



Scartleigh National School

SALEEN, CLOYNE, CO.CORK.

021 4652094

secretary@scartleigh.com

www.scartleigh.com

School roll number 17600S

Charity regulator number 20206217

Scartleigh National School

Cairde le Chéile ag Foghlaim

Bí Cineálta Policy

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scartleigh NS 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.

We confirm that we will take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated.

Catholic schools have a distinctive understanding of the human person, recognising that every person is created in God's image and likeness and has inherent dignity as a child of God. This is the basis for ensuring that each person in our school is treated with respect and care, in accordance with the Catholic Schedule.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to respecting the dignity of every individual. No human person is to be devalued, and all have an indispensable part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

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:

1. targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm.
2. the harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature.
3. 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.

Types of bullying

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include directing bullying at someone focused on the following: disability, exceptional ability, gender identity, LGBTQ+ , physical appearance, racism, poverty status, religious identity, sexism and sexual harassment. This is not an exhaustive list.

Bullying can be - Direct:

- Physical: pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. Physical assault. Destruction of personal property.
- Verbal: continual name calling which insults, humiliates the student – this may refer to physical appearance, size, clothes, gender, accent, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.
- Written: Writing insulting remarks in public places, passing notes or drawings about the student.
- Extortion: where something is obtained through force or threats.

Bullying can be - Indirect:

- Exclusion: where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.
- Relational: Where a student's attempts to form friendships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined, threats, non-verbal gesturing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours, silent treatment and manipulation of friend groups etc. can all form relational bullying for a student.

Online bullying behaviour:

Cyber bullying is carried out via text, direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, e-mail, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This can include:

- Sending or sharing of insulting and offensive or intimidating messages or images via online means as mentioned above.
- Posting information which is personal, private or sensitive without consent.
- Making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students.
- Exclude/disrupt access to a student on purpose on online chat groups/access to accounts/from an online game.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is not bullying behaviour. However, 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.

Disagreement between two students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups.

Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that their behaviours are not deliberate or planned, but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control.

Bullying behaviour that occurs outside of school

As per the BÍ Cineálta Procedures, a school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved.

Examples of prohibited bullying behaviours that can occur outside of school (non-exhausted list):

- Bullying behaviour that occurs in the area immediately outside the school, and the wider local area.
- Bullying behaviour that occurs on the journey to and from school.
- Bullying behaviour that occurs in organised clubs and groups outside of school such as sports clubs.
- Online bullying (cyberbullying) behaviour, along with other types of bullying behaviour can cause significant harm and have a lasting impact on students who experience this behaviour. Access to technology means that online bullying behaviour can happen any time and that the student's home is no longer a safe place. The nature of these technologies means that digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and the content is almost impossible to delete permanently.

Requests to take no action

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than "look out" for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them. Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe. 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 be facilitated to do so where there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, schools have a right to act and may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Section A: Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	2nd April 2025 10th June 2025	Half day school closure. Staff meeting, presentation and discussion of Bí Cinealta policy. Staff questionnaire completed and reviewed. Staff meeting presentation of Draft Bí Cineálta policy.
Students	15th - 20th May 2025	Individual Class Sessions. Questionnaire 3 rd – 6 th class.
Parents	19th May 2025	Parents were sent a questionnaire and feedback was taken into account when drafting this policy.
Board of Management	28th August 2025	Meeting outlining new procedures. Review and discussion of draft policy – leading to ratification.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	2nd April 2025 Caretaker, Secretary, Cleaners	Half day school closure. Staff meeting, presentation and discussion of Bí Cinealta policy. Staff questionnaire completed and reviewed.
Date policy was approved: 28th August 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 28th August 2025		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by our school to address all forms of bullying behavior, in whatever form and however motivated, including online bullying behavior, homophobic and transphobic bullying behavior, racist bullying behavior, sexist bullying behavior and sexual harassment.

In developing preventative strategies which this school will use to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour, we come from the context of our Catholic ethos where inclusivity permeates the school in a real way.

This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which

ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at board of management and staff meetings.

The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence.

In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies.

Culture and Environment

We strive to :

- Create a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and a consistent approach to addressing bullying behavior.
- Build an environment where students feel safe, connected and supported.
- Promote kindness and inclusion among student body – peer support and positive environment.
- Promotion of and compliance with our school's "6 Golden Rules". (see code of behavior)
- Involve parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated.
- Support the idea that our school is a telling environment.
- Promote the concept of a trusted adult – stay safe linkage – who to tell.
- Create safe spaces in our school building and yards – visibility.
- Incorporate school signs and artwork to promote our school values – "Our Golden Rules" signage (also available in Ukrainian).
- Create a positive school culture and climate which-
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
 - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
 - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;
- Staff are briefed on the uniform approach we must take to handle all reports of bullying – this is distributed to staff (in school policies folder) and a copy is displayed on the Staff Room notice board for ease of access also.
- Anti Bullying week activities such as Random acts of Kindness homework, Poster making, slogan making, etc.
- Buddy System – students in higher classes volunteer to support younger classes in-class on yard and at lunchtime to help with games and positive interactions.
- Child Friendly Anti- Bullying Policy (formed with pupil and parent input).
- Parents receive information at times regarding useful information on Anti Bullying.
- Stay safe and SPHE lessons focusing on positive behaviour form part of curricular content in all classes.

- Weekly circle-time to be undertaken in each class weekly.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
- Notice board to promote kindness and build responsibility amongst pupils.

Curriculum (teaching and learning)

We strive to :

- Provide teaching and promote learning which is collaborative and respectful, fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Display a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying.
- Implementation of the Social Physical and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum, according to our school plan, including the Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE), Weaving Well-being and Stay Safe Programmes.
- School-wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, programmes to teach about cyberbullying (e.g. Webwise teachers' resources and lessons from (www.cybersafekids.ie)).
- Organise seminars/workshops given by relevant professionals to older pupils and to parents/guardians, focusing on educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online and also on developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber-bullying.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies eg. Inclusion workshops, child-friendly anti-bullying policy.
- Use of programmes such as Friend for Life.
- Our school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.
- Acknowledgment of our diverse school population – celebrating diversity and culture in our school through art, displays, photographs, international events.
- Build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils.

Supports for staff:

- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

Policy and planning

We strive to:

- have our child-friendly Bí Cineálta Policy on display prominently around the school.
- raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
- promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and

discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.

- ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.

The Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision policy, Special Education Needs Policy and The Code of Behaviour all support the implementation of the Bi Cinealta policy.

Effective leadership is a key component with Principal, Deputy Principal, DLP, DDLP, and all middle management focused on supporting the implementation of this policy.

Relationships and Partnerships

We strive to:

- catch the children being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- at assemblies, the "Golden Rules" are reinforced on a regular basis. Raise awareness of the definition of bullying behaviour and how the school deals with such behaviour.
- give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- encourage parents/guardians to sign up to the voluntary agreements to defer smartphone/device ownership during the primary school years.
- actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- support the active participation of students in school life through formal and informal structures, e.g. circle-time activities, assemblies, sports' teams, student council, buddy system.
- Support the active participation of parents in school life, e.g. being a member of the Parents' Association.

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Yard, Playground Supervision Policy
- Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy
- G-Suite guidelines for parents
- Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Policy

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- class teachers and SETs (where appropriate).
- The Principal/Deputy Principal will provide support and advice and will become involved where appropriate.
- Principal will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.

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 (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Approach:

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the students involved, rather than to apportion blame.

When addressing bullying behaviour, the teachers with responsibility will:

- ensure that the student 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 students 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.

Stage 1 - Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred:

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.

Where bullying behaviour is suspected, parents/guardians report it to the class teacher.

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour we will consider the following questions:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
3. Is the behaviour repeated?

If the answer to each of the questions above is Yes, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour, and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

Note: One-off incidents may be considered bullying behaviour in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

If the answer to any of these questions is No, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred (Stage 1), teachers should consider what, where, when and why? as follows:

(Note that these steps are required – as outlined in the Procedures):

- Where one student is reported to be involved, the student should be engaged with individually at first.
- Thereafter, this student and the student who is reported to be experiencing the bullying behaviour should be met together.
- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first.
- Thereafter, all students involved and the student who is reported to be experiencing the bullying behaviour should be met as a group.
- At the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views.
- Each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting.

It may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s).

-Parents will be supported by the school, if needed, with recommendations for useful resources/guides to help them support their children.

Stage 2: Where bullying behaviour has occurred:

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

-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.

-All bullying behaviour will be recorded (See Appendix A). This will include the form and type of behaviour if known, 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*.

-The record should be shared with the Principal/Deputy Principal.

Stage 3: Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

- The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement. Important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
- The teacher should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.
- Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.
- Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.
- If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures (available on our website).
- If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the Student.

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):

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.

Supporting Bullied pupils:

- Ending the bullying behavior.
- Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils.
- Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils.
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes.
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy

resolution of bullying situations.

- Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class, student council and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

Supporting Bullying pupils:

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet'.
- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honorable thing and giving them praise for this.
- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in student council, group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth.
- In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child.
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

Section D: Oversight

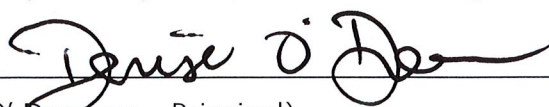
The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning 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: 
(Tom Casey - Chairperson of board of management)

Date: 28/8/25

Signed: 
(Denise O'Donovan - Principal)

Date: 28/8/25

APPENDIX – A

Scartleigh NS – Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

Date of initial engagement with pupils/parents: _____

Name of pupil who has experienced bullying behavior: _____

Class: _____

Name of pupil engaged in bullying behavior: _____

Class: _____

Source of bullying concern (eg pupil, parent etc.): _____

Location of incidents: _____

Name of person who reported the bullying and relationship to the pupil:

Dates of when the bullying behavior occurred: _____

Form of bullying behavior:

Physical Bullying Behaviour		Exclusion Bullying Behaviour	
Verbal Bullying Behaviour		Relational Bullying Behaviour	
Written Bullying Behaviour		Online Bullying Behaviour	
Extortion		Other (Specify)	

Type of bullying behavior:			
Disablist Bullying Behaviour		Homophobic/Transphobic (LGBTQ+) Bullying Behaviour	
Exceptionally Bullying Behaviour		Physical Appearance Sexual Harassment	
Gender Identity Bullying Behaviour		Racist Bullying Behaviour	
Sexist Bullying Behaviour, Sexual Harassment		Religious Identity Bullying Behaviour	
Poverty Bullying Behaviour		Other (Specify)	
Brief Description of bullying behavior and its impact:			
Views of pupil(s) and parent(s) regarding the actions to be taken:			

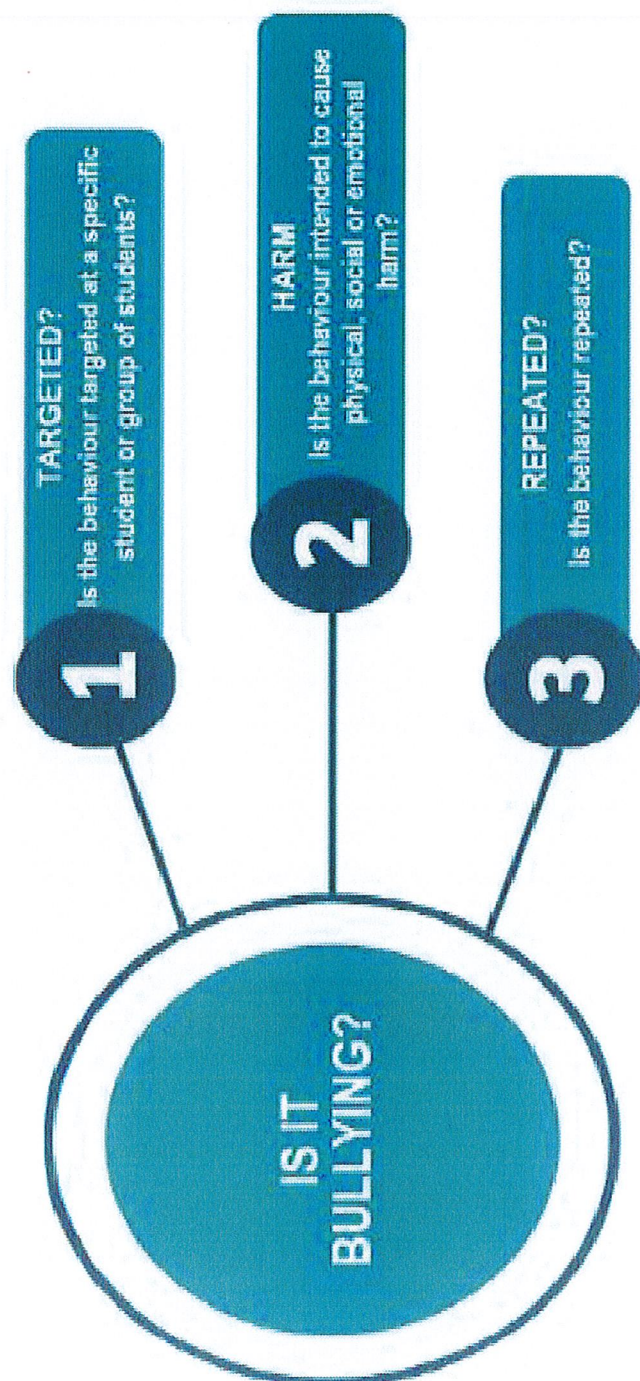
Date of review with pupil(s) and parent(s) (within 20 days):	
Has bullying behavior ceased?	
Views of pupil(s) and parent(s) in relation to this:	
If bullying behavior has not ceased, set an agreed timeframe to meet again and review strategies.	
Engagement with external services or supports (if any)	

If bullying behavior continues beyond the review timeframes, the school's "Code of Behaviour" is to be used.

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date: _____

APPENDIX – B



If the answer to each of the questions is **Yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the *Bi Cineálta* Procedures.

If the answer to any of the 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.



Oide

Forbes and Wright in
Classroom Practice
Supporting and Improving
Learning (© School Leaders
and Teachers)

Bí Cineálta: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

