



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

1. Rationale

The Board of Governors of Sandford Park 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 Governors 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* (UNCRC). 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.

2. 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.

The core elements of the definition are further described below:

- **Targeted Behaviour:**

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the student displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless

behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example, personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example, withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and long-term negative impact on the student experiencing the bullying behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying but, importantly, must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

- **Repeated Behaviour:**

Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online, and which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

- **Imbalance of Power:**

In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity, technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted student to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

3. Parental Responsibilities

Parents/Guardians play a vital role in addressing bullying behaviour. It is important that they respond calmly and avoid becoming overly emotional when their child speaks to them about a bullying issue or when they become aware of one.

Parents/Guardians should support their child in building resilience to help them cope with the emotional impact of bullying, and should work collaboratively with the school to address the issue. If a parent/guardian is informed that their child has been accused of bullying, this should be viewed not as a personal attack but as an opportunity to guide their child toward more respectful and empathetic behaviour.

While it is natural for parents/guardians to want to protect their child, it is essential to acknowledge and address any negative behaviour. Recognising the issue allows parents/guardians to help their child learn from the experience and develop the social skills and emotional awareness needed to interact kindly and responsibly with others.

Together with the school, parents/guardians should also ensure that their child understands that the internet is not a private space. They should be familiar with the four key characteristics of digital media:

- **It is searchable:** Anyone, anywhere, anytime can find it.
- **It is permanent:** Online content can resurface at any time.

- **It is replicable:** Once found, content can be copied, altered, and shared.
- **It has a global, invisible audience:** You cannot control who views or shares your content, even if it is set to private. (*Source: Integrating Internet Safety into Teaching and Learning, NCTE*)

If cyberbullying persists or escalates, parents/guardians can report the issue to the website, internet service provider (ISP), or mobile phone company—most sites include reporting options on their homepages. If the cyberbullying involves threats, parents/guardians should also contact An Garda Síochána.

4. Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to contribute to creating a safe and respectful school environment. The following steps outline students' responsibilities in preventing and addressing bullying:

- **Treat others with respect:** Ensure that your words and actions reflect kindness and consideration for everyone in the school community.
- **Ensure others are physically safe:** Do not engage in any form of physical harm or intimidation. Respect others' personal space and wellbeing.
- **Respect others' property:** Take care to avoid damaging or taking others' belongings. Acknowledge that everyone's property is valuable and should be treated with care.
- **Allow others to learn without disruption:** Every student has the right to a focused and supportive learning environment. Avoid behaviours that could distract, disrupt, or create an unsafe or uncomfortable space for others.
- **Be free from all forms of bullying:** Actively reject bullying behaviour, whether it is physical, verbal, emotional, or cyberbullying. Understand that bullying is unacceptable in all forms.
- **Report bullying behaviour appropriately:** If you witness or experience bullying, it is your responsibility to speak up, either directly or through a trusted adult. Reporting helps ensure that the situation is addressed promptly and effectively.
- **Actively contribute to a positive school environment:** Be a role model for others in creating an inclusive, respectful, and kind school atmosphere.
- **Look after your own wellbeing and safety:** If someone's behaviour makes you feel unsafe, excluded, or uncomfortable, seek help from a trusted adult. You have a right to be treated with respect, to feel safe at school, and to learn without disruption.

5. Signs and Symptoms of Bullying Behaviour

As bullying behaviour is not always easy to identify, teachers and parents/guardians should be vigilant and observant for signs that may indicate a student is being bullied or is engaging in bullying behaviour. See Appendix 1 for examples of bullying behaviours. Signs and symptoms may include, but are not limited to:

- Deterioration in academic performance.
- Possessions missing or damaged.
- Refusal to talk to a parent/guardian about what is troubling them.
- Reluctance to go to school.
- Generalised anxiety, difficulty sleeping, or loss of appetite.

6. 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	13/04/2025	Questionnaire
	03/04/2025	Workshop
Students	07/05/2025	Questionnaire
	06/03/2025 and 05/05/2025	Student Council
Parents/Guardians	04/04/2025	PTA Workshop
	07/05/2025	Questionnaire
Board of Governors	06/05/2025	Review
Wider School Community, as appropriate	03/04/2025	Workshop
Date policy was approved:	12/06/2025	
Date policy was last reviewed:	12/06/2025	

7. Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the 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):

Bullying Prevention aligned with Key Areas of Wellbeing Promotion

At Sandford Park School, our approach to preventing bullying behaviour is proactive, comprehensive, and rooted in the creation of a positive school culture. We recognise that prevention must be embedded across all aspects of school life—in the culture and environment, the curriculum, policy and planning, and in relationships and partnerships. Our strategies are outlined below.

Culture and Environment

Sandford Park School prioritises a positive school culture and climate where diversity is celebrated, and respectful relationships are modelled and promoted daily.

- **Inclusivity and Visibility:** The student-designed Anti-Bullying Charter (see Appendix 2) is prominently displayed in classrooms, the school diary, and across the school, reinforcing our shared commitment to a respectful community. 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 (see Appendix 3).
- **A Welcoming Ethos:** We provide dedicated support for students transitioning into the school, including a common base rooms area for Form 1, buddy systems for new students, and a structured induction process for mid-year entrants.
- **Physical Environment:** The school's 2.5-hectare wooded campus contributes to student wellbeing through tranquil surroundings, modern facilities, and dedicated spaces for reflection and recreation.
- **Trusted Adult and Telling Environment:** The school actively promotes a culture where students feel safe to report concerns. Students are encouraged to identify a trusted adult within the school community to whom they can turn for support. This is reinforced through SPHE classes, registration and student induction, helping to normalise help-seeking behaviour and ensure that concerns, particularly about bullying, are shared in a non-judgemental, responsive environment.
- **Supervision and Safety:** Staff supervise students for 30 minutes before and after school, as well as during breaks. CCTV and other safety measures are used where appropriate to ensure a secure environment.
- **Themed Weeks and Campaigns:** Stand-Up Week, Friendship Week, and Wellbeing Week raise awareness of bullying, promote positive interactions, and help normalise help-seeking behaviour.
- **Public Messaging:** Anti-bullying messages and the Anti-bullying Charter are reinforced through assemblies, newsletters, and displays.
- **Extra-Curricular Opportunities:** Programmes in sport, music, drama, and other areas promote peer connection, teamwork, and inclusion.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

Anti-bullying education is integrated across the curriculum to equip students with the skills to build empathy, resilience, and healthy relationships.

- **SPHE and RSE:** These subjects are central to teaching about personal safety, communication, respect, identity, and conflict resolution. All Junior Cycle students receive SPHE, and RSE is taught at Senior Cycle.
- **E-Safety Classes:** All Form 1 students take part in a dedicated e-safety module, addressing cyberbullying, digital citizenship, and online safety.
- **Curriculum Integration:** Teachers incorporate wellbeing and anti-bullying themes across various subject areas. Wellbeing indicators from the Junior Cycle framework are integrated into subject planning and delivery.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Teaching and learning practices actively promote respectful group work and peer collaboration. Regular opportunities for group projects and discussions help build empathy, social connection, and a sense of belonging among students.
- **Co-Curricular Learning:** Events like study skills workshops, school trips, music concerts, cultural exchanges, and team sports foster resilience, teamwork, and student wellbeing outside the classroom.
- **Student Voice:** Student surveys and consultation feed into programme design and School Self-Evaluation (SSE) to ensure student needs are heard and addressed in curricular and wellbeing planning.

- **External Expertise:** Guest speakers from An Garda Síochána, the IT sector, legal experts, and youth organisations provide real-world context on bullying, cyber safety, and students' rights and responsibilities.

Policy and Planning

School policies and planning are guided by a commitment to the wellbeing of the entire school community and the prevention of bullying behaviour.

- **Bí Cineálta Policy:** The school has a policy for preventing and addressing bullying behaviour in line with the Bí Cineálta procedures. A student-friendly version is also available to ensure accessibility and understanding (see Appendix 3).
- **Whole-School Policy Alignment:** Related policies such as the Code of Behaviour, Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), Supervision Protocol, AEN Policy, and Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment are regularly reviewed to ensure they support and align with the Bí Cineálta Policy.
- **Wellbeing as a Core Principle:** All planning and policy development are underpinned by a commitment to promoting student wellbeing and fostering a safe, inclusive school environment.
- **Student Participation:** Students are consulted and involved in the development, review, and implementation of key policies, where appropriate, to promote ownership, awareness, and effective practice.
- **Staff Training and Collaboration:** Professional learning in areas such as inclusion, diversity, and bullying prevention is supported and facilitated where possible. Opportunities for staff to share best practices and learn from one another are encouraged.
- **Monitoring and Review:** Policies are reviewed regularly and informed by feedback from the Board of Governors, staff, students, and parents/guardians to ensure ongoing effectiveness.

Relationships and Partnerships

We promote a network of strong, respectful relationships across the school and actively engage families and community partners in our efforts to prevent bullying.

- **Pastoral Care Framework:** The Pastoral Care Team, including Form Teachers, Year Heads, the Guidance Counsellor, Deputy Principal, and Principal support students and respond to any issues.
- **Student Support Structures:** A buddy system links junior and senior students. Prefects and TY leaders support first-year students and model respectful behaviour.
- **Student Leadership:** The Student Council plays a role in promoting wellbeing and addressing student concerns.
- **One-to-One Supports:** Personalised check-ins, guidance counselling, and teacher-student mentoring are available to students.
- **Parent Partnerships:** The active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) helps promote a culture of respect and supports awareness campaigns and speaker events.
- **Community Engagement:** Initiatives such as FUSE, One Good School, and the Green Schools Programme encourage student leadership and foster a sense of global citizenship and inclusion.
- **Open Communication:** Students are encouraged to disclose bullying in any form—verbally, in writing, or via trusted peers or adults—ensuring multiple access points for support and intervention.

Supervision and Monitoring

The school has supervision and monitoring practices in place to proactively prevent and respond to bullying behaviour as part of its commitment to student wellbeing and safety.

- **Supervision Protocol:** A structured supervision rota is managed through the S&S System. The Deputy Principal, in consultation with the Principal, assigns morning, break-time, lunch, and after-school supervision duties. The rota is distributed via staffroom noticeboard and email to ensure clarity.
- **Staff Vigilance and Presence:** All staff are expected to actively observe student interactions both inside and outside the classroom. This includes being alert to patterns in relationships, noting changes in behaviour or attendance, and intervening early when concerns arise.
- **Student Support Teams:** Student Support Teams meet weekly to discuss emerging concerns, coordinate interventions, and monitor ongoing issues. Information is shared appropriately to ensure consistent follow-up and support.
- **Positive and Inclusive Climate:** Supervision practices are framed within the broader goal of creating a safe and inclusive school culture. Staff model respectful relationships, encourage reporting, and reinforce the school's Bí Cineálta and other related policies through daily interactions.

8. Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The Relevant Teachers with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are as follows:

- Year Heads for each year group, assisted by the Principal and Deputy Principal.

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/guardians of those involved

Parents/Guardians are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with the school, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents/guardians of the parties 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 the school's Bí Cineálta policy.

9. Procedures for Dealing with Incidents of Alleged or Actual Bullying

The primary aim for the Relevant Teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame). In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise their professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred (see Appendix 4) and how best the situation might be resolved.

9.1 Reporting, Investigation and Recording:

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, must be investigated and dealt with by the Relevant Teacher. Non-teaching staff, such as ancillary staff, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), grounds staff, sports coaches, instrumental/singing teachers etc. must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to a Relevant Teacher.
- The Relevant Teacher is required to keep a written record of the entire investigation process.
- The Relevant Teacher should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents/guardians.
- Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved and all interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned.
- The alleged victim should be listened to and asked to write an account of the incident, see Appendix 5.
- The Relevant Teacher should obtain written accounts of the incident from the alleged bully/bullies and from any witnesses noting important facts (who, what, where, when, why, names of witnesses etc.). These records should be signed and dated by the student and Relevant Teacher. These records should be kept in a safe place.
- Any accusations against a member of the School community found to be false will be taken very seriously and dealt with appropriately.

9.2 Post Investigation Outcomes

If an investigation uncovers no evidence of actual bullying then the issue may be dealt with in the context of promoting better behavioural awareness/standards and in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. Consideration should also be given to offering support (as outlined below) to the student alleged to have been the recipient of the unsubstantiated bullying and the student alleged to have been responsible for the bullying.

9.3 Post Investigation Sanctions (dealing with students found to have been involved in bullying):

Stage 1

In cases where it has been determined by the Relevant Teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the Relevant Teacher will:

- Complete the Record of Bullying Behaviour (Appendix 6).
- Contact the parents/guardians of the parties to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy).
- The Relevant Teacher discusses the incident with the student and a clear warning is given. The student will be told that their behaviour is unacceptable and that it must stop.
- It will be explained to the student why their behaviour is deemed as bullying and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- Appropriate sanctions will be imposed in accordance with the Code of Behaviour and parents/guardians will be advised of any such sanctions. Parents/Guardians will also be advised of the possible consequences of a continuation of the unacceptable behaviour.

- The student involved in bullying behaviour may be referred to the School's Disciplinary Committee where appropriate sanctions are decided upon in accordance with the Code of Behaviour.

Stage 2

Follow Up

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the Relevant Teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgment, take the following factors into account:

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable.
- Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents/guardians or the School's Principal and Deputy Principal.

In cases where the Relevant Teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately resolved within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the Relevant Teacher in the recording template at Appendix 5 which must be retained by the Relevant Teacher and copied to the Principal or Deputy Principal as appropriate. The student responsible for bullying comes before the School's Disciplinary Committee and appropriate sanctions are decided upon in accordance with the Code of Behaviour. The student's parents/guardians are informed of the outcome. The Guidance Counsellor is also informed and may discuss the situation further with the parents/guardians.

Sanctions

The case is referred to the Principal and sanctions up to and including suspension may ensue. In extreme circumstances the student's case may be referred to the Board. (See Disciplinary Procedures involving Suspension or Expulsion.)

Where a parent/guardian is not satisfied that the School has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent/guardian must be referred, as appropriate, to the School's complaints procedures.

10. Programme of Support

The School's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is as follows:

- The student who has been bullied will be offered support. This may involve sympathetic listening, the support of a senior cycle mentor, helpful advice, referral to the Guidance Counsellor, or a discussion with another member of staff.
- The Relevant Teacher may consider it appropriate to remind all class members of their responsibility in upholding the Policy.
- The student responsible for bullying should be informed of the possible impact of his/her behaviour on the person, the subject of the bullying, and the possible consequences for himself/herself if it were to continue. He/she should receive clear direction in how to change his/her behaviour. He/she may also be referred to the Guidance Counsellor.

- Parents/Guardians of the students involved will be informed of the issue and the actions taken.

11. Records and Reports

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/guardians. 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.

Formal records of all stages of investigations should be kept by the Relevant Teacher including, but not limited to:

- Notes of all interviews held
- The decision-making process
- The decision and the rationale for the decision
- The sanctions applied including any conditions attached thereto.

The Template for recording bullying behaviour (Appendix 6) will be completed by the Relevant Teacher and copied to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

12. Important Considerations in Addressing Bullying Behaviour

- **Timely Reporting:** Incidents of bullying behaviour should be reported as soon as possible. Delays can make it significantly more difficult to investigate and resolve issues effectively. The school may not be in a position to investigate incidents reported more than one academic year after the alleged behaviour took place, due to the difficulty in obtaining accurate and reliable information.
- **Parental Support:** Parents/Guardians are expected to support and uphold the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour, recognising the shared responsibility of home and school in fostering a respectful and inclusive environment.
- **Jurisdiction Limitations:** The school cannot investigate actions involving individuals who are not students of Sandford Park School.
- **Requirement for Evidence:** To proceed with an investigation, sufficient information or evidence must be provided. This may include written accounts, screenshots (in the case of online behaviour), or credible witness statements.
- **Policy Framework:** All concerns related to bullying behaviour will be addressed in accordance with Sandford Park School's Bí Cineálta Policy and associated procedures.
- **Confidentiality and Sensitivity:** The school acknowledges the sensitive nature of bullying allegations. All matters will be handled promptly, professionally, and with due regard for the confidentiality and wellbeing of all parties involved.
- **Restorative Approach:** In the first instance, the school will seek to resolve issues using restorative practices, focusing on repairing harm, rebuilding relationships, and promoting understanding.
- **Escalation Where Necessary:** If a restorative approach is not effective or appropriate, the matter will be addressed in line with the school's Code of Behaviour and the established ladder of referral.
- **Zero Tolerance for Bullying Behaviour:** Bullying behaviour is not tolerated at Sandford Park School. It is considered unacceptable and fundamentally at odds with the values and ethos of our school community.

13. Oversight

The Principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each Board of Governors 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 (see Appendix 3).

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 (Appendices 8 and 9).

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of the Board of Governors)

Date: 12/06/2025

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: 12/06/2025

APPENDIX 1



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL EXAMPLES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOURS

Please note: this is not an exhaustive list.

General behaviours which apply to all	• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The ongoing “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
Cyber	• Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which is then posted online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposely excluding someone from an online group • False reporting • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages

	• Abusive emails • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
Identity-Based Behaviours	• Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community). • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • "Bitching" • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loudly enough for the victim can to hear • The ongoing "look" • Setting others up for ridicule
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above

Examples of bullying behaviour and its effects (continued)

Bullying can be verbal, physical, psychological, or online (Snapchat, email, text, etc).

What is verbal bullying?

- Words are powerful. When it comes to bullying, sometimes verbal bullying can result in as much distress and pain as physical bullying.
- The goal of verbal bullying is to degrade and demean the victim in order to make the aggressor appear dominant and powerful.
- Verbal bullying is the saying of mean or hurtful things. Verbal bullying examples include comments under the following categories; race, gender, sexuality, size, religion, ability, culture, age and more.

Examples:

- Repeated teasing and/or name-calling
- Putting someone down in front of others
- Offensive jokes
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Offensive graffiti, notes or pictures
- Making jokes about someone or referring to them with a nasty nickname
- Inappropriate sexual comments, or repeated comments about sexuality
- Taunting about appearance, clothes, shoes, hair etc
- Threatening to cause harm, instilling fear

What is Physical Bullying?

Physical bullying is the use of physical actions to intimidate and gain control over someone. The physical actions are unwanted by the victim and can either cause damage to their body or possessions or both. (Physical bullying is also assault)

Examples: Repeated

- Shoving, jostling, pushing, slapping
- Pinching
- Interfering with personal property, bag or locker
- Unwanted touching or prodding
- Tripping someone up
- Blocking their path or refusing to move out of their way
- Intimidating behaviour or force or threat of force

What is Psychological Bullying?

Psychological bullying can be defined as any kind of intentional and purposeful mental abuse.

Examples:

- Socially isolating a person
- Exclusion
- Making demeaning comments about a person based on their physical appearance or ability
- Spreading gossip about someone with intent to hurt them
- Stalking
- Gaslighting
- Controlling someone

What is online (cyber) Bullying?

- Cyberbullying is a form of bullying. It happens on social media, online forums, text and email.
- Online or Cyberbullying is the use of electronic and digital means to deliberately harass, ridicule or hurt someone or group of people.

Examples:

- Sending mean texts or (IMs) Instant Messages to someone
- Prank/Malicious calls someone's cell phone (making prank/malicious calls to or from someone's phone pretending to be someone else or making prank calls from someone's phone)
- Hacking into someone's gaming or social networking profile
- Sharing images or videos of someone without their knowledge or permission
- Being rude or mean to someone in an online game
- Spreading secrets or rumours about people online
- Pretending to be someone else to spread hurtful messages online

Effects of Bullying

Research shows that ALL bullying including name-calling, exclusion, physical, online and psychological, have serious consequences and can leave deep emotional scars that carry on into adulthood and can affect in various emotional and psychological ways, including:

- Low self-esteem/self-worth
- Feelings of depression
- Anxiety/panic attacks
- Cutting/self-harm
- Avoidance of school and or friends
- Substance use or abuse (drinking and/or drug use)
- And in extreme cases, suicidal thoughts or attempts

APPENDIX 2



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING CHARTER

1. Every student in Sandford Park School has the right to enjoy his/her learning and leisure free from intimidation, both in the School and in the surrounding community.
2. Our school community will not tolerate any unkind actions or remarks, even if these were not intended to hurt.
3. Students should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying.
4. Bullying will be taken very seriously.
5. We are a telling school. Bullying is too important to ignore.

APPENDIX 3



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy



Sandford Park School

• Founded 1922 • Co-educational

BÍ CINEÁLTA – BE KIND

Let's stand together against bullying



What Is Bullying?

Bullying is **targeted, repeated behaviour** that causes **harm**, either in person or online. It involves an **imbalance of power**—where one person uses strength, status or knowledge to hurt someone else.



Forms of Bullying:

- Physical – pushing, hitting, taking things
- Verbal – name-calling, teasing, threats
- Emotional – exclusion, rumours
- Online – hurtful messages, posts, or sharing images

Even a single online post can be bullying if it causes harm and is likely to be shared.



What You Can Do:

- Treat everyone with **kindness and respect**
- Don't join in – silence can support bullying
- **Speak up** – tell a trusted adult
- **Be kind** – support classmates who are left out
- Help make our school a place where **everyone belongs**



What We Will Do:

At Sandford Park School, if bullying happens, we will:

- **Listen carefully** and take it seriously
- **Support everyone** involved
- **Act** timely and with sensitivity
- Involve **parents/guardians**
- **Follow up** to make sure it stops

Our school has a **Bí Cineálta policy** to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. We look at this policy **every year** to see what's working well and what could be better. **We'll ask you what you think – your voice matters.**



Bí cineálta. Be kind. Together, we make Sandford Park a safe and respectful place for all.

APPENDIX 4



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL IDENTIFYING IF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR HAS OCCURED

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the Relevant Teacher should consider the following questions:

- 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 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.

APPENDIX 5



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL

'TARGETED' STUDENT REPORT ON AN INCIDENT OF ALLEGED BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Bullying is 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.

Name: _____

Form: _____

Please explain in detail the incident(s) in which you felt you were bullied.

When did it happen? (Date(s) and time(s) if known)

--

Where did it happen?

--

What happened? (Give details of the incident(s) including the name(s) of those allegedly involved)

--

Did anybody else witness this incident? (List their names and classes if you can)

Have you told your parents/guardians about this incident?

Signed: _____

Form: _____

Date: _____

Please return this completed form to the relevant teacher.

APPENDIX 6



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL RECORD OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

1. Name of student being bullied _____ Form _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of student(s) engaged in bullying behaviour:

--

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

Student concerned	
Other Student	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other (please specify)	

4. Location of incidents
(tick relevant box(es))

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School Bus	
Other (please specify)	

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

--

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)):

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying		Name calling	
Damage to property		Intimidation		Other (please specify)	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious gossip			

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

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller Community	Other (please specify)

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour and its impact (please attach any relevant notes, records, or minutes).

9. Details of actions taken (please attach any relevant notes, records, or minutes).

10. Details of post investigation sanctions taken (please attach any notes and refer to the stages outlined in section 9.1 of the Bí Cineálta Policy).

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

APPENDIX 7



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL

PARENT/GUARDIAN REPORT ON AN INCIDENT OF ALLEGED BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Bullying is 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.

Name of your son/daughter: _____ Form: _____

Please explain below in detail the incident(s) in which you felt your son/daughter was bullied.

When did it happen? (Date(s) and time(s) if known)

--

Where did it happen?

--

What happened? (Give details of the incident(s) including the name(s) of those allegedly involved)

--

Did anybody else witness this incident? (List their names and classes if you can)

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please return this completed form to the relevant teacher.

APPENDIX 8



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL

Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Governors (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.

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? Insert date when 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/guardians?

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

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

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

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

17. Does the school refer parents/guardians 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

19. 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: _____
(Chairperson of the Board of Governors)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

APPENDIX 9



SANDFORD PARK SCHOOL

Notification regarding the Board of Governors' annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Governors of Sandford Park School confirms that the Board of Governors' annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the Board of Governors' meeting of _____[date].

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

Signed: _____
(Chairperson of the Board of Governors)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____