

Bí Cineálta Policy

Section A: Development/review of our Bi 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.

	<i>Date Consulted</i>	<i>Method of Consultation</i>
School Staff	20 th May 2025	Survey
Pupils	16 th June 2025	Survey
Parents/Guardians	19 th May 2025	Survey
Date Policy was approved:		
Date Policy was last reviewed:		

Section B: 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.

Culture and Environment

A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The Enable Ireland Sandymount School environment is a space where pupils and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.

The whole school community fosters kindness and inclusion and maintains a positive and supportive school environment for all. Parents/guardians, as active partners in their child's education, can help nurture an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.

Relationships between all members of the school community is based on respect, care, integrity and trust. Open communication between the patron, boards of management, school staff, pupils 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.

Each member of school staff has a further responsibility to report bullying or possible bullying behaviour.



A Telling Environment

It is important that the school community supports a ‘telling’ environment. According to research conducted in Ireland, there is a persistent tendency not to report bullying incidents.

Pupils should feel comfortable to talk about concerns regarding bullying behaviour. The reasons why pupils may not report include the following:

- fear of retaliation from the pupil displaying the bullying behaviour or their friendship group
- concerns about being seen as a “tell-tale” for reporting bullying behaviour
- fear that the adult may make the situation worse
- fear that the adult doesn’t have the knowledge and skills to deal appropriately with the bullying behaviour
- fear that the adult may deny access to their smart phone
- not knowing what will happen when they report bullying behaviour
- fear that they will not be believed
- concerns about “getting into trouble” for reporting bullying behaviour
- not having evidence to back up the allegation of bullying behaviour, this can be seen particularly with relational bullying behaviour

Enable Ireland Sandymount School takes these reasons for not reporting into account when developing strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

A Trusted Adult

The concept of “a trusted adult” can be an effective strategy to encourage pupils to report if they or another pupil is experiencing bullying behaviour. Enable Ireland Sandymount School support this strategy by letting pupils know who they can talk to regarding bullying behaviour so that the behaviour can be addressed.

Pupils who witness bullying behaviour on social media have an important role in helping to address the behaviour by reporting the witnessed behaviour to a trusted adult. The trusted adult should reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing by reporting the behaviour.

The trusted adult should, without delay, inform the member of staff who has responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour. At Sandymount School, this is the class teacher.

If unsure who to inform, the trusted adult should inform the principal or deputy principal. The trusted adult should continue to support the pupil, as appropriate, while the behaviour is being addressed by the relevant member of staff.

Creating safe physical spaces in schools

Enable Ireland Sandymount School will create safe physical spaces thus supporting psychological safety. This is seen as an important measure to prevent bullying behaviour. Spaces that have a clear line of sight make it easier for school staff to supervise pupils.

Enable Ireland Sandymount School will look at taking the following measures to create safe physical spaces:

- ensure good lighting is present to avoid dark corners or spaces
- remove visual barriers from windows such as posters



- murals, artwork and signage can help Enable Ireland Sandymount School to promote values such as equality, diversity, inclusion and respect

A Sense of Belonging.

Pupils can feel a greater sense of belonging to a school community when they are given ownership of their own space through art and creativity. This helps pupils to identify and to feel a sense of responsibility for their school environment.

The inclusion of spaces within schools for collaborative learning can also play a part in fostering a sense of belonging. Our outside areas and school grounds are well maintained to promote a sense of ownership and respect in our school community. We come together for learning, socialising and to celebrate school events on a regular basis.

Supervision

Appropriate supervision is an important measure to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. Pupils are supervised by school staff and/or Enable Ireland staff (such as Nursing staff, Physiotherapists, O.T's., S.L.T's.) at all times during school hours to ensure their safety and general wellbeing.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

Teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful is promoted in Enable Ireland Sandymount School. Pupils have regular opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy among pupils.

The curricular subjects offered to pupils provide opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity. Enable Ireland Sandymount School provides opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of self-worth through curricular activities, the green schools committee and the pupil council.

The Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curricula aim to foster pupils' well-being, self-confidence and sense of belonging and to develop pupils' sense of personal responsibility for their own behaviour and actions.

Pupils' social and emotional learning skills can be improved through the SPHE curriculum. The SPHE curriculum aims to help pupils to feel empowered to create, nurture and maintain respectful and healthy relationships with themselves and others. The RSE strand of the specification also provides space for post primary pupils to examine and consider relationships and human sexuality which can foster an understanding of diversity which may help to reduce gender and identity-based bullying as well as sexism and sexual harassment.

In Enable Ireland Sandymount School, diversity and inclusion can be experienced via cross curricular themes which aim to encourage respect and understanding of different beliefs, perspectives and ways of living.

Policy and Planning.

The wellbeing of the whole school community is at the heart of Enable Ireland Sandymount School's plans and policies.

Other Enable Ireland Sandymount Policies which support this Bí Cineálta policy are:



- School Ethos
- Code of Behaviour
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Dignity at Work
- Enable Ireland Sandymount School staff are also encouraged to engage in appropriate Teacher Professional Learning (TPL)
- Working Together 2024
- Wellbeing Policy.

Relationships and Partnerships.

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. Enable Ireland Sandymount School recognises the importance of positive relationships across the whole education community to promote empathy, understanding and respect. The meaningful involvement of the board of management, staff, pupils and their parents/guardians in the development, implementation and review of their school's *Bí Cineálta* policy and pupil friendly version is essential to effectively prevent and address bullying behaviour.

When implementing a prevention strategy Enable Ireland Sandymount School will consider engaging with members of the wider school community who are in regular contact with pupils, such as the following:

- school bus drivers and escorts,
- education welfare officers
- Enable Ireland Sandymount CDNT staff (e.g. Physiotherapists, O.T., S.L.T. etc) and Nursing staff.

These members of the wider school community can be encouraged to report any bullying behaviour to the school as appropriate.

Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of life that can impact even the youngest members of society.

However, the increase in the use of technology has led to pupils becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour.

Enable Ireland Sandymount School will implement strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour which will include the following:

- implementing the SPHE curriculum.
- implementing the Digital Media Literacy short course L1LP which teaches pupils about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship
- having regular conversations with pupils about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
- referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour.



- promoting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online.

The digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their data. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16.

Most social media platforms and services have a minimum age requirement and for the majority of these services, it is 13 years old. Therefore technically, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account.

It is important for their child's safety, that parents are aware of their children's use of technology including smartphones and gaming consoles.

Preventing Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying Behaviour

All pupils including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender pupils, have a right to feel safe and supported at school. Enable Ireland Sandymount School will implement strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour where appropriate. These include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters.
- encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- challenging gender stereotypes.
- encouraging pupils to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.

Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

Schools have become much more culturally diverse over the last number of decades. Pupils attending Enable Ireland Sandymount School come from many different cultures and backgrounds. Pupils from diverse backgrounds may face discrimination and prejudice and may be subject to racist bullying behaviour.

Enable Ireland Sandymount School will implement strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour. These will include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- foster a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where pupils "see themselves" in their school environment
- have the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
- encourage peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- encourage bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour provide supports to school staff to respond to the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
- provide supports to school staff to support pupils from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma pupils, and to encourage communication with their parents
- invite speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds as appropriate
- ensure that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of pupils and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.



Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour

As part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment, Enable Ireland Sandymount School will focus on gender equality. Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat pupils equally irrespective of their sex.
- ensuring all pupils have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex.
- celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all pupils.
- organising awareness campaigns on gender equality and respect as appropriate.
- encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home.

Preventing Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. Enable Ireland Sandymount School will make it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- using the SPHE curriculum at post primary level to teach pupils about healthy relationships and how to treat each other with respect and kindness
- promoting positive role models within the school community
- challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- all teachers.

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows:

Identify if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher should consider the following: what, where, when and why.

The definition of bullying provided in Chapter 2 of "Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools" *Report on Focus Group [1] sets out clear criteria to help schools to identify bullying behaviour.

Core definition of 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



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

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?
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.

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.

These definitions of bullying behaviour may not apply to all the pupils in Enable Ireland Sandymount School. However, as the anti-bullying policy will also apply to all staff employed by the Board of Management, these types of bullying are listed as part of this policy and will be investigated as per any allegation of bullying. Adult bullying in the workplace can be addressed through the Working Together 2024 document which Enable Ireland Sandymount School has adopted.

https://www.into.ie/app/uploads/2019/07/Working-Together_English.pdf

For many of our pupils, bullying is an abstract concept that is difficult to understand as it involves both flexibility of imagination and an understanding of Theory of Mind. (Theory of mind (TOM - also popularly known as 'mind-reading') is the ability to understand that other people may have different thoughts, feelings, ideas, attitudes or knowledge to one's own.)

These areas pose significant difficulty for children and young people with special educational needs. Therefore, our definition of what is perceived as bullying behaviour in Enable Ireland Sandymount School will consider the following observable behaviour:

- A pupil persistently seeking to negatively influence the behaviour of another pupil, deliberately triggering behaviours to annoy a peer or seeking to get another pupil into trouble by provoking a negative response.
- A pupil persistently targeting another pupil as a focus for negative behaviour during their own behavioural outburst.
- A pupil repeatedly removing preferential reinforcers or chosen objects from another child on a routine basis to deliberately provoke or annoy them.

As many of our pupils have diagnosed cognitive impairments, we will promote acceptance of everyone within the school and use all opportunities to promote a tolerant school culture. Some of our pupils may have issues with certain peers due to sensitivity to loud noise that may emit or their unpredictable behaviour. Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):



Where Bullying Behaviour has occurred.

Enable Ireland Sandymount School 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 pupils involved, rather than to apportion blame.

When addressing bullying behaviour teachers should:

- ensure that the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured
- seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- consider the age and ability of the pupils involved
- listen to the views of the pupil 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 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 parties involved will be contacted by Enable Ireland Sandymount School 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.

In circumstances where a pupil expresses concern about their parents being informed, the school will develop a plan to support the pupil and for how their parents will be informed appropriate to the pupil and the situation.

Enable Ireland Sandymount School acknowledge there may be communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents, for example, literacy, digital literacy or language barriers and we will endeavour to be sensitive to these in our approach to addressing the situation.

A record of any engagement with all parties concerned will be kept.

This record will include:

- Date and time
- What form and type of bullying behaviour was reported; (physical, verbal, written, extortion, exclusion, relational or cyber bullying) See gov.ie - [Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying](#) 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 for further information.
- Where and when it took place. (inside school, outside school or online)
- This record will also include the views of the pupil and parents regarding the actions to be taken to address this bullying behaviour.

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

- the teacher will engage with the pupils 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 pupils involved. It is important to note that sometimes the relationship between the pupil may never be restored to how it was before the bullying behaviour started.



- the teacher will document the review with pupils and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and also the views of pupils and their parents in relation to this.
- the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased will also be recorded.
- any engagement with external services/supports will also be noted.
- ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the pupils involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
- if the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher will review the strategies used in consultation with the pupils involved and their parents. A timeframe will be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased
- if it becomes clear that the pupil who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then Enable Ireland Sandymount School will consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant pupil, their parents and the school
- if a parent 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 will 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 pupil.

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.

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



Appendix 1: Bullying Incident Report Form

1. Name of pupil being bullied: _____

2. Class: _____

3. Name(s) and class(es) of pupils allegedly engaged in bullying behaviour:

4. Source of bullying concern/report (tick as relevant)

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other pupil(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
SNA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent/guardian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Location of incident(s) (tick as relevant)

School Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changing Rooms (swimming pool)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Out-of-school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cyberspace	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>



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

7. Form and type of bullying behaviour

Forms of Bullying	
Physical	
Verbal	
Written bullying	
Extortion	
Exclusion/isolation	
Relational	
Cyber-bullying	

Types of Bullying	
Disablist	
Exceptionally able	
Gender identity	
Homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+)	
Physical appearance	
Racist	
Poverty	
Religious identity	
Sexist	
Sexual harassment	

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour:

9. Impact of bullying behaviour:

10. Details of action taken:



11. Details of follow up actions, if any.

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: _____



Appendix 2: Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for board of management meeting of

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous board of management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

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

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

- the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc
- the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- if a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the board of management
- if the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.



Appendix 3: Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

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

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

6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post- Primary Schools? Yes No
7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour? Yes No
8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour. Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year? Yes No
9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour? Yes No
10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy? Yes No
11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented? Yes No



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Appendix 4: Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management of Enable Ireland Sandymount School confirms that the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of _____ [date].

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

Signed:



Sé Goulding, Chairperson of Board of Management



Jennifer Doyle, Principal

Date: 4 July 2025



Appendix 5: Bí Cineálta student-friendly policy

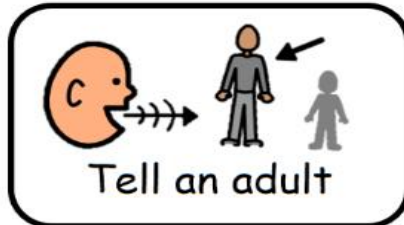
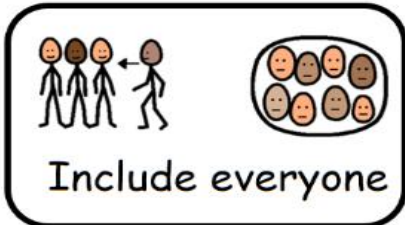
Bí Cineálta

Be Kind



Bullying is being unkind and/ or hurting others

In Sandymount School we:



Bullying makes us feel:

