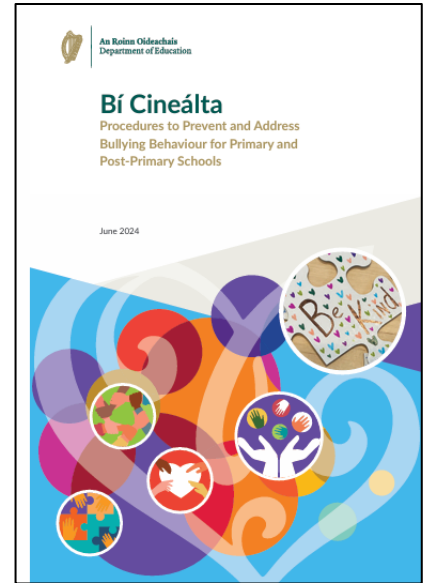




## Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of **Marymount N.S.** 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.



Ireland ratified the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 1992. In doing this we committed to promote, protect and fulfil the rights of children. Bullying is a children's rights issue. Bullying interferes with the following rights of the child:

- The right to freedom of expression (Article 13)
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)
- The right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 15)
- The right to privacy (Article 16)
- The right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect (Article 19)
- The right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health (Article 24)
- The right to education (Article 28)
- The right to enjoy their own culture, religion or language (Article 30)

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.



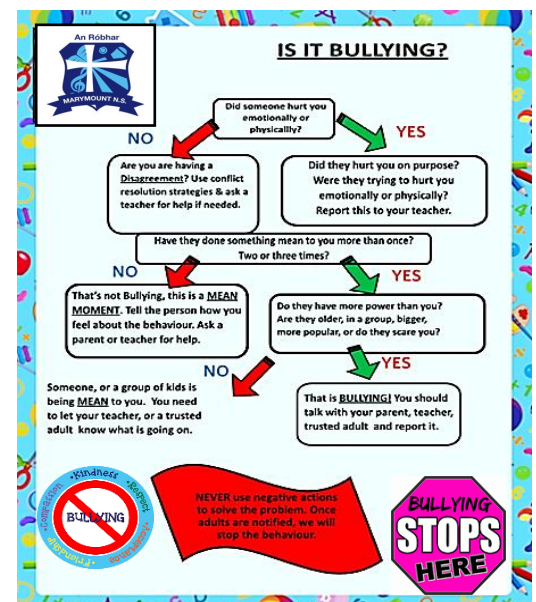
### Definition of Bullying :

- Bullying is **targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm.**
- The harm caused can be:
  - Physical ( eg: personal injury, damage to or loss of property)
  - Social: ( eg: withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion)
  - Emotional: (eg: low self-esteem, depression, anxiety)
- Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.
- It is behaviour which is deliberate in nature and is unwanted. It is not accidental or reckless behaviour.

\* A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a 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.

### Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:

- If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour, but **unintended** by the other student, this is not bullying, but, importantly, must be addressed under the school's Code of Behaviour.
- 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 cannot control.
- Disagreement between students is not considered bullying **unless** it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.



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



### Types of Bullying:

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

Bullying can be : Direct:

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

Bullying can be: Indirect

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

### Online bullying behaviour:

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

This can include:

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

### 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 also criminalises threatening to share these images.**



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 1989/11, 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.**

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

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

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	10/09/2024	Staff introduced to the new procedures at the first staff meeting of the school year. As a staff we focused on our current Anti-Bullying practices / procedures and what is working well.
	09/12/2024	Full day training by Oide for principal and one of management team.
	20/01/2025	Engaged with advice following Oide training and reviewed current preventative strategies in place for addressing bullying.
	21/03/2025	Bí Cineálta – staff training with half-day school closure following the guidance of the Department of Education and Oide.
	01/04/2025	Croke Park – examined and reviewed Appendix C of the new Bí Cineálta procedures.
	20/05/2025	All staff surveyed following the Department of Education recommended template.
	27/05/2025	Croke Park – draft policy reviewed by staff.



**MARYMOUNT N.S. THE ROWER.**

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Students	May 2025	Students were consulted using the questionnaire as suggested by the Dept of Education, to gather their input in developing an Anti-Bullying policy in Child Friendly Format – their wording, examples and suggestions were all taken into account when drafting this Policy. This policy was distributed to all households and children were given the homework of reading through their policy with parents.
	May 2025	Survey of all pupils – students given an Anti-Bullying survey a minimum of once a year or more if required.
	May 2025	Student focus group from the Students’ Council.
Parents	May 2025	Parents were consulted via an online survey using the questions as suggested by the Dept. of Education Feedback sought from parents in the formation of a child-friendly Anti-Bullying policy. Policy drafted with this information and sent out to parents/children to review together with information on same in terms of how to contact the school if needed. Attention drawn to our policy and child-friendly policy, resources and initiatives in sent out via Aladdin.
Board of Management		Board presented with circular and procedures in and Board viewed CPSMA guidance video and Reviewed new policy draft – leading to consultation and final ratification after amendments made where necessary.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		Draft policy shared with bus escorts/drivers, cleaning staff, caretaker and secretary.
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		



## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

### 1. Culture and Environment: School Wide Approach

#### We strive to:

- Create a **school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable** and ensure a **consistent approach** to addressing it.
- Our **whole-school wellbeing framework** helps create a warm, caring environment where every child feels safe, valued, and included. By teaching kindness, empathy, and respect as everyday values, we build a positive school culture that helps prevent bullying behaviours from happening.
- Involve **parents as active partners** in fostering a positive school environment where bullying is not tolerated.
- Encourage a **telling & listening culture**, where bystanders understand the importance of speaking up.
- Promote the concept of a **trusted adult** (linked to the Stay Safe programme) so pupils know who to turn to.
- Ensure **safe spaces** throughout our school, both in classrooms and the yard, by increasing **visibility and supervision**.
- Foster a **sense of belonging** by encouraging pupils to take ownership of their learning environment through **art and creativity**.
- Create a **positive school culture and climate** that:
  - **Welcomes difference and diversity** and promotes inclusivity.
  - **Encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents** in a **non-threatening** environment.
  - **Promotes respectful relationships** across the school community.
- Implement **education and prevention strategies**, including:
  - Building **empathy, respect, and resilience** in pupils.
  - Explicitly addressing **cyber-bullying** and **identity-based bullying**.
  - Staff CPD – specific focus on the training of the relevant teachers.

#### Ways in which we work to achieve these goals are as follows:

- **Consistent Staff Approach:** All staff are briefed on the **uniform approach** to handling bullying allegations/reports.
- **Bí Cínéalta (Anti-Bullying) Week:** Activities include **Random Acts of Kindness homework, poster-making & slogan creation**.

- **Friendship Week (Nov. / Jan.):** Focuses on well-being, inclusion, and positive social interactions.
- **Wellbeing Framework**
- **Pupil Involvement in a Safe School Environment:**
  - **Buddy System & Playground Leaders:** Older pupils support younger pupils in games and positive interactions.
  - **Student Council:** Supports activities that promote respect and inclusion.
- **Child-Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy:** Distributed to parents, children, and staff and displayed in classrooms and common areas.
- **Relate** – a regulation first approach to reframing behaviour.
- **Parental Involvement:** Parents receive relevant anti-bullying information & resources throughout the year. Parents are an integral and valued part of the school community.
- **Active Supervision:**
  - Effective monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours, and extra-curricular activities.
  - Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report concerns.
  - Supervision also extends to student use of communication technology in school.
- **School & Class Charters ('Golden Rules')** to promote kindness, responsibility, and respect.
- **Visual Reinforcement:** Artwork and signage promote school values, inclusion, and equality.
- **Encouraging Pupils to Speak Up:** Pupils are encouraged to report bullying through multiple channels:
  - Speaking directly to a teacher at an appropriate time (e.g., after class).
  - What would I like Teacher to Know Box for anonymous reporting.
  - Asking a parent, guardian, or friend to report on their behalf.
  - Termly Pupil Questionnaires (from 3rd class upwards) to check their experiences.
  - Bystander awareness: Pupils are taught that witnessing bullying and not reporting it allows it to continue.
- **Celebrating Diversity:** We acknowledge and celebrate our diverse school population through:
  - Art, displays, photographs, and international events.
  - Inclusive activities and discussions that foster respect for different cultures and backgrounds.



- **Class and School Charter & Wellbeing noticeboard** to promote awareness and keep message visible.
  - **Junior Classes – ‘Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Actions’**
  - **Senior Classes – ‘I will treat others as I would like them to treat me’**
- **Weekly Assembly** – Regular and consistent promotion of our Bí Cineálta procedures and the ethos of the school.

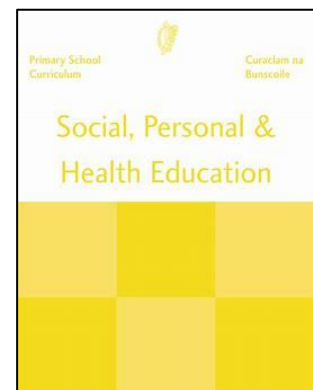
## 2. Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

We strive to:

- Provide **high-quality teaching and learning** that is **collaborative, respectful, and inclusive**, fostering a culture of **belonging and diversity**.
- Ensure a **shared understanding** among staff, pupils, and parents about **what bullying is and its impact**.

### Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- **Implementation of the SPHE Curriculum & Stay Safe/RSE/ Wellbeing Programmes:**
  - These programmes support **pupil well-being, self-confidence, and personal responsibility** for behaviour.
  - Lessons promote **empathy, conflict resolution, and respectful interactions**.
- **Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Staff:**
  - Ongoing training ensures effective delivery of **SPHE, RSE, and anti-bullying strategies / Relate / Behaviours of Concern**.
- **Modelling Respectful Behaviour:**
  - Staff **model positive interactions** with colleagues, pupils, and visitors, setting a standard for respect within the school.
- **Curricular & Extra-Curricular Activities:**
  - Activities promote **teamwork, self-worth, inclusion, and respect**.
  - Group work opportunities help pupils **develop connections, empathy, and cooperation skills**.
- **Cyber-Bullying Awareness & Prevention:**
  - School-wide delivery of **age-appropriate cyber-bullying programmes**.
  - **Programmes at primary level**, delivered by **Community Gardaí or other outside agencies** if possible, covering **personal safety and cyber-bullying**.
- **Supporting Pupils with Additional Educational Needs:**
  - Programmes are adapted to **support the individual needs** of pupils with **additional learning needs**.
  - Strategies are developed to **help all pupils** respond appropriately to challenging social situations.



### 3. Policy and Planning

We strive to:

- Raise awareness that **bullying is unacceptable** among school management, teachers, pupils, and parents/guardians.
- Foster a **school ethos that encourages open discussion** and empowers pupils to **disclose and address bullying behaviour**.
- Provide **support for both those affected by bullying** and those involved in bullying behaviour, helping all pupils develop positive social interactions.

#### Key Policies Supporting the Bí Cinealta Policy:

Our **Bí Cinealta Policy** is reinforced by the:

- **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)** – Ensuring responsible and safe use of technology.
- **Health & Safety / Supervision Policy** – Outlining procedures for **active supervision** in all school areas.
- **Special Education Policy** – Supporting **inclusive strategies** for pupils with additional needs.
- **Code of Behaviour** – Promoting **respectful interactions and positive behaviour management**.
- **Child Protection Policy**
- **Wellbeing Policy / Framework**



**Strong leadership** plays a key role in policy implementation, with the **Principal, Deputy Principal, DLP, DDLP, and middle management** overseeing and supporting anti-bullying initiatives.

#### Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- **Implementation of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP):**
  - Ensuring that **technology use is strictly monitored** to prevent cyberbullying and inappropriate online behaviour.
- **Effective Supervision & Monitoring:**
  - Maintaining clear **observation of all school activities**, ensuring a safe and supportive environment.
- **Collaboration with External Agencies:**
  - Engaging with **relevant professionals and organisations (NEPS/NCSE)** to strengthen anti-bullying efforts.
- **Consistent Procedures for Reporting & Investigation:**
  - A **clear, structured approach** to recording, investigating, and addressing incidents of bullying.
  - **Ongoing Policy Review & Evaluation:**
    - Regularly assessing the **effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies** to ensure continued improvement.



#### 4. Relationships and Partnerships

We strive to:

- Foster **strong relationships** between students, staff, and parents to create a **supportive, inclusive school community**.
- Encourage **open communication** and **active participation** from students and parents in promoting **kindness, respect, and anti-bullying initiatives**.
- Provide **opportunities for students to reflect** on their own behaviours and the impact of bullying.
- Ensure that all students feel **valued, included, and represented** in school life.

#### Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- **Building connections within the school community:**

Supporting **formal and informal structures**, such as the **Parents' Association** and **Student Council**, to encourage engagement and collaboration.

Providing **opportunities for students and parents** to actively contribute to school life.

- **Raising awareness and promoting positive behaviours:**

Implementing **age-appropriate initiatives** that promote **kindness, empathy, and inclusion** during **SPHE lessons**.

Conducting **sessions** for students, staff, and parents to **raise awareness of bullying and its effects**.

- **Encouraging peer support:**

Giving students opportunities to **work collaboratively**, fostering a **sense of belonging**.

- **Creating an inclusive and respectful school environment:**

Ensuring that **all students "see themselves"** reflected in the **school environment**.

Ensuring the **school library collection** includes **diverse books** that represent different **nationalities, ethnicities, and cultures**.

Modelling **respectful behaviour** towards all students **regardless of gender**.

Ensuring all students have **equal opportunities** to engage in **school activities, leadership roles, and extracurricular programmes**.

- **Monitoring and addressing bullying behaviour:**

Staff are **vigilant in observing students** who may be at risk of bullying or being bullied.

School-wide **supervision and monitoring** of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours, and extracurricular activities.

Making clear that the school has a **zero-tolerance approach** to **sexual harassment**, with **clear policies and enforceable consequences**.



## Supervision and Monitoring

### We strive to:

- Ensure a safe and structured environment where bullying behaviour is actively monitored and addressed.
- Maintain effective supervision across all areas of school life, including classrooms, corridors, school grounds, and extracurricular activities.
- Encourage all staff to be vigilant and proactive in identifying and addressing instances of bullying.

### Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- **Supervised Breaks:** A rota ensures that the yard, corridors, and all school areas are monitored during morning arrival, break and lunchtime. The Board of Management does not accept responsibility for pupils dropped off earlier than 9.00am. School premises end at the gate. The school is not responsible for the children once they have left the school premises.
- If a parent/teacher indicates a worry about a particular child on the yard, all staff rostered for yard duty are informed of the concern so that the particular concerns can be monitored and/or addressed satisfactorily.
- **Staff Vigilance:** Teachers and SNAs observe pupil interactions, with particular attention to vulnerable pupils.
- **Incident Recording:** Any instances of bullying behaviour are recorded and followed up appropriately through Aladdin and the school's reporting procedures.
- **Communication with Parents:** Where concerns arise, staff inform relevant colleagues and parents, ensuring timely intervention.
- **Use of Technology:** Student use of digital communication tools within the school is monitored under the Acceptable Use Policy to prevent cyberbullying.
- **Active Presence:** Staff engage in continuous movement and observation during supervision, intervening in inappropriate behaviour as necessary.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

### The Staff responsible for Addressing Bullying are as follows:

**Class Teacher, Special Education Teachers, Principal, Deputy Principal, In-School Management Team.**

- The **class teacher** is the primary staff member responsible for addressing bullying behaviour, following the **Bí Cinealta policy** to investigate and record reports of bullying.
- If a parent or child approaches a teacher other than the class teacher, they will be directed to the class teacher in the first instance.
- **All staff** will remain vigilant to signs of bullying behaviour.
- The **Principal** will inform the **Board of Management** of incidents of bullying as required.
- **Deputy Principal.**
- **In-School Management** are available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist class teacher in addressing concern.

## School Response to Bullying Behaviour

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

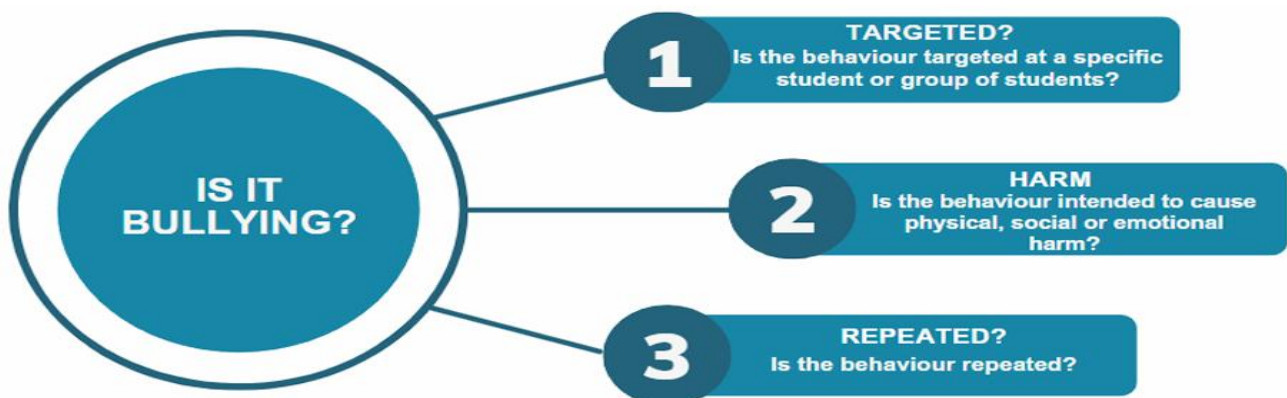
- Ensure the **student experiencing bullying** is heard and reassured.
- Seek to **maintain privacy** for all involved.
- Conduct all discussions with **sensitivity and discretion**.
- Take into account the **age and ability** of those involved.
- Listen to the views of the student experiencing bullying regarding the best way to address the situation.
- Take **timely action** to resolve the issue.
- **Inform parents** of those involved as appropriate.

### Procedures for Investigating, Following Up, and Recording Bullying Behaviour

The school's procedures for investigating and responding to bullying incidents, as well as the established intervention strategies, are as follows:

#### Investigation and Recording of Bullying Behaviour

- All reports of bullying, including anonymous ones, must be investigated and addressed by the **Relevant Teacher(s)**.
- The **Relevant Teacher(s)** will use their professional judgment in determining the records to be kept, the actions taken, and any discussions with those involved.



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

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



To determine whether bullying has occurred, the following **three key questions** should be considered:

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 **all three questions** above is **Yes**, the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the **Bí Cineálta** procedures.*

*If the answer to **any** of these questions is **No**, then the behaviour is not classified as bullying. Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's **Code of Behaviour**.*

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.

### Procedures for Investigating, Following Up, and Recording Bullying Behaviour

If it is determined that bullying has occurred:

- The **bullying incident** must be **recorded** on **Aladdin Bí Cineálta Tab** by adding a **Bullying Behaviour Report** to the relevant pupil's file.
- The **Relevant Teacher** must **inform the Principal**.

### Investigation Procedures

The **primary aim** of investigating and addressing bullying is to resolve the issue and restore relationships (in so far as in practicable) rather than to apportion blame. The school follows these procedures:

- The **Relevant Teacher(s)** will use professional judgment to determine:
  - Whether bullying has occurred.
  - The type of bullying involved.
  - The most appropriate course of action.
- **All reports** (including anonymous ones) must be investigated so that pupils feel confident in reporting incidents. Pupils should understand that reporting bullying is a **responsible** action, not "telling tales."
- Emphasis is placed on bystanders being upstanders.
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, caretakers and cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to the class teacher.
- Teachers will approach reports of bullying in a **calm, unemotional, and problem-solving** manner.
- Upon receiving an **alleged bullying report**, the **Relevant Teacher** will:
  - Interview the victim(s) to understand their experience and feelings.
  - Conduct initial investigations in class where appropriate, but some incidents may be investigated outside the classroom for privacy.
  - Use a **calm approach** to gather details (who, what, where, when, why) and ensure that all involved understand the situation.



If a **group** is involved:

- Each student will first be **interviewed individually**.
- A **group meeting** may follow, where each member provides their account.
- Support will be given to **group members** to mitigate peer pressure after interviews.
- A written account by members of the group may be appropriate.

If bullying behaviour is confirmed:

- The **Relevant Teacher** will explain to the student(s) involved that their behaviour is a **breach of the school's anti-bullying policy**.
- The teacher will encourage them to **understand the impact of their actions** from the victim's perspective.
- The **teacher does not assign blame** but rather seeks to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is.
- The teacher's aim is not to punish but to secure a **commitment to stopping the behaviour**.
- If the student(s) involved agree to stop and **honour this commitment**, no penalty will be imposed, that is the end of the matter.

#### 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 will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour.
- 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 will be kept of the engagement with all involved.
- This record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.
- The record will 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 will engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement
- important factors will be considered 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 will 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 will 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 will review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased
- if it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then consideration will 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
- Disciplinary actions remain a **private matter** between the pupil, their parents/guardians, and the school.

### Parental Involvement & Appeals

- If a **parent is not satisfied** with how the school has handled a bullying case, they will be referred to the **school's complaints procedure**.
- If, after exhausting the **complaints procedure**, a parent remains dissatisfied, they may escalate the matter to the **Ombudsman for Children**.

### Continued Care for the Victim

- The school will maintain **ongoing support** for the student who experienced bullying.
- The **Relevant Teacher** will check in with the student **several weeks after** the incident to ensure their continued well-being.
- Parents will also be consulted to monitor their child's well-being.

### Handling Requests for No Further Action

- If a student or parent reports bullying but requests that **no action** be taken:
  - The **Relevant Teacher** will offer support and explore **sensitive ways** to handle the situation.
  - If a **parent** requests no further action, they must submit this request **in writing**.
  - However, the school **retains the right to investigate** if it deems it necessary for the student's safety and well-being.

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



### **Where bullying behaviour has occurred outside of 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, the school is required to **support** the students involved. If the bullying behaviour **continues** within the school environment, it will be addressed in accordance with the Bí Cineálta policy.

It is essential for staff to be fair and consistent in their approach when addressing bullying behaviour. Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour require support. School staff should engage promptly with the student who is experiencing bullying and identify the necessary supports for the student displaying bullying behaviour to help them manage relational difficulties more effectively.

### **Supporting Pupils Who Have Been Bullied:**

- Ending the bullying behaviour.
- Fostering respect for all pupils, including those who have been bullied.
- Encouraging greater empathy and support for bullied pupils.
- Clearly indicating that bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes.
- Speedily identifying those responsible and resolving bullying situations promptly.
- Assisting bullied pupils in raising their self-esteem by encouraging involvement in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

### **Supporting Pupils Who Engage in Bullying Behaviour:**

- Making it clear that pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and will receive a 'clean sheet.'
- Emphasising that pupils who choose to reform are making the right and honourable decision and offering praise for this positive change.
- Encouraging pupils who need to raise their self-esteem to participate in activities that promote friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth.
- Encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge, and correct negative behaviour while still supporting the child.
- Seeking resolution in instances of bullying behaviour and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' in exchange for a commitment to positive change.

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*.



## 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 bullying incidents reported since the last meeting.
- The number of ongoing incidents.
- The total number of incidents recorded since the beginning of the school year.

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update, where relevant, on:

- Trends or patterns identified.
- Strategies used to address the bullying behaviour.
- Any wider school-wide initiatives to prevent and address bullying.

This update will not contain any personal or identifying information.

### Communication and Implementation

This policy is available to our school community on the school website and in hard copy upon request. A student-friendly version is displayed in the school and can also be accessed on our website or upon request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually, following input from the school community, or sooner if there is a significant change in relevant guidelines or school circumstances.

### Review and Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Marymount N.S. The Rower on date below.

It will be reviewed in 2028/2029, or earlier if necessary, following the publication of new guidelines.

Signed:  Date: 10/06/2025

Liam Mulholland - (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:  Date: 10/06/2025

Mary Mc Cormack - (Principal)