St John Bosco Junior Boys' School
Bí Cineálta Policy to prevent and address Bullying Behaviour

Introduction

The Board of Management of St John Bosco Junior Boys' school has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.
This policy fully complies with the requirements of Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024.

The Board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.
We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do.

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

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is fully committed to following the key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour.

The Key Principles
- The creation of a positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.
- Pupils are encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.
- The promotion of respectful relationships across the school community.
- Effective leadership
- A whole school approach is adapted
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and the impact it may have
- The implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness-raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
- Supports and support systems for all staff members.
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow-up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies) and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

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 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.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour, that is not bullying behaviour, are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Definition of bullying behaviour as outlined in Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying

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

Building on many years of international research, the core definition above sets out clear criteria to help school communities to prevent, correctly identify and address bullying among students. Alleged incidents of bullying are, however, often complex and must be considered on a case-by-case basis. There are many different methods of bullying behaviour, including physical, verbal and relational forms, and it can take place online and offline. There are also many different motives for bullying behaviour which can be understood on an individual level (for example, desire for dominance, status, revenge) and/or on a societal level (for example, identity-based bullying such as racist, disablist, sexist or LGBTQ+ bullying). Bullying behaviour in schools is often strongly influenced by attitudes, behaviours, norms and power dynamics that are deeply engrained in our society.

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 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 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 bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves because 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.

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 may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.

Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour 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 these behaviours are not deliberate or planned but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control.

Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying.

These behaviours, while not defined as bullying, can be distressing.
Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Criminal behaviour
Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years.

Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and criminalises threatening to share these images.

If bullying behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence, it may be considered assault.

If bullying behaviour involves discrimination or hate speech targeting a student based on their race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, it may be considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989[1], and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges.

If bullying behaviour involves sexual harassment or sexual assault, this may also be considered criminal behaviour.

An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour.

How bullying behaviour occurs
Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Direct bullying behaviour:

Physical Bullying
Physical bullying behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While students can often engage in "mess fights" they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
Personal property can be a focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phones or other devices, schoolbooks and other learning material or interference with a student's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Verbal bullying behaviour:
Continual name-calling directed at a student which hurts, insults or humiliates the student should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling of this type refers to physical appearance; for example, size or clothes worn or gender identity. It can also refer to a student's accent, distinctive voice characteristics, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.

Written bullying behaviour:
Written bullying behaviour includes writing insulting remarks about a student in public places, passing around notes about or drawings of a student.

Extortion:

Bullying behaviour can involve extortion. Extortion is where something is obtained through force or threats.

Indirect bullying behaviour:

Exclusion
Exclusion bullying behaviour occurs where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students

Relational
Relational bullying behaviour occurs when a student's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. Common forms include control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"; a group of students ganging up against one student; nonverbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a student; giving a student the "silent treatment"; and the deliberate manipulation of friendship groups to make someone unpopular.

Online bullying behaviour:

Online bullying behaviour (cyberbullying) is carried out using information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This form of bullying behaviour can include:
sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent > making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students

excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to   accounts or from an online game

Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.

As online bullying uses technology to carry out bullying behaviour and does not require face-to-face contact it can occur at any time. Many types of bullying can be facilitated through online bullying. In many cases, online bullying can relate to an "offline" experience with someone known to the student. This type of bullying may involve forms of sexual exploitation, including but not limited to, sextortion and the non-consensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence.

Where bullying behaviour can occur

Bullying behaviour can happen anywhere, online or offline and at any time, but there are certain places and times where bullying behaviour can be more likely to occur. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Inside School
School physical environments can have a significant influence on social relationships among students and can impact on the ability of school staff to effectively prevent and address bullying. Welldesigned school environments play a vital role in preventing bullying behaviour and promoting inclusion, positive relationships, and a safe and supportive learning environment.

School Yard
Bullying behaviour can take place in the school yard. School grounds with hidden or obscure parts may provide an environment where bullying behaviour is more likely to occur. Many common school yard games present opportunities for bullying behaviour because of their physical nature. Continuing provocation may lead to a physical fight and in some cases the student experiencing bullying behaviour may appear to be the aggressor as they give vent to their frustration.

In the classroom
Bullying behaviour can take place in class. It may occur subtly through glances, looks, sniggers or may take the more overt form of physical intimidation or deliberate isolation. Bullying behaviour may also occur between class periods when the students or the teacher moves.

Other areas
Bullying behaviour can take place in other areas such as toilets, corridors, cloakrooms, locker areas, changing rooms, showers, gym, canteen and assembly hall.

Outside School
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 this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved.
Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

Coming to and from school
Bullying behaviour can occur in the area immediately outside the school, the local shops and the wider local area.
Bullying behaviour can take place at the bus stop or on the journey to and from school, whether the students are walking, cycling or on school buses. Bullying behaviour can also take place in organised clubs and groups outside of school such as sports clubs.

Online bullying (cyberbullying) behaviour, along with all other types of bullying behaviour, can cause significant harm and can have a lasting impact on students who experience this behaviour. Access to technology means that online bullying can happen anytime, and 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.

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying	- 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/looks - Invasion of personal space - A combination of any of the types listed.

Cyber	
Cyber Parents must take primary responsibility for supervision of their children and teaching their children regarding cyber bullying and its consequences. The school will work with families, the community and society on this issue.	• 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. Each child must take responsibility for her own device. Each child will be accountable for activity originating from her device. • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group. St. John Bosco Junior Boys' School acknowledges the difficulty for a school to monitor this • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety e.g. • Silent telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls/text messages/emails • Abusive posts/comments/pictures 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).	
Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
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 based on 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 • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loudly enough so that the victim can hear • Insulting or offensive looks/comments
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and their l • limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and their limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

We confirm that we will take all steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent all 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 everybody 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 everybody has a part to play in the school community, regardless of difference

Rights & Responsibilities

A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school.
Individual teachers must take appropriate measures regarding reports of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
In these procedures, the member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the "relevant teacher".

Relevant Teachers

The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:
All class teachers – in the first instance
Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal in charge of discipline
Principal

Any teacher may act as a relevant person if circumstances warrant it.

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	25/3/25 9/4/25 7/5/25	Inservice day Questionnaire Meetings
Students	28/4/25	Focus Group
Parents	10/4/25 22/5/25	Focus Group Questionnaire
Board of Management	16/6/5	Focus Group/Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	10/4/25	Focus Group
Date policy was approved:31/8/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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

In developing the 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 our school in a real way

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice provides the following four key areas that are essential for a holistic, whole school approach to wellbeing promotion: Culture and Environment; Curriculum (Teaching and Learning); Policy and Planning; and Relationships and Partnerships.

The following table includes preventative measures aligned to The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice

Bullying Prevention aligned with Key Areas of Wellbeing Promotion

Culture and environment	Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)
- Open Door Policy - Establishment of a Safe Telling Environment - Seating Plans - Visible Displays around the school - Display of students' work - Random Acts of Kindness - Foster and enhance the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. - Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions. - This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at our board of management and staff meetings	- Various awareness weeks throughout the school calendar e.g. Friendship Fortnight, - A variety of programmes are run in SPHE and Wellbeing/ - Whole school survey regarding bullying - Teachers explain what a bystander is and ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place. - Provide class lessons to enable pupils 'how to tell' (telling protocol). - Reinforce the message from teachers to pupils that if anyone is the victim of bullying behaviour, they should not retaliate in any way but should tell an adult. Victims should be reassured that if they tell, something will be done about the bullying in a safe manner and all reported incidents will be dealt with. - Promote the value of diversity. - Implementation of curricula

	• The full implementation of the SPHE, the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes. • Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes. • School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes such as The Stay Safe Programme and The Walk Tall Programme. • The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils regarding the implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately. • Targeted intervention/support programmes e.g., Fun Friends, Zippy's Friends.
Policy and planning	**Relationships and partnerships**
Education and prevention strategies: The education and prevention strategies that will be used by the school are as follows: • School-wide approach – Creation of a culture of 'telling. Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. • Ensure that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.: • Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example immediately following incident, or after class. • Hand notes up with homework. • Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or	• Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school on enrolment. • Implement regular whole school awareness measures e.g. promotion of friendship. • Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied i.e. contact the class teacher in the first instance. • Linking with external services e.g. NEPS, CAMHS, Túlsa, Gardaí • Linking with the Board of Management and the Parents Association. • Guest Speakers • Garda Visits • Extra-Curricular Activities

friend to tell on your behalf.	
• Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.	
• Provide whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it	
• Complete an annual review of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources.	
• Provide professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s).	
• Supervise and monitor the classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.	
• Involve the pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.	
• Develop and promote an Anti-Bullying Code for the school - displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.	
• Develop an Acceptable Use Policy in the school outlining the necessary steps to ensure that access to technology within the school is strictly monitored.	
• Bí Cineálta Policy	
• Code of Behaviour Policy	

- Acceptance Use Policy - Child safeguarding - Data protection - Internet Acceptable use policy - Wellbeing Policy - Staff are aware that they are all mandated persons, child protection procedures are reviewed and distributed each year, and staff must complete Children E-Learning Programme - Principal & Deputy Principal complete DPL/DDLP training and refreshers - Social, Personal and Health Education Policy - Code of Behaviour Policy - Supervision Policy - Acceptable Use Policy - Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment	

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 further 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.

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 students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour. Schools should proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments.

Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship
- Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online

- Developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology
- referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour
- Promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online
- Holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour

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Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour
All students have a right to feel safe and supported at school.

Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:
- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools
- Challenging gender stereotypes
- Conducting workshops and seminars for school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour
- Encouraging students 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. Students attending schools come from many different cultures and backgrounds. Students from diverse backgrounds may face discrimination and prejudice and may be subject to racist bullying behaviour.

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:
- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment
- Having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of racism
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
- providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
- providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents
- inviting speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds

Preventing sexist bullying behaviour
Schools should focus on gender equality as part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment.

Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex, organising awareness campaigns, workshops and presentations on gender equality and respect
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. Schools must 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:
- Promoting positive role models within the school community
- Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

Supervision & Monitoring

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):

Supervision

Staff supervision: all staff members are trained to recognise and respond to bullying behaviour. They are present and visible in common areas and playgrounds during break times.
Student supervision: class teachers supervise students during class time and break times. They are aware of what is happening in their classroom and on the playground.

Visitor supervision: visitors to the school are always supervised. They are not left alone with students. (unless carrying out assessments with consent of parents/guardians)

Monitoring

Incident reporting: the class teacher investigates all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour with a view to establishing the facts and records on an incident report form.

Incident investigation: all reports of bullying should be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The investigation should include interviews with the student who reported the incident, the student who was allegedly bullies and any witnesses.
Follow-up: the school should take appropriate action to address the bullying behaviour.

By implementing these policies, St. John Bosco Junior Boys' School can create a safer and more positive school environment for all students.

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

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

- All class teachers – in the first instance
- Deputy Principal
- 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
- Act in a timely manner
- Inform parents of those involved

Procedures

Procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour:

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach. Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including pupils, parent/guardian) understand this approach from the outset.

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

Reporting bullying behaviour
Any pupil or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school. Ideally incidents occurring in school should be reported immediately to the class teacher.
All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners, must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

If the answer to any of these questions is No, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider what, where, when and why?

- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first

- thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group

- at the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views

- each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting

- it may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s)**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.
A record should be kept of the engagement with all involved.
This record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bi Cineálta procedures), where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.

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

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

The 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

- 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 the school consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school

If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures
If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student

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School support for pupils affected by bullying

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)*

Children who have been victims of bullying behaviour:

- Are reassured that they are not to blame.

- Strategies for restoring self-esteem are explored between teacher and parents/guardians.

- A Staged approach is used – classroom support, school support.

- The parents of the pupils concerned will be advised to contact the Gardaí, if appropriate.

- If pupils require counselling or further support the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same.

Children who engage in bullying behaviour:

- If pupils require counselling or further support the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same.

- A Staged approach is used – classroom support, school support

- In certain cases, it may be necessary to invite assistance from other agencies such as the Gardaí.

The school will remind parents of the dangers of cyber-bullying and the misuse of social media sites.

Note: *The school cannot be responsible for disagreements between pupils that happen outside the school setting but will make reasonable efforts to work with parents in assisting them to resolve the issues.*

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

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.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management in August 2025

Signed   Bernard Farrell
                (Chairperson Board of Management)
Date   31/8/2025

Signed   Karen Mc Goldrick
                 (Principal)

Date   31/8/2025

Appendix 1

Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Always model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school and involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being well behaved, notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school, this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or Special Educational Needs.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when there is an absence of respectful behaviour and respectful language.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media. In Ireland, the Age of Digital Consent is sixteen. Most of the popular social media apps will require parental permission before a child can use them.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure
- in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying "hot spots" and "hot times" for bullying in the school. "Hot spots" tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision. "Hot times again tend to happen where there are less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.

Appendix 2 Template for recording bullying behaviour

Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name   Class   Date

Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

_____   _____   _____

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

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

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

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other	

Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

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

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

Details of actions taken

Description of Bullying Behaviour and the impact
Date of initial engagement withStudent(s)/guardian(s)
Views of student(s)/parent(s)/guardians(s) re actions taken to address bullying behaviour
Date of review with Student(s)/parents(s)/guardians to determine if bullying has ceased and the views of students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) in relation to this
Engagement with external services/supports (if any)

Signed: (Relevant Teacher) Date

_____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal

<u>Appendix 3</u>

Prompt questions for Staff review

The following Prompt Questions may be useful in considering this aspect of the policy:

- Are there agreed appropriate monitoring and supervision practices in the school?
- Have bullying danger spots been identified?
- Have parents and pupils been consulted in the identification of these danger spots?
- How will the student support/care structures support measures to counteract bullying behaviour?
- How will pupils, be involved as a resource to assist in counteracting bullying?
- Has a mentoring/buddy system been considered?
- How will the student body be involved?

In relation to Acceptable Use Policy in the school are the following issues addressed
- Are all Internet sessions supervised by a teacher?
- Does the school regularly monitor pupils' Internet usage?
- Have pupils been instructed to use only approved class accounts for email purposes and to use these only under teacher supervision?
- Have pupils been instructed to access only messaging or other electronic communication platforms which have been approved by the school?

Appendix 4

Resources, References, Related Policies

- Resources for Children
- Friends for Life Programme
- Zippy's Friends
- Stay Safe Programme – Friendship and Bullying

References

- Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary School (September 2013 Department of Education and Skills)
- Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools (NEWB 2008)
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Department of Education and Skills)
- Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (Teaching Council)
- Bullying: Information Booklet for Schools (Professional Development Service for Teachers)
- www.pdst.ie

Related School Policies

- Social Personal and Health Education Policy
- Code of Behaviour (Positive Behaviour Policy)
- Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Statement
- Acceptable Use Policy

Appendix 5

Teachers may choose a selection of the following strategies to encourage positive behaviour:

- Formal programmes of work are a vital element in raising the children's self-esteem and equipping children with the skills to cope with bullying behaviour e.g. Grow in Love, Web wise (cyberbullying), Stay Safe, Walk Tall.

- Positive reinforcement of good behaviour and language by teachers in the classroom. Modelling of respectful behaviour and language by teachers and staff.
- Promotion of extra-curricular activities which encourage cooperation among pupils.

- Rewarding incidents of good and improved behaviour and showing acts of kindness at class level and whole school.

- Encouraging pupils to look out for one another and to be responsible for their own behaviour.

- All teachers are required to be vigilant on yard duty – record all serious incidents, maintain lines of communication between teacher on yard and class teacher.

- Immediate affirmation of children who report incidents of bullying witnessed. Reassurance that they have done the right thing.

- Circle-time sessions, role-play and puppetry are methodologies which are used to discuss and explore issues of bullying.

- Class rules to complement school's Code of Behaviour.

- Buddy system,
- Supervise internet use.
- Internet Safety lessons

- Encourage children to keep telling if the behaviour continues.

Appendix 6

Investigating and dealing with incidents:

Style of approach

- Incidents of bullying are generally dealt with on a staged basis.

- Pupils are encouraged to report bullying behaviour as soon as possible.

- All reports of bullying behaviour must be dealt with initially by the class teacher..

- The aim for the class 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, it is important to gather all the facts from both sides (what, where, when, who, why). They will involve separate interviews with the alleged bully, victim and/or witness(es).

- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school policy). The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the pupils.

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.

- Where the Releavant Teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.

- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parent(s)/ guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school.

Informal – predetermination that bullying has occurred

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the relevant teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.

Stage 1

- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.

- Where possible, incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved. Teachers should seek assistance

regarding class supervision.

- All sides are listened to separately and notes are taken.

- The notes are brief, factual and should be void of emotional or judgemental language.

- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.

- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.

- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher; It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).

- It is explained to the alleged bully how hurtful their behaviour is and attempts are made to encourage them to empathise with the alleged victim.

- A verbal warning is given by the teacher, a verbal apology offered, and a verbal promise agreed.

Teachers must record all the above in the child's file.

Stage 2

- If the child breaks the verbal promise and re-offends, the Deputy Principal or teacher with responsibility for discipline in the school, along with the class teacher, will meet with the child/children again. It is explained to them that this is their second time offending and that they have not committed to their promise. Again, attempts will be made to resolve the situation. The child's parents will be informed, and the child will be asked to sign a 'Pupil Behaviour Promise' which also be signed by his parents.

- The child is advised that if he breaks this promise again, they will have a meeting with the principal and their parents. The behaviour will be monitored closely by the teacher and the Deputy Principal/Principal to ensure that the situation is resolved.

The teacher records all the above in the child's file. A copy of the Pupil Promise is kept on file

Stage 3
- If, after the above steps, the bullying behaviour reoccurs, a formal meeting with the child and his parents, the principal and another member of the Board of Management will be held. A formal suspension may occur.

Follow up

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, 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.
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Is Engagement with external services required
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Where a parent/guardian is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- If a parent(s)/guardian(s) has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parent(s)/ guardian(s) of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Recording

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

- All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant teacher. The teacher records his/her own notes in the class file.
- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- The relevant teacher must inform the principal of all incidents being investigated.
- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist

his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

- A copy of the Pupil Promise is kept in the class file. When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the relevant teacher in question and a copy maintained by the principal. (Records will be kept for 10 years following the end of the child's primary education.)

- The principal will provide a report to the BOM setting out the overall number of bullying cases reported by means of this template and confirmation that all cases are being dealt with in accordance with the agreed procedures.

Appendix 7

Age-appropriate written Pupil Promise (with parental involvement)

I know that my behaviour has been unacceptable on more than one occasion, and it must improve. I understand that my behaviour is/was considered to be bullying.

I promise to stop this behaviour immediately.

Signed: _____ (Pupil)

Parent/Guardian

My child's behaviour has been discussed with me. I am aware that the Pupil Promise is in accordance with the Anti Bullying Policy of St. John Bosco Junior Boys' School

Signed: _____(Parent/Guardian)