ROSARY COLLEGE

BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

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The Board of Management of Rosary College 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 in the development/review of this policy

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	26/03/25	Staff Meeting
Students	30/04/25	In Class
Parents	28/04/25	Email
Board of Management	30/05/25	Meeting
Wider school community – taxi man	27/05/25	Telephone
Date policy was approved: 30th May 2025		
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:

- o Creating an environment where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported
- o Supporting a 'telling' environment where students feel comfortable talking about concerns regarding bullying behaviour
- o Promoting the concept of a 'trusted adult' where staff support the strategy of letting students know that they can talk to them
- o Having appropriate supervision in place to help prevent and address bullying behaviour
- o Providing regular opportunities for students to work in small groups which builds connection, belonging and empathy among students
- o Implementing classroom seating plans
- o Employing strategies such as 'Check & Connect' and Restorative Practice
- o Ensuring that SPHE and RSE is taught to help students create and maintain respectful relationships with themselves and others
- o Posting anti-bullying visuals in prominent positions throughout the school

- o Including 'scan code' on student friendly anti-bullying posters which link to HSE/Webwise anti-bullying websites
- o Encouraging the development of the student voice so that students feel empowered to report bullying behaviour
- o Putting the wellbeing of the school community at the heart of all school policies and plans
- o Recognising the importance of positive relationships across the whole education community to promote empathy, understanding and respect
- o Fostering safe online environments through the promotion of digital literacy, digital citizenship and the involvement of parents through online safety events
- o Developing an inclusive environment by challenging homophobic behaviour and gender-stereotypes and conducting workshops for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic behaviour
- o Implementing a student 'buddy system'
- o Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students 'see themselves' in their school environment
- o Focusing on gender equality to create a supportive and respectful environment
- o Implementing a 'zero-tolerance' approach to sexual harassment
- o Conducting awareness-raising strategies through regular events such as 'Friendship Week'
- o Developing an understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity through annual 'World Culture Day'
- o Ensuring that staff are trained to monitor, report and prevent bullying behaviour

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The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

- o CCTV cameras in place in foyer, student lunch room and on all corridors
- o Creating safe physical spaces with a clear line of sight which enables staff to supervise students thus ensuring their psychological safety
- o Lunch time supervision
- o Frequent patrols of corridors
- o Limiting number of students allowed into toilets
- o SNAs escorting students to toilets
- o Effective classroom management strategies
- o Daily tutor classes
- o Year Heads
- o Pastoral Care Team
- o Anti-Bullying Policy and Code of Behaviour

SECTION C: ADDRESSING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

All staff are responsible for addressing bullying behaviour.

Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads and Home School Liaison Coordinator have a specific responsibility in that they must follow through on the procedures contained in the Rosary College's Bí Cinéalta Anti-Bullying Policy

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 the 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:

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

To determine whether bullying behaviour has occurred the following 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 each of the questions above is **Yes** then it is bullying behaviour

Where bullying behaviour has occurred

1. 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
2. It is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best address the situation
3. A record should be kept of the engagement with all involved documenting the form and type of bullying behaviour, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents

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

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

1. The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement
2. The nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved must be considered
3. The teachers should document and review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased. The views of students and their parents in relation to this should also be sought
4. The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should be recorded
5. Any engagement with external services/supports should be noted
6. Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased
7. 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
8. If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school
9. If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools,* they should be referred to the Rosary College's complaints procedures
10. 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 has had a negative effect on the student

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The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

- o Review progress after initial intervention
- o Use of restorative practice and mediation
- o Referral to Guidance Counsellor for counselling
- o Referral to CAMHs service through GP
- o Involvement of local youth service and/or community guard
- o Engage student(s) in 'Check & Connect' programme
- o National Psychological Service (NEPs) offers support to schools with issues around bullying through direct or indirect case work service

- o Oide provides continuing professional learning support to schools to support implementation of the Bí Cineálta procedures
- o Webwise develops youth-oriented awareness raising resources and training programmes that promote digital citizenship and address topics such as online wellbeing and cyberbullying
- o National Parents Council delivers courses to support parents to prevent and address *bullying behaviour*
- o Dublin City University (DCU) Anti-Bullying Centre offers through its FUSE programme modules to help promote a positive school culture and assist in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours
- o Tusla can be contacted for advice where it is considered that bullying behaviour is a child protection concern
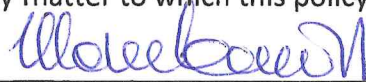
All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern 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.

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.

The 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:_____30ᵏ May 2025_____

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:_____Jean Doyle_____ Date:____30ᵗʰ May 2025._____

(Principal)