# Drumfad National School

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# Appendix A -

# School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

## Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Drumfad NS has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

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

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

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

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

## 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/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 | 21st January<br>19th February 2025 | Staff Training - school leaders<br>Staff Survey<br>Staff Focus group |
| Students | 30th January 2025<br>4th February 2025<br>6th February 2025 | - Online Survey (Senior room)<br>- Whole school action group<br>- Student council |
| Parents | January 2025 | - Online Survey |
| Board of Management | March 2025 | - At Meeting consultation and discussion |
| Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers | | |
| Date policy was approved: | | |
| Date policy was last reviewed: | | |

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

School-wide approach

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of 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.
- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- Supervision and monitoring of 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.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/ guardian(s) are informed about all school policies and their availability upon enrolment. It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to familiarise themselves with all policies.
- The implementation of an annual whole-school anti-bullying awareness campaign will be organised by the relevant teacher. This will include the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention.
- 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.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.: direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class, hand note up with homework, make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school, get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf, tell if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Identify clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied - see protocol below.
- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

**Implementation of curricula**

The full implementation of the Wellbeing curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.

Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes, if available.

School wide delivery of lessons on anti-bullying and from evidence based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet.

School wide delivery of lessons on Relational aggression (Cool School Programme: A Friend in Deed), Cyber Bullying (#UP2US, Be Safe-Be Web wise, Think Before you Click, Let's Fight it Together, Web wise Primary teachers' resources, Diversity and Interculturalism.

The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

**Culture and Environment**
**Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils**

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.

**Relationships and Partnerships**

**Preventing online bullying behaviour**

- R.S.E. Programme
- Stay Safe Programme – updated to include cyber-bullying
- Anti Bullying Week, including a cyber bullying activity
- Information seminars & literature for parents, pupils and staff
- General activities to develop empathy, respect and resilience through giving children opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.

**Homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour**

- R.S.E. Programme
- Stay Safe Programme – updated to include cyber-bullying
- Anti Bullying Week, including a cyber bullying activity
- Information seminars & literature for parents, pupils and staff
- General activities to develop empathy, respect and resilience through giving children opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth.

**Racist bullying behaviour**

**Sexist bullying behaviour**

**Sexual harassment**

**Sexist bullying behaviour**

Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management of Drumfad NS confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under 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.

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):

Acceptable use Policy
Special Education teaching Policy
Code of behaviour
DEIS Action Plan
Literacy plan - communication
Risk Assessment
ICT Policy

Planning -
Cuintas miosúil - recording of lessons undertaken
Staff training - Bí Cinealta 1/2 day in school training / School leaders training.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

**Principal and all teachers**
**Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.**

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
- take action in a timely manner
- inform parents of those involved

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

### *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(s).

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?

Visual included in Appendix 1 - Is it bullying Poster can further assist teachers in determining whether behaviour reported is bulling behaviour.

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 our school's Code of Behaviour.

### *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

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

> All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded, documenting form, type of bullying behaviour, where and when it took place and the date of initial engagement with students and their parents.

> Please see recording template Appendix 3.

> Drumfad NS is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. Where bullying behaviour has an impact in school, Drumfad NS will support the students involved but not investigate.

> Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in the school, but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school should support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken.

> 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*

***Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased:***

> 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.

***Complaint process:***

> If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.

> 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.

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):

**Supports:**

Supports are available to help prevent and address bullying behaviour:

- To participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships
- If pupils require counselling or further supports, the school will endeavour to liaise
- Pupils should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents

The following outside agencies may be consulted to offer or guide support for students an

- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS )
- Oide
- Webwise (Online safety initiative through Department of Education)
- National Parents Council (NQC)
- Dublin City University (DCU)- Anti Bullying Centre
- Tusla

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 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.

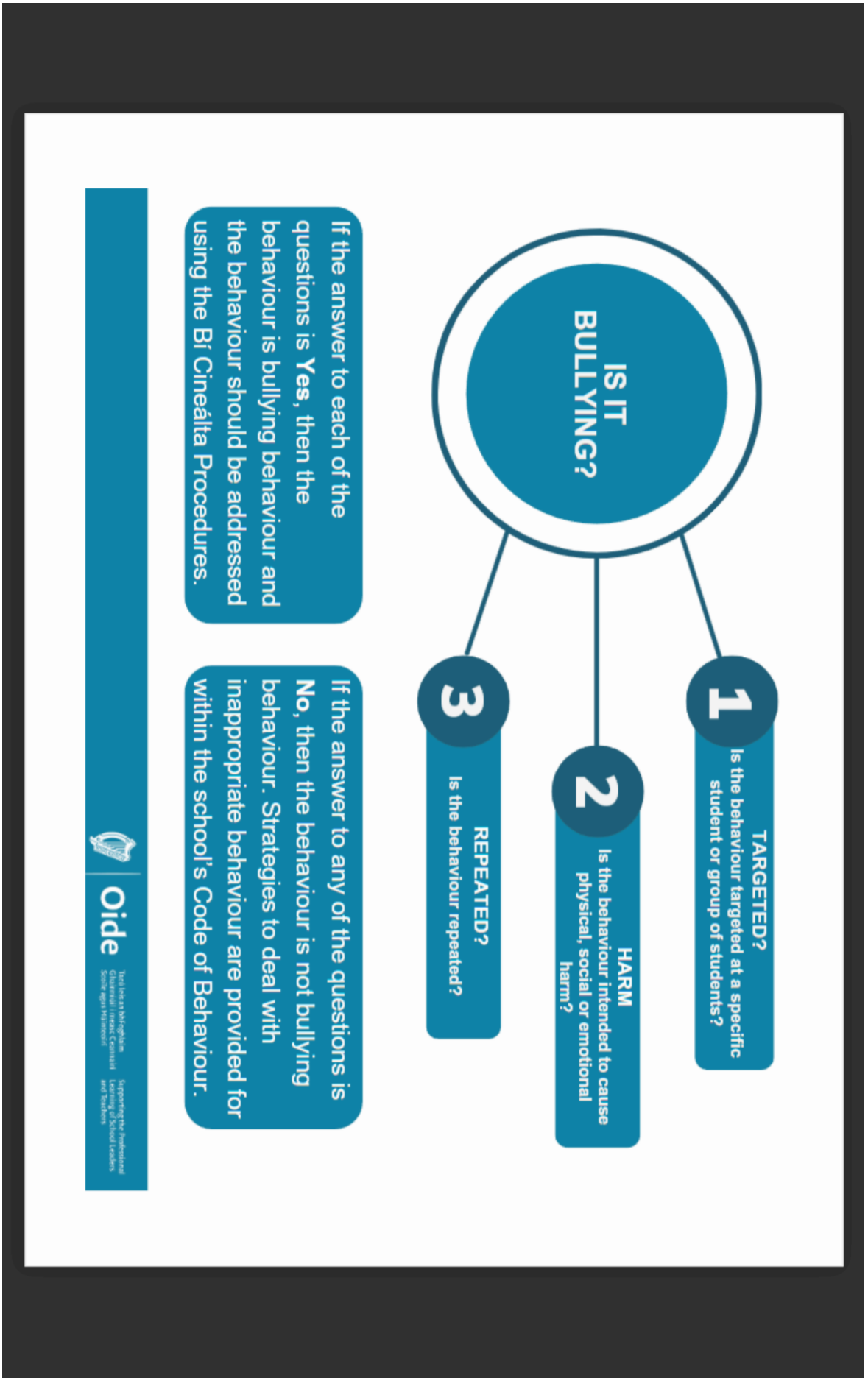
Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

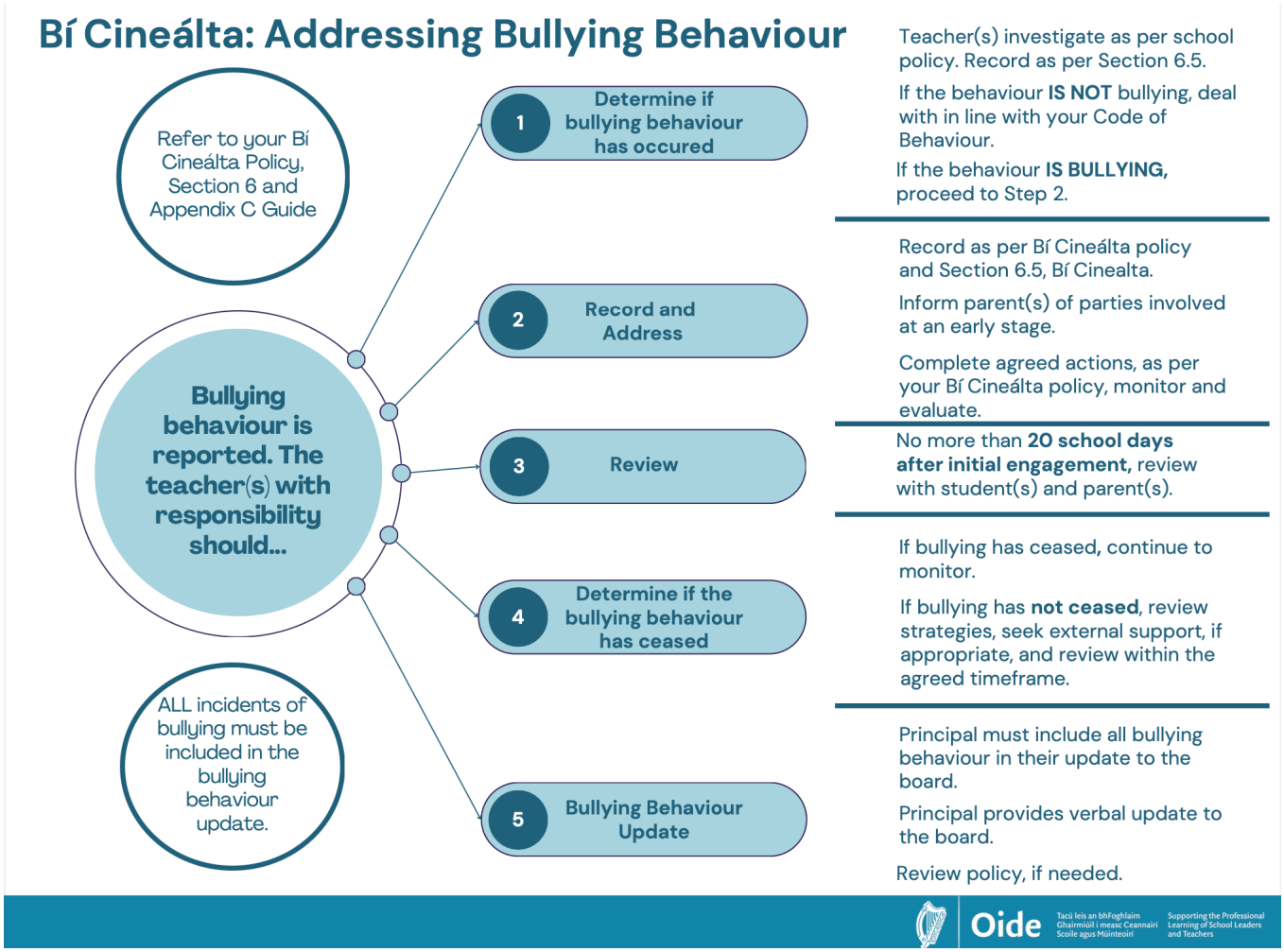
Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Principal)

## Appendix 1- Is it Bullying?



## Appendix 2- Actions Flow chart




## Appendix 3 - Recording of Incident(s) of Bullying Behaviour Template

| | |
|---|---|
| Name: Class teacher / Principal Investigating | |
| Date of incident: | |
| Students Involved: | |
| Form of Bullying | |
| Type of Bullying | |
| When incident took place: | |
| Where incident took place: | |
| Date of initial engagement with parents: | |
| Views of students: | |
| View of parent on actions to be taken: | |
| Review date: | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Review of Incident: | |
| Has Bullying behaviour ceased: | |
| View of student: | |
| View of Parent: | |
| Decision following review: | |

## Appendix 4 Student Friendly Bi Cinealta Policy

# Bí Cineálta Drumfad NS

We want everyone at our school to feel safe and happy.

Our school has a Bí Cineálta policy to try to stop bullying behaviour. We look at this policy every year to see what is working well or what we could work better.

We will ask you what you think.

If a student tells a staff member that they think they are being bullied, we will:
talk with the student
Ask the student what they want to happen

If you think that you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied, you need to tell a teacher or another adult that you trust. They will know what to do to help.

Bullying behaviour is when someone keeps being mean or hurtful to others on purpose over and over again.
When it happens a lot.
Not just once!