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Scoil Baile Fálbhach
Lusca

Baile Átha Cliath
Roll Number: 17472M

School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of **Hedgestown National School** has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

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

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

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

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

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

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

Section A: Development of our Bi Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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

Date consulted		Method of consultation
School Staff	15/01/2025	Survey / Meeting
Students	14/01/2025	Survey / Talking to classes
Parents	15/01/2025	Survey / PA meeting
Board of management	16/01/2025	BOM Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	15/01/2025	Caretaker / Secretary
Date policy was approved:	16/1/25	
Date policy was last reviewed:	13/12/2023	

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

1. **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;

Hedgestown National School is a Bí Cineálta school. We follow these anti-bullying procedures (2024) and we consider the following to be key elements of a positive school culture:

· We acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment

· We acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual and their worth as a human being

· We promote positive habits of self- respect, self -discipline and responsibility among all its members.

· We actively discourage vulgar, offensive, sectarian or other aggressive behaviour by any of its members

· We have a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning

· We have the capacity to change in response to our pupils' needs

· We identify aspects of its curriculum through which positive and sustainable influences can be exerted towards forming pupils' attitudes and values

We take particular care of 'at risk' pupils and use systems to identify needs and facilitate early intervention where necessary –thus responding to the needs, fears & anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

· Hedgestown National School recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships within the school community.

· We recognise the right of parents to share in the task of equipping pupils with a range of life skills.

· We recognise the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying

· We promote habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities

· We promote qualities of social responsibility, tolerance and understanding among its members both in school and outside of school

· Staff members share a collegiate responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying/aggressive behaviour by ANY MEMBER of the school community

(b) Effective leadership

· The BOM has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, sustainable and measured. The BOM must ensure that accountability is of the highest standard and frequently appraise the outcomes of the strategies and measures contained within the policy

· ISM Team - have a clear role to act in a leadership capacity within the school community, stimulating a whole school approach to preventing and tackling bullying – and modelling best practice. Reports of bullying are assessed by the relevant staff member and then referred to the school's KiVa team if appropriate.

· The Principal of Hedgestown National School as key leader strongly influences attitudes and sets standards in relation to dealing with bullying

· Teachers must act as good role models and not misuse authority, but be fair, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures.

(c) A school-wide approach

· A whole community approach to the problem of bullying is required and Hedgestown NS community comprises of management, teachers, non-teaching staff, pupils, parents/guardians

CULTURE OF TELLING

· Tell issue immediately to a member of staff in the classroom / yard. Staff member will investigate at an appropriate time

Beyond the school community, bullying behaviour may extend to outside of school. Where this negatively impacts on a school - parents and pupils have a responsibility to support the school in helping to address the issue. This applies particularly (but not exclusively) to cyber bullying.

· The assistance of Gardaí, Tusla and Community Workers may be required in some cases

· Collective vigilance is needed throughout the whole school/community sector to identify and deal with issues around bullying in a fair and equitable manner

(d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

· *Hedgestown National School* endeavours to put in place appropriate systems to ensure that ALL relevant members of the school community (parents, pupils, staff and the wider community) have a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour as defined in this policy *(Section 2 of Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024)*

(e) Implementation of education and prevention strategies see section 5 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures, (including awareness raising measures) that-

· build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and

· explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying;

· effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

5.5 Preventing cyberbullying behaviour (Bí Cineálta procedures)

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

In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. Therefore technically, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account.

5.6 Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour

All students including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender 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 >

encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities

> challenging genderstereotypes

> conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour

> encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour

5.7 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[23]

> ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds

5.8 Preventing sexist bullying behaviour

Schools should focus on gender equality as part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment. https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/education/2018/43.pdf
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

> ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex

> celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students

> organising awareness campaigns, workshops and presentations on gender equality and respect

> encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home

5.9 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 zerotolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

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

> using the updated SPHE specifications at primary level to teach students about healthy relationships and how to treat each other with respect and kindness

> promoting positive role models within the school community

> challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

(f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils

· Staff members have a distinct responsibility to ensure that supervision of pupils in class is effective and consistent

· **Supervision in playground areas are managed and conducted effectively, with particular attention given to 'hot spots' or 'hot times' e.g. arrival & dismissal**

· Office, Ancillary Staff, SNAs and Bus Drivers are well placed to inform if any behaviour which may constitute bullying is noticed

(g) Supports for staff

· Regular discussion and review of policy and procedures is essential to support staff on a continuous basis

· All staff have a uniform interpretation of what is expected in relation to bullying, how to identify possible bullying behaviours, how to manage disclosures and how to deal effectively with incidents of bullying within the classroom context

· Staff are aware that supporting one another is a key aspect of prevention and new/inexperienced members of staff must be given every opportunity to discuss concerns and model best practice

· CPD in relation to Anti Bullying Strategies regularly occurs in Hedgestown National School for all members of staff

(h) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); Bí Cineálta standardised documentation is used to record all allegations and investigations.

(i) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour **

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

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

6.1. Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher should consider the following: 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 also be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident.

Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

6.2 Where bullying behaviour has occurred

School staff should know what to do when bullying behaviour is reported to them or when they witness bullying behaviour. The school's Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour and the student friendly policy should clearly explain what actions will be taken when bullying behaviour is reported.

The following principles must be adhered to when addressing bullying behaviour:

> 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 those involved

> listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation

> take action in a timely manner

> inform parents of those involved

6.3 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. 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. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

6.4 Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased

The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.

Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school should consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.

6.5 Recording bullying behaviour

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded. The record should document the form (**Appendix F**) and type (See Section 2.7) of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students and their parents.

Where a Student Support File exists for a student, a copy of the record will be attached to the student's support file.

6.6 Complaint process

• Where a parent(s)/guardian(s) 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

Additional Information relating to schools' complaint procedures are available at the following link: https://www.gov.ie/en/policyinformation/parentalcomplaints/

In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and/or parent may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student.

The Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie.

***Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools (See Appendix A)*

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: _____ Date: 16/1/25

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: _____ Date: 16/01/2025

(Principal)

Appendix A
Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The whole school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour. Schools should work in partnership with their patron, board of management, staff, students and their parents to develop and implement their Bí Cineálta policy.

This appendix is intended as a guide to addressing bullying behaviour. It is based on the information contained in Chapter 6 of the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

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 teachers should:

> 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

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.

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: Oneoff 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 occured

> 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 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

Appendix B
Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for board of management meeting of DD/MM/YYYY

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

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

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

> the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc.

> the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour

> any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour

> if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student

> if a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour

> if any additional support is needed from the board of management

> if the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

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

Appendix C
Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

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

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? *Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school.*
16 / 01 /20 25

2. Where in the school is the studentfriendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?
School entrance (reception)

3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student friendly policy on the school website? 17 / 01 /20 25

4. How has the studentfriendly policy been communicated to students?
School Assembly and class teachers.

5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student friendly policy been communicated to parents
Email, survey and PA meeting.

6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? (Yes) No

7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour? (Yes) No

8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting ove rthe last calendar year? (Yes) No

9.Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour. (Yes) No

10.Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy?

New policy which will be followed going forward.

11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?

Yes, Stay Safe in all classes. Anti-bullying lessons, Friendship Week, Internet Safety Day, Garda Talks.

12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour?

Yes.

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

Surveys and emails.

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

Strategies for prevention will continue to be assessed by staff. Celebrations of different cultures and nationalities. Kindness awards. CPD for staff - half day closure.

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

Half day closure in May. Date TBC.

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

No.

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

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

19. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour? Yes (No)

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

(Chairperson of board of management) Date: 16/1/26 (Principal)

Date of next review: _____ Date:

Appendix D

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

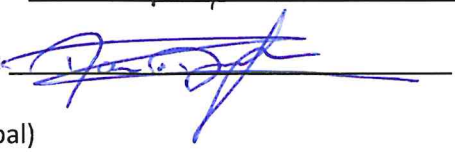
The Board of Management of HEDGESTOWN NS confirms that the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of 16/01/2025 [date].

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

Signed:

(Chairperson of Board of management)

Date: 16/01/2025

Signed: 

(Principal)

Appendix E
Recording of Bullying behaviour

1. **Names of Children Involved**

Student(s) Experiencing Bullying _____

Student(s) Engaging in Bullying Behaviour: _____

Other Witnesses (if any) _____

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2. Form of Bullying
(Refer to Section 2.5 – Tick all that apply)

- [ ] Physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing)
- [ ] Verbal (e.g., name-calling, teasing, insults)
- [ ] Psychological (e.g., intimidation, manipulation)
- [ ] Cyberbullying (e.g., harmful messages, social media misuse)
- [ ] Relational (e.g., exclusion, spreading rumors)
- [ ] Other: _____

3. **Type of Bullying**
(Refer to Section 2.7 – Tick all that apply)

- [ ] Peer-to-Peer
- [ ] Teacher-to-Student
- [ ] Student-to-Teacher
- [ ] Group Bullying
- [ ] Prejudicial Bullying (e.g., based on race, religion, gender)
- [ ] Sexual Bullying (e.g., inappropriate comments, harassment)
- [ ] Other: _____

4. Where and When
(If known)
-Location:_____

-Date/Time:_____

5. Date of Initial Engagement

- With Student(s): _____
- With Parent(s): _____

6. Views of Student(s)/Parent(s)

(Regarding the actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour)

_____
_____
_____

7. Date of Review
(To determine if bullying behaviour has ceased)

- Review Date: _____

-Outcome: _____

- Views of Student(s): _____

- Views of Parent(s): _____

8. Engagement with External Services/Supports
(If any)

- Services Contacted: _____

- Details of Engagement:
_____

9. Recording Teacher

- Name: _____

- Date Recorded: _____

Appendix G
Overview of the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Preventing and Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The following is a guide to the main changes between the requirements of the *2013 Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* and the requirements of the 2024 *Bí Cineálta procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, which replace the 2013 procedures. This is not an exhaustive list.

Chapter 1	Responsibilities of the school community	All members of the school community must work together in partnership to prevent and address bullying behaviour at school.
	Legal basis	Legislation underpinning Bí Cineálta: Children First Act 2015. Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 also known as Coco's Law.
Chapter 2	What is bullying behaviour?	Updated definition of bullying behaviour based on Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2022).
	Criminal behaviour	Updated information on when bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour.
	Child protection concerns	Updated information relating to when bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern.
Chapter 3	Impact of bullying behaviour	Updated information on how bullying behaviour can impact students who experience bullying behaviour, students who witness the behaviour and students who engage in bullying behaviour.
Chapter 4	Bí Cineálta Policy	Schools must engage with the whole school community to develop their Bí Cineálta policy, using the template in Appendix A. The policy must list preventative strategies that are used including those to specifically prevent cyberbullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate. Schools must list specific support strategies for individuals experiencing bullying behaviour, those who witness bullying behaviour and those displaying bullying behaviour. All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded. The school principal is required to provide a bullying behaviour update at each ordinary board of management meeting. The school's Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed in collaboration with the whole school community once each calendar year and sooner if a serious incident occurs and the board of management determines an urgent review is required.

Chapter 4	Appendix A Bí Cineálta Policy	This template document must be used as a basis for each school's Bí Cineálta Policy.
	Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	Every school must develop a student-friendly version of its Bí Cineálta policy and display it where students and the school community can see it.
	Appendix B Student- Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	This template document can be used by schools as a basis for their student-friendly policy.
Chapter 5	Preventing Bullying Behaviour	Prevention measures are linked to the four areas of Wellbeing Promotion. Importance of fostering a "telling environment" in schools and the role of the trusted adult. Prevention strategies must be provided relating to specific types of bullying behaviour including cyberbullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment, as appropriate.
Chapter 6	Appendix C Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour	Guide can be used to address bullying behaviour.
	Remit of the school in addressing bullying behaviour	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.
	Requests to take no action	Guidance for schools on how requests by students and parents to "take no action" should be addressed.
	Engagement with students involved in bullying behaviour and their parents	Schools must engage with students who have experienced bullying behaviour to decide the actions to be taken to address the incident of bullying behaviour. Schools must also engage with their parents. Schools must engage with students who have displayed bullying behaviour as well as their parents when deciding actions to be taken. Schools must engage with all involved when reviewing progress and determining whether bullying behaviour has ceased.
	Recording Incidents of Bullying Behaviour	All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded by the teacher addressing the behaviour.

Chapter 7	Update to the board of management	Principal must provide an update to the board of management at each ordinary board meeting. This report includes the number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board meeting, the number of incidents ongoing and the total number reported since the beginning of the school year. The principal must provide a verbal update which will include, where relevant, trends and patterns, the strategies used to address the incidents and whether an urgent review of the policy is needed. The update is to inform discussion at each ordinary board of management meeting regarding the effectiveness of the preventative strategies used by the school and the overall effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta Policy.
	Appendix D Guide to providing bullying behaviour update to the board of management	Guide can be used to assist principals in providing bullying behaviour update to board of management.
	Review of Bí Cineálta Policy	The Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed once each calendar year, in collaboration with the whole school community, and earlier if the Board determines an urgent review is warranted.
	Appendix E Review of the Bí Cineálta policy.	The Review template must be completed when the Bí Cineálta policy is reviewed.
	Appendix F Notification of Annual Review	The template can be used to notify the school community that the annual review has been completed.