- Student voice will be a key component in shaping school policy and planning, promoting greater awareness and supporting the successful implementation of initiatives.
- Teachers and school staff will engage in appropriate professional learning courses to support us in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

#### Relationships and Partnerships

- Strong personal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. These interpersonal connections will be supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as our *Student Council* and *Parents' Association*.
- Implementing age-appropriate awareness initiatives that encourage students to reflect on their own behaviour. These initiatives will promote kindness, friendship, and supporting others, while also exploring the causes and impact of bullying during SPHE lessons.

- Promoting and facilitating workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying for example external speakers and reference to parental workshops in school newsletter in line with targets from our Digital Learning Policy.
- Encouraging the active involvement of students in school activities, while also promoting the engagement of parents in the school community.
- Encouraging the active involvement of parents and students in the development of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy, as well as a child-friendly version of the policy. This will ensure their participation in promoting and discussing effective strategies to identify and reduce bullying behavior, while also outlining procedures for addressing and resolving incidents if they occur.

#### Preventing cyberbullying behaviour

The increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour. The school will proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments.

Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include:

- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Implementation of the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship. (Web wise)
- Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
- Implementing and clearly communicating the school's acceptable use policy for technology.
- Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour.
- Promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online.
- Organising online safety workshops for students to enhance their understanding of safe internet practices and ensure their security while online.

#### Preventing Homophobic/Transphobic bullying, Racist bullying, Preventing sexual harassment.

All students have a right to feel safe and supported at school. Strategies to prevent these various forms of Bullying behaviour include the following;

- Staff at all times endeavor to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- The school's Bí Cineálta policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of

bullying/ being bullied.

- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff and recorded on our school's template.
- Ensuring the library has material which reflects our diverse school population from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of sex.
- Challenging gender stereotypes.
- Celebrating diversity in school and acknowledging the contributions of all students.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex.

St. Dympna's NS has the following supervision and monitoring procedures in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour  
(See Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Implementation of effective supervision strategies and continuous monitoring of students are implemented throughout the school day, including during transitions, break times, and extracurricular activities, to maintain a safe environment, prevent bullying incidents, and swiftly address any concerns related to student behaviour or well-being. (See Code of Behaviour)
- Classroom teachers actively encourage students to report any incidents of bullying they witness or experience, promoting a culture of trust and responsibility.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.
- School assemblies are used to emphasise the importance of positive behaviour and looking after one another.
- The Student Council serves as a key student voice, providing valuable insight into identifying and addressing issues related to school practices or procedures that impact student wellbeing.
- SPHE lessons play a crucial role in promoting positive behavior and providing students with strategies to address negative behavior when it arises.

## Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teachers with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are as follows:

Class teacher, Special Education Teachers, Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal, Principal

- The class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and record bullying behaviour on the correct form.
- All reports of bullying will first be addressed by the class teacher, with the Principal being notified at this stage. If the teacher's interventions do not resolve the issue and the negative behavior continues, the matter will be escalated to the Principal for further action.
- Principal will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.
- Bí Cineálta Policy Coordinator will be available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist class teacher in addressing concerns.
- Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

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

St. Dympna's NS takes the following steps 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):

### What is 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.)

*Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred:*

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider **what, where, when** and **why**? The steps that will be taken by the school to identify if bullying behaviour has occurred are as follows:

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report instances of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Teacher will meet with the student(s) involved individually.
- If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged with individually first.
- Thereafter, all students involved will be met as a group providing the child allegedly experiencing the bullying is comfortable to do this.
- 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 member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.
- Children may be asked to write down their account of an incident.
- When determining if bullying behaviour has occurred the following questions will be considered:
  - *Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?*
  - *Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?*
  - *Is the behaviour repeated?*

If the answer to each question above is YES, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour will be addressed using the procedure laid out below. If the answer to any of the above questions is no then the behaviour may be negative behaviour but is not considered bullying behaviour and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

*Where Bullying has occurred*

The approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour are as follows:

Stage 1 – Class Teacher

- The teacher will exercise their judgment to determine what type of bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- Once it has been established that bullying has occurred the teacher dealing with the bullying will first interview the child experiencing bullying behaviour and discuss the feelings the child experienced because of the bullying behaviour.
- 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.
- If a group is involved each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group providing the child allegedly experiencing the bullying is comfortable to do this.
- At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about the other's statements.
- Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.
- The teacher will inform the Principal of the bullying behaviour.
- At this stage the Principal will not become involved if it is felt that the issue can be resolved by the class teacher.
- Parents of students who have experienced bullying behaviour and who have displayed bullying behaviour will be informed at *an early stage*.
- A record should be kept of the engagement with all involved – See appendix 1 for School Template.
- Teacher will record incidents in a factual and impartial manner.
- This record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.
- Where the teacher has determined that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her empathise with the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour.
- The child/ children involved will be asked to assure the teacher and the child experiencing the bullying behaviour that further incidents will not take place.
- The primary objective at this first stage will be to restore the relationship between parties involved. This may involve employing strategies specific to the

situation.

- Ongoing extra supervision will be arranged if necessary.

### Reviewing Progress

- The teacher 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.
- 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 teacher will document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of the student 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 it is determined that the bullying behaviour has not ceased, then the process will proceed to Stage 2 outlined below.

### Stage 2 – Principal

If the bullying behavior has not ceased following initial interventions, the Principal will take additional steps to address the issue. These will include;

- Meeting with the students involved to review the situation in detail, ensuring that all parties have an opportunity to express their concerns and perspectives.
- A thorough assessment of the situation will be conducted to determine whether further strategies or additional supervision measures need to be implemented to prevent further incidents of bullying.
- The Principal will also arrange meetings with the parents or guardians of the students involved. These meetings will serve to collaboratively discuss the ongoing issues, put in place further interventions, and develop a tailored plan of action aimed at addressing the bullying behaviour. The focus of the plan will be on fostering positive behavioural change, promoting respect, and ensuring the well-being of all students.
- The school will work closely with parents to monitor progress, provide ongoing support, and ensure that both the student experiencing the bullying behaviour and the student displaying bullying behavior receive the necessary guidance and support to resolve the situation effectively.

- Continuous monitoring and follow-up will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the interventions, with the aim of ending the bullying behaviour.
- If, after all interventions and supports have been implemented at this stage, it is determined that the bullying behavior has not ceased, the process will proceed to Stage 3, as detailed below.

### Stage 3 – Code of Behaviour

The school has a fundamental responsibility to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all students. If initial interventions and supports do not effectively address bullying and the behaviour persists, a more structured program of appropriate sanctions may be implemented. This will be done by the Principal in consultation with the student's parents and the Board of Management. The sanctions will be designed to not only address the bullying behaviour but also to encourage positive behaviour, promote personal growth, and uphold the dignity and self-esteem of the child. The aim is to support the student's development in a constructive manner, while reinforcing the importance of respect and responsibility within the school community. For a detailed list of possible sanctions, please refer to *St. Dymphna's NS Code of Behaviour*.

### Recording bullying behaviour:

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded.

The record should:

- Document the **form** (Section 2.5) and **type** (2.7) of bullying behaviour. If known, **where** and **when** it took place and the **date** of initial engagement with the students and their parents.
- Include the views of the students and their parents regarding the action 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**.
- Document engagements with external services/supports.
- Retain in accordance with the school's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations.

### Where a Student Support File exists for a student

- Schools are encouraged to 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.

### Requests to take no action

#### Student

- A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour.

Where this occurs, it is important that the staff member:

- Shows empathy to the student
- Deals with the matter sensitively
- Speaks to the student to work together on steps that can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation
- It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe
- However, while acknowledging the child's request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

#### Parent:

- Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school or can 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.

#### Social Media

- 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 and the school reserves the right to inform parents where this occurs.
- A school is not expected to deal with bullying behavior that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behavior has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behavior continues in school, schools

should deal with in accordance with the BÍ Cineálta policy.

### Complaints Procedure

- 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.
- In the event that a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a 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.

St. Dymphna's NS will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

- The school offers a range of programs and initiatives designed to support and promote students' wellbeing. These include Amber Flag Committee, wellness Wednesdays homework, wellbeing displays, school assemblies, the school garden, extracurricular activities, SPHE lessons, and the *Grow in Love* program. Each of these initiatives plays a vital role in fostering a positive and supportive environment that prioritises the emotional, social, and mental wellbeing of all students.
- The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) provides a comprehensive range of supports including both direct supports; working with affected children, and indirect support in the form of CPD and advice.
- The NCSE has a range of supports available to schools in the form of advisors to visit the school and provide advice and support as well as providing a range of CPD opportunities for teachers and staff.
- *Oide* is the Department of Education support service for schools and it supports professional learning for primary teachers and school leaders.
- *Webwise* is the online safety initiative of the Department of Education and is used in the classes to help support the promotion of safer, better internet use through awareness raising and education initiatives targeting teacher's students and parents.

### Supporting students who experience bullying behaviour:

- Ensuring prompt identification of those responsible for bullying and swift resolution of bullying situations, reinforcing that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is not at fault.
- Promoting respect for all pupils, including those who are experiencing bullying.
- Encouraging empathy and providing support for students experiencing

bullying.

- Supporting students who experience bullying behaviour in building self-esteem by encouraging participation in activities that foster friendships and social skills, such as group work in class or involvement in extracurricular activities, either during or after school.
- Implementation of social skills groups, led by Special Education teachers, to support students affected by bullying behaviour. These groups aim to build confidence, improve self-esteem, and foster meaningful friendships. They provide a safe space for students to express emotions, learn conflict resolution, and practice communication skills. Additionally, these groups afford teachers the opportunity to 'check in' on students' well-being and offer personalised support to help them overcome the emotional impact of bullying behaviour and build social and emotional resilience.

#### Supporting students who engage in bullying behaviour

- Ensuring that students who improve their behaviour are not blamed or penalised, and are given a fresh start.
- Recognising and praising students who demonstrate behavioural improvements, affirming their decision to make positive and honourable choices.
- Students will be encouraged to engage in activities that foster friendships and social skills, such as group work in class or extracurricular team activities, to support the development of self-esteem.
- Teachers and parents are encouraged to focus on addressing and correcting negative behaviour while maintaining continuous support for the child's overall growth and well-being.
- Implementation of Social and Emotional Skills Groups, facilitated by Special Education teachers, may be used with children engaging in bullying behaviour to help them develop more positive social interactions. These groups provide a supportive environment where students can reflect on their behaviour, build self-esteem, and practice conflict resolution strategies. The aim is to foster meaningful friendships and equip students with the tools needed to navigate social situations constructively and respectfully.
- Specific topics in SPHE and other related subjects, including friendships, feelings, caring for others, and bullying, may be revisited by the class teacher with the whole class as required. This allows for reinforcement and revision of important principles related to positive social interactions and behaviour.

#### Record Keeping

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter

will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

### **Section D: Oversight**

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on our website and in hard copy on request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed: Caroline McNally Date: 22/4/26 (Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: Douglas Date: 22/4/26 (Principal)

### **Appendix 1**

#### *St Dymphna's NS Bullying Behaviour Incident Report*

Incident Details

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Bullying Behaviour Description

Forms of Bullying Behaviour

- **Verbal Bullying:** Insulting, mocking, or making hurtful comments about someone.
- **Physical Bullying:** Physically hurting someone, such as hitting, kicking, pushing, or damaging their property.
- **Social/Relational Bullying:** Excluding someone from a group, spreading false information, or intentionally isolating them.
- **Cyberbullying:** Using digital platforms (e.g., social media, texts) to harass, intimidate, or cause harm to others.

Types of Bullying Behaviour

- **Direct Bullying:** Actions or words targeted directly at the victim (e.g. hitting, insults)
- **Indirect Bullying:** Subtle or covert actions (e.g. spreading rumours, manipulating social situations)
- **Discriminatory Bullying:** Based on race, gender, religion, disability or other personal characteristics.
- **Sexual Bullying:** Inappropriate sexual comments, advances or harassment.
- **Prejudicial Bullying:** Targeting individuals due to stereotypes or biases against certain groups.
- **Power-based Bullying:** Bullying involving an imbalance of power, such as seniority, authority or social standing.

Form of bullying behaviour identified:

\_\_\_\_\_

Type of bullying behaviour identified:

\_\_\_\_\_

Initial Engagement

Date of initial engagement with Student and Parent(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Initial Engagement

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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Student and Parent(s) View

Students' view on actions to address the Bullying Behaviour:

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Parent's view on actions to address the Bullying Behaviour:

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Agreed strategies to be put in place to address bullying behaviour:

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Follow Up and Review

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the Bullying Behaviour resolved?

Yes

No

Details of Review with Students and Parents:

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Final Determination

Date of Final Determination that Bullying Behaviour has ceased: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments on Final Determination:

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Engagement with external agencies & supports (if any)

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Recorded by:

Name of staff member: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Record Completion: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 2: ST. DYMPNA'S NS: Board of Management Oversight Report on Bullying Behaviour**

( no personal information should be recorded)

**Date of Board Meeting:**  
**Presented by:**

**1. Introduction**

The following report provides an overview of bullying behaviour at ST. DYMPNA'S NS including the number of incidents reported, ongoing cases, and the measures taken to address the behaviour since the last board meeting.

**2. Incidents Reported Since the Last Board Meeting**

Category	Number of Incidents
Total Incidents Reported (since last meeting)	
Incidents Ongoing (currently being investigated)	
Total Bullying Incidents (reported since the start of the school year)	

**3. Types of Bullying Observed**

*Below is a breakdown of the different types of bullying behaviours observed since the last report:*

Type of Bullying	Number of Incidents	Brief Description
Verbal Bullying		
Physical Bullying		
Social/Relational Bullying		
Cyberbullying		
Other (please specify)		

**4. Ongoing Bullying Incidents**

*As of the date of this report, the following bullying incidents are still under investigation or resolution:*

Incident Reference	Type of Bullying	Current Status	Date Reported
#1			
#2			
#3			

[Additional Incidents]

**5. Strategies Used to Address Bullying**

To address the bullying incidents reported and to prevent future occurrences, the following strategies have been implemented or are ongoing:

Strategy/Intervention	Details	Status
School-Wide Anti-Bullying Program		
Use of Restorative Practices		
Individual Counseling/Support		
Parent/Guardian Engagement		
Classroom Behaviour Management		
Staff Training on Bullying Awareness		
Other		

**6. Next Steps/Recommendations**

To further improve the environment at ST DYMPNA'S NS and prevent bullying, the following actions are recommended for the coming months:

We will continue to monitor all bullying incidents closely and adjust our strategies as necessary. Additional updates will be provided at the next Board meeting.

**Principal's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

