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Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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Defined Terms

This section provides a description of the defined terms used in this Policy. These will be capitalised throughout the document.

Bí Cineálta Procedures	Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024.
Bullying Behaviour	As defined in the Bí Cineálta Procedures (see Chapter 2), Bullying Behaviour is targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm may be physical, social and/or emotional. Bullying Behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.
Continuum of Support	Means the three-level framework used by the School to identify, plan, provide and review support for Students with additional educational needs, comprising Classroom Support (for all), School Support (for some) and School Support Plus (for a few). The level of support provided is determined by the Student's individual needs and may involve classroom-based strategies, targeted interventions or more intensive individualised support, including collaboration with external professionals where necessary.
Parents/Guardians	Refers to the Student's parent(s), legal guardian(s) or primary carer(s), as appropriate.
School Community	Students, parents/guardians, staff, the Board of Management, visitors, contractors, outside agencies and other persons who engage with the School.
School Day	A day on which the school is in operation.
Senior Management	The Principal and Deputy Principals of Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's.
Staff	Teaching, non-teaching, ancillary and other authorised personnel working in or for the School.
Student Support Plan	A support plan where one exists for a Student and which may be updated to incorporate response strategies and associated supports.
Student(s)	A student enrolled in Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's.
the School	Refers to Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's.
Tutors	A member of the teaching staff assigned responsibility for a designated group of students within the school's pastoral care system, who provides guidance, support and encouragement to students, monitors their general wellbeing and progress, and acts as a point of contact between students, their parents/guardians and the school.

Abbreviated Terms

AEN	Additional Educational Needs.
BOM	Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's.
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.
DDLp	Deputy Designated Liaison Person.
DLP	Designated Liaison Person.
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service.
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education.

1. Preamble

The Board of Management (BOM) of Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's has adopted this Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour. This Policy is developed in accordance with *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024* (the Bí Cineálta Procedures).

The Policy is underpinned by relevant legislation and guidance, including the Children First Act 2015, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, as amended, the Equal Status Acts 2000 - 2018, and *Developing a Code of Behaviour: Guidelines for Schools* (National Educational Welfare Board, 2008).

The School recognises that Bullying Behaviour can undermine the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, the School will take all reasonable steps to prevent the harassment of Students on any of the nine protected grounds: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

The School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which all Students are treated with dignity and supported to participate fully in School life. Recognising the potential impact of Bullying Behaviour on Students' wellbeing, safety and educational experience, the School will take all appropriate steps to prevent and address such behaviour. This commitment is a shared responsibility across the School Community.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a clear, consistent and supportive approach to preventing and addressing Bullying Behaviour within the School. It aims to promote a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which all Students are valued, supported and able to participate fully in School life.

The Policy sets out the School's approach to preventing Bullying Behaviour, responding to reports and allegations of Bullying Behaviour, supporting Students who experience, witness or engage in Bullying Behaviour, and ensuring appropriate arrangements for recording, oversight and review.

3. Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies to all Students. All members of the School Community have a role in supporting its implementation and in promoting a safe, inclusive and respectful School environment.

The Policy applies to Bullying Behaviour that occurs within the School, during School-related activities and in other circumstances where the behaviour has an impact on the safety, wellbeing or experience of Students or other members of the School Community.

3.1 Application to Online and Off-Site Behaviour

The School will address Bullying Behaviour that occurs online or outside the School where it has a direct impact on the School Community or on the safety and wellbeing of Students.

This includes Bullying Behaviour involving digital technology, online platforms or electronic communication, including where such behaviour affects Students or relationships within the School Community.

The 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 such behaviour impacts on the safety, wellbeing or experience of Students within the School Community, the School will take appropriate steps to support the Students

involved. Where the Bullying Behaviour continues in School, it will be addressed in accordance with this Policy.

3.2 Linked Policies and Relevant Documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies and relevant legislation, guidance and procedures, as applicable:

- Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Additional Educational Needs Policy
- Student Support Plans and relevant wellbeing procedures
- Attendance Strategy
- Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Relevant Department of Education and Youth legislation, guidance and procedures

Copies of relevant School policies are available on the School website and may also be obtained from the School office upon request.

4. Policy Statement and Objectives

The School is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment in which all Students and Staff are treated with dignity, respect and care. Bullying Behaviour involving Students is unacceptable and will be prevented and addressed through a consistent, supportive and timely approach in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- prevent Bullying Behaviour through a whole-School approach;
- promote respectful relationships, inclusion and a sense of belonging;
- ensure that concerns and reports of Bullying Behaviour are listened to and addressed appropriately;
- support Students who experience, witness or engage in Bullying Behaviour;
- provide clear roles and responsibilities for members of the School Community;
- maintain appropriate records and arrangements for oversight and review; and
- review the effectiveness of the Policy and its implementation.

5. Guiding Principles

The implementation of this Policy will be guided by the following principles:

- The dignity, privacy, rights and wellbeing of all Students will be respected.
- Reports and allegations of Bullying Behaviour will be treated sensitively and addressed fairly.
- The views of Students will be listened to and given due consideration, having regard to their age and maturity.
- The School will seek to resolve issues and restore relationships wherever possible.
- The School will work in partnership with Parents/Guardians and relevant external services, where appropriate.
- Information will be shared only where appropriate and necessary, and records will be maintained securely and in accordance with relevant data protection requirements.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

This section provides an overview of the principal roles and responsibilities associated with the implementation and oversight of this Policy. Further details of these responsibilities and the arrangements for carrying them out are set out in the relevant sections of the Policy, particularly Sections B, C and D.

6.1 Board of Management (BOM)

The BOM is responsible for adopting, overseeing and reviewing the Policy and for ensuring that the School has appropriate arrangements in place to prevent and address Bullying Behaviour.

6.2 Principal and Deputy Principals

The Principal and Deputy Principals (Senior Management) are responsible for overseeing implementation of the Policy, ensuring that procedures are followed, ensuring that Staff have appropriate guidance and support in carrying out their responsibilities under the Policy, making the Policy available to all members of the School Community, and reporting to the BOM in accordance with the Policy. The Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of the Policy.

6.3 Year Heads

Year Heads support the implementation of the Policy, respond to reports, oversee investigations and follow-up, and coordinate appropriate supports. They liaise with Senior Management, as appropriate, in accordance with the detailed procedures.

6.4 All Staff

All Staff have a responsibility to promote respectful behaviour, remain vigilant, respond to concerns, report incidents and support Students in accordance with this Policy.

6.5 Students

Students are expected to contribute to a respectful School environment, report concerns, support peers appropriately and avoid engaging in Bullying Behaviour.

6.6 Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to promote respectful behaviour, empathy and positive relationships at home, and to encourage their child to speak up and seek support if they experience or witness Bullying Behaviour. They are also encouraged to communicate concerns to the School at an early stage, cooperate with the School in addressing reports of Bullying Behaviour, and support agreed actions and strategies to promote their child's wellbeing and foster positive relationships.

6.7 Wider School Community

Members of the wider School Community are expected to support the School's commitment to inclusion, safety and respectful relationships and to report concerns where appropriate.

Section A: Development and Review of the Policy

The School will develop, implement and review this Policy in consultation with the School Community. The consultation process will provide opportunities for relevant members of the School Community to contribute to the development and review of the Policy and to identify any revisions required to reflect current School practice, emerging needs or relevant developments.

The consultation undertaken as part of the development or review of this Policy will be recorded below.

	Date Consulted	Method of Consultation
Senior Management	13.10.26	Meeting, Face to face
Year Heads	13.10.26	Meeting, face to face
Staff	13-16.10.26	Email / Meeting consultation
Student Council	16.10.2026	SRC Meeting
Parents Association	13-16.10.26	Shared + feedback sought
Board of Management	22.10.2026	BOM Meeting
Wider School Community, where appropriate	13.10.2026	Shared on school app. feedback sought

The School will consider feedback received through the consultation process and will make amendments to the Policy where appropriate. This may include removing practices or arrangements that are no longer in place, clarifying existing arrangements or incorporating new measures and approaches.

A record of the consultation undertaken, feedback considered and amendments made will be maintained as part of the review process.

The Policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually, or as soon as practicable where the BOM determines that a review is warranted.

Following the review process, any proposed amendments will be considered by the BOM and the revised Policy will be formally approved in accordance with the School's governance arrangements.

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The School's prevention strategies address Bullying Behaviour, including online Bullying Behaviour and Bullying Behaviour that may be related to gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, membership of the Traveller community, religion, disability, additional needs or academic ability.

The School recognises that preventing Bullying Behaviour requires a whole-School approach involving Staff, Students and Parents/Guardians. Prevention strategies will be implemented through the School's culture, environment, curriculum, relationships, awareness-raising, supervision and support arrangements.

The School's prevention strategies include promoting awareness of and respect for diversity, challenging prejudice and discriminatory behaviour, and fostering positive relationships and inclusion. Through SPHE, Religious Education, Tutor Time and the School's wider wellbeing initiatives, the School will promote awareness of and work to prevent Bullying Behaviour. These strategies will be reviewed and adapted to reflect the needs of the School Community.

B.1 Culture and Environment: A Whole-School Approach

The School will promote a whole-School culture where respect, inclusion, dignity and positive relationships are actively encouraged and where Bullying Behaviour is not tolerated.

The School will:

- promote respect for diversity and challenge prejudice, stereotyping and discriminatory behaviour;
- support Students' sense of belonging, self-esteem and positive relationships through curricular and extracurricular activities;
- provide opportunities for Student leadership and positive peer relationships through initiatives such as Student Leaders, the Student Representative Council and Peer Mediators, where applicable;
- raise awareness among Students and Parents/Guardians of Bullying Behaviour, its impact and the importance of reporting concerns;
- make available the School's Anti-Bullying Code to Students through their School Journals;
- promote responsible and respectful use of digital technology and online platforms;
- implement the School's mobile phone arrangements, in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy and Code of Behaviour, whereby mobile phones are switched off and kept in Students' lockers during School hours;
- provide relevant training and ongoing professional learning for Staff to support the prevention of and response to Bullying Behaviour; and
- ensure that non-teaching and ancillary Staff are aware of their role in recognising and reporting concerns about Bullying Behaviour.

Appropriate supervision and monitoring arrangements will be maintained across classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school-related activities, tours and extracurricular activities, with particular attention to areas and situations where Bullying Behaviour may be more likely to occur.

B.2 Awareness-Raising and School Initiatives

The School will promote awareness of Bullying Behaviour and positive relationships through a range of activities throughout the School year.

These activities may include, but are not limited to:

- themed awareness initiatives, including Bullying Awareness Week, Social Justice Week and Stand Up Awareness Week
- Restorative Practice Week and ongoing restorative approaches;
- learning and discussion through SPHE, Religious Education and Tutor Time;
- peer mediation, friendship and positive relationship initiatives;
- creative, interactive and Student-led awareness activities, such as presentations, competitions, videos, classroom messages and other initiatives that promote understanding of Bullying Behaviour and its impact;
- information displayed on noticeboards and in classrooms;
- communication via Year Head assemblies;
- communication with Parents/Guardians through appropriate School channels; and
- confidential questionnaires or surveys to gather Students' views and identify concerns.

The School will promote a culture where Students feel safe to speak up and report concerns about Bullying Behaviour. Awareness-raising and prevention activities will be reviewed periodically and adapted where appropriate to respond to identified needs.

B.3 Reporting and a Culture of Telling

The School will promote a culture of telling, where Students understand that reporting concerns about Bullying Behaviour is encouraged and that seeking help is not considered to be “telling tales”. Students will also be encouraged to be active upstanders rather than bystanders by supporting those affected by Bullying Behaviour, reporting concerns and contributing to a safe, inclusive and respectful School Community.

Students and Parents/Guardians will be encouraged to raise concerns at an early stage so that appropriate support and action can be provided.

Students are encouraged to report concerns about Bullying Behaviour to a trusted member of Staff, such as their Tutor, Year Head or another teacher with whom they feel comfortable.

Students may report concerns verbally or in writing. A Student who finds it difficult to speak directly to a member of Staff may write a note, give a note to a Teacher or include a note with their homework. Students may also ask a Parent/Guardian, friend or another trusted person to help them make a report or to bring a concern to the attention of the School. Students may also approach the Peer Mediation Coordinator, a Peer Mediator or a Senior Prefect to seek assistance in bringing a concern forward. Any concern raised through these channels will be referred to an appropriate member of Staff for consideration in accordance with Section C of this Policy.

Students may also report concerns on behalf of another Student.

Parents/Guardians who have concerns about Bullying Behaviour should contact the relevant Tutor or Year Head.

A concern may also be brought to the School by a youth worker or other relevant external agency. Any such concern will be referred promptly to the relevant Year Head and addressed in accordance with this Policy.

Reports may also be made anonymously. All reports will be treated sensitively and considered in accordance with Section C of this Policy. Where a report is anonymous, the School will take appropriate steps to establish the relevant information, recognising that this may limit the extent to which the concern can be investigated.

Staff will listen to reports sensitively and will take appropriate action in accordance with Section C of this Policy.

The School will also promote safe and responsible use of digital technology and online communication in accordance with the School’s Acceptable Use Policy.

B.4 Inclusion and Students Who May Be More at Risk of Experiencing Bullying Behaviour

The School recognises that Bullying Behaviour can be experienced by any Student. However, some Students may be more at risk of experiencing Bullying Behaviour because of their individual needs, characteristics or circumstances, including those relating to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion or disability.

The School will take account of the particular needs of its Student population when developing and implementing prevention strategies. This includes recognising that some Students with disabilities or Additional Educational Needs (AEN) may experience difficulties in recognising, understanding or responding to social situations and may require additional support.

The School will:

- promote inclusion, positive relationships, social skills and a sense of belonging for all Students, with particular attention to Student induction and fostering a School culture that respects everyone and encourages Students to help one another;

- take account of individual needs, age, ability and communication needs when developing and implementing prevention strategies;
- use the Continuum of Support and relevant Student Support Plans, as appropriate, to identify and respond to individual support needs;
- provide appropriate support through Learning Support Classes and other relevant School-based supports, where applicable;
- ensure that Staff are aware of relevant individual needs, challenges or vulnerabilities that may affect a Student's wellbeing, relationships or ability to recognise or respond to Bullying Behaviour;
- use the Care Team and the Student Support List to identify Students who may require additional support and to coordinate appropriate responses;
- maintain appropriate supervision and monitoring, with particular attention to situations or environments where individual Students may require additional support;
- provide access to appropriate pastoral and wellbeing supports, including the Check and Connect Programme, where appropriate; and
- tailor preventative and supportive measures to the needs of individual Students, where appropriate.

The School recognises that Students may require additional support for a range of personal, social, emotional or wellbeing-related circumstances and that these circumstances may change over time. The School will review and adapt appropriate supports where necessary.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The School will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display Bullying Behaviour. These procedures should be read in conjunction with Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures. A Quick Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour is provided in Appendix C. This guide offers a summary of the School's procedures, which are set out in detail in this Section.

C.1 Responsibility for Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Staff Member Receiving the Initial Report

Any member of Staff, including non-teaching Staff, who receives an initial report of Bullying Behaviour will listen sensitively to the Student or person reporting the concern and make a written record of the information provided. The Staff Member will complete the Initial Report Form (School Form 1) and forward it promptly to the relevant Year Head.

The Staff Member will reassure the Student that the concern will be taken seriously and addressed in accordance with this Policy. The responsibility for investigating the allegation and determining whether Bullying Behaviour has occurred rests with the relevant Year Head, in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy.

Relevant Year Head

The relevant Year Head is responsible for investigating the allegation and determining whether Bullying Behaviour has occurred, in accordance with the procedures set out in this Policy. This will involve meeting separately with the Student who has reported experiencing Bullying Behaviour and the Student alleged to have engaged in Bullying Behaviour, as well as any other Students who may have relevant information, where appropriate. Each Student will be given an opportunity to share their account, and information gathered during these meetings will be recorded using the Student Meeting/Incident Record (School Form 2). The Year Head will document the assessment and determination using the Assessment and Determination of Bullying Behaviour (School Form 3), ensuring that the procedures and principles outlined in this Policy are followed.

Relevant Deputy Principal

Where the Year Head has determined that Bullying Behaviour has occurred, the matter will be referred to the relevant Deputy Principal, who will take a lead role in overseeing and coordinating the implementation of appropriate actions in accordance with this Policy. The Deputy Principal and Year Head will work closely together to ensure that appropriate support is provided to the Students involved, that agreed actions are

implemented and that relevant records are maintained. They will work together on follow-up to establish whether the Bullying Behaviour has ceased and whether any further action or support is required. The Deputy Principal will keep the Principal informed of the actions taken, the outcome of follow-up and any further matters requiring attention.

Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring that the procedures for preventing and addressing Bullying Behaviour are implemented effectively throughout the School. The Principal will oversee the work of relevant Staff, ensure that appropriate support, recording and follow-up arrangements are in place, and report to the Board of Management (BOM) in accordance with this Policy. The Principal will ensure that the BOM receives the information required to fulfil its oversight responsibilities, while maintaining the confidentiality of Students involved.

C.2 Principles for Addressing Bullying Behaviour

In addressing Bullying Behaviour, the School will:

- ensure that the Student experiencing Bullying Behaviour is heard, supported and reassured;
- respect the privacy of those involved;
- conduct conversations sensitively and appropriately;
- take account of the age, ability and individual circumstances of those involved;
- listen to and consider the views of the Student experiencing Bullying Behaviour;
- take action in a timely manner; and
- inform the Parents/Guardians of those involved at an early stage.

The primary aim is to resolve issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved, rather than to apportion blame. In serious cases, appropriate and proportionate consequences in line with the School's Code of Behaviour may be necessary.

C.3 Procedures for Determining Whether Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

The Year Head undertakes the investigation in consultation with relevant Staff and Senior Management, as appropriate.

Investigations will:

- be conducted using professional judgement and a calm, objective and problem-solving approach;
- take place outside the classroom setting, with the privacy of all involved respected;
- provide each Student with an opportunity to give their account and to be heard sensitively;
- encourage Students involved to engage openly and honestly in the process and to provide relevant information to assist the School in establishing the facts;
- where a group is involved, begin with individual conversations with the Students concerned;
- provide appropriate support to Students who may experience pressure or influence from other Students involved in the group following an individual conversation or interview;
- establish the relevant facts by considering what happened, where and when it occurred, who was involved and why;
- request written accounts where appropriate;
- only after individual meetings have taken place, and where considered appropriate, facilitate a meeting between those involved, taking account of the circumstances and the wellbeing of the Students concerned; and
- where Bullying Behaviour is determined to have occurred, result in the completion of the Formal Record of Bullying Behaviour (School Form 4).

The School will follow the Bí Cineálta: Procedures and this Policy throughout the process.

C.4 Approach Taken to Address Bullying Behaviour

In addressing Bullying Behaviour, the School will:

- contact the Parents/Guardians of the Students involved at an early stage;
- provide Parents/Guardians with an opportunity to discuss ways to reinforce or support the School's actions;
- explain to a Student who has engaged in Bullying Behaviour how the behaviour breaches this Policy and support the Student to understand its impact;
- provide those involved with a written account of the outcome and any conclusions reached, and communicate any decisions about post-investigation actions, subject to confidentiality and data protection requirements; and
- provide an opportunity for those involved to comment on the findings and discuss them with the relevant Year Head and/or Deputy Principal or Principal.

C.4.1 Possible Post-Investigation Actions

Where Bullying Behaviour has been determined to have occurred, the School will consider and implement appropriate actions, having regard to the nature and seriousness of the behaviour, the circumstances of the case and the needs of the Students involved. Actions may include one or more of the following:

- formal restorative intervention, with the agreement of the Students involved and where facilitated by appropriately trained Staff;
- additional supervisory measures, where appropriate;
- referral to or use of an appropriate School-based support programme, such as Check and Connect;
- counselling or other appropriate support; and
- proportionate consequences in accordance with the School's Code of Behaviour.

Individual follow-up meetings will be arranged separately, with a view to bringing the Students involved together at a later stage where they are willing and agreeable (see Section C.6).

Any consequence arising under the Code of Behaviour is a private matter between the relevant Student(s), their Parents/Guardians and the School.

C.5 Specific Provision for Requests to Take No Action

A Student may request that the School take no further action at that time, other than to provide appropriate support and monitor the Student's wellbeing. The relevant Year Head or Deputy Principal will respond sensitively and empathetically, discuss possible steps with the Student, consider how the Parents/Guardians will be informed and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to support the Student's safety and wellbeing.

Parents/Guardians may also request that the School take no action. Such a request should be made in writing, with appropriate support provided where literacy, digital literacy or language barriers exist. However, a request for no action does not prevent the School from taking appropriate steps to address the Bullying Behaviour. The School will consider the circumstances of the case and determine whether action is necessary in accordance with this Policy.

C.6 Follow-Up and Determining Whether Bullying Behaviour Has Ceased

Following the implementation of agreed actions, the School will conduct a follow-up to assess the effectiveness of the response, determine whether the Bullying Behaviour has ceased and identify any further support or action required.

Follow-up will consider:

- whether the Bullying Behaviour has ceased;
- whether issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
- the current state of relationships between the Students involved; and
- any further feedback from Students, Parents/Guardians or Staff.

The relevant Deputy Principal or Year Head will engage with the Students and Parents/Guardians involved no more than 20 School days after the initial engagement to review progress. The follow-up will be recorded using the Follow-Up Form Record (School Form 5).

Where the Bullying Behaviour has not ceased, the strategies used will be reviewed in consultation with the Students and Parents/Guardians. Further follow-up meetings will be arranged within an appropriate timeframe until the Bullying Behaviour has ceased.

Even where the Bullying Behaviour has ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the Student who has experienced the Bullying Behaviour and the Student who has engaged in the Bullying Behaviour. The School recognises that relationships may take time to settle and that, in some cases, they may not be restored to their previous state. Appropriate ongoing support and monitoring will be considered in light of the individual circumstances and needs of the Students involved.

Where necessary, the School will consider appropriate strategies under the Code of Behaviour.

C.7 Complaints Procedure

Where a Parent/Guardian or a Student aged 18 or over is not satisfied with how Bullying Behaviour has been addressed, they may refer to the School's Complaints Policy and Procedures for Parents/Guardians and Students aged 18 or over, which is available on the School website and from the School Office.

A Student and/or Parent/Guardian may also make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children where they believe that the School's actions have had a negative effect on the Student.

C.8 Programme of Support

The School is committed to ensuring that Students who experience, witness or engage in Bullying Behaviour receive appropriate and timely support. Support will be responsive to the Student's individual needs and circumstances and may be provided during or following the investigation process, regardless of whether Bullying Behaviour is determined to have occurred. The School will seek to promote the wellbeing, safety and positive relationships of all Students involved.

In-school supports may include:

- pastoral support from Tutors and Year Heads;
- Guidance Counselling;
- the Check and Connect Programme; and
- restorative approaches, where appropriate and with the agreement of the Students involved.

Where a Student requires additional or external support, the School will, where appropriate, liaise with Parents/Guardians and relevant external services. This may apply to a Student who has experienced Bullying Behaviour, witnessed Bullying Behaviour or engaged in Bullying Behaviour.

Depending on the circumstances and the supports already in place, this may include liaison with or referral to relevant services such as Tusla, the CFSN Meitheal Family Support Process, NEPS, CAMHS, Primary Care, Pieta, Jigsaw or the Local Garda Youth Diversion Programme (GDYP).

C.9 Formal School Record Keeping

Responsibility for formal School record keeping rests with the Principal.

Records relating to Bullying Behaviour will be maintained as follows:

- All incidents where Bullying Behaviour is determined to have occurred will be recorded using the Formal Record of Bullying Behaviour (School Form 4). Records will include the form and type of behaviour, where and when it occurred, and the date of initial engagement with the Students and Parents/Guardians involved.
- Records will include the views of the Students and Parents/Guardians involved regarding actions and supports provided, where appropriate.
- Reviews to determine whether Bullying Behaviour has ceased will be documented using the Follow-Up Form Record (School Form 5), including the views of the Students and Parents/Guardians involved, dates of engagement and the date on which the Bullying Behaviour is determined to have ceased.
- Engagement with external services or supports will be recorded, where applicable.
- All records relating to reported concerns, incidents, actions taken and follow-up will be retained on the relevant Student file(s), in accordance with the School's record-keeping arrangements and relevant data protection requirements.
- Where a Student Support Plan exists, relevant information and agreed response strategies or supports will be incorporated into the plan, where appropriate.
- Where Bullying Behaviour gives rise to a child protection concern, the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Section D: Oversight

D.1 Oversight by the Board of Management

The Principal will provide the Board of Management (BOM) with an update on Bullying Behaviour, using Appendix D, at each BOM meeting.

The update will include:

- the number of incidents reported since the previous BOM meeting;
- the number of ongoing incidents; and
- the total number of incidents recorded since the beginning of the School year.

Where incidents have occurred, the Principal will also provide a verbal update, where relevant, on:

- trends and patterns identified;
- strategies used to address Bullying Behaviour;
- wider strategies used to prevent and address Bullying Behaviour;
- whether any Student has experienced a serious adverse impact as a result of Bullying Behaviour;
- whether any Student has left the School as a result of reported Bullying Behaviour;
- whether additional support is required from the BOM; and
- whether there is a need for an urgent review of this Policy.

Where Bullying Behaviour has had a serious adverse impact on a Student, the School will review the measures taken and identify any lessons that may help to prevent a recurrence.

The update provided to the BOM will not contain personal or identifying information. The School will follow the relevant requirements set out in Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

The minutes of the BOM meeting will record the number of incidents reported, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents recorded since the beginning of the School year. The minutes will

also record that the verbal update was provided and considered, and any decision made regarding an urgent review of this Policy.

D.2 Availability of the Policy

This Policy will be made available to the School Community on the School website and in hard copy from the School Office upon request.

The Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy (Appendix B) will be displayed in the School and made available on the School website and in hard copy from the School Office upon request.

The Quick Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour (Appendix C) will also be made available to the School Community on the School website and in hard copy from the School Office upon request.

D.3 Board of Management Review of the Policy

This Policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually, following input from the School Community, or as soon as practicable where the BOM determines that a review is warranted.

The review will consider the implementation and effectiveness of the Policy, including feedback from the School Community and any relevant information arising from the School's experience of preventing and addressing Bullying Behaviour.

The outcome of the review will be recorded using the Board of Management Review form (Appendix E). Any amendments considered necessary will be made in accordance with the School's governance arrangements.

The School Community will be notified that the review has taken place using the Notification regarding the BOM's annual review of the School's Bí Cineálta Policy (Appendix F). Where appropriate, any revised version of the Policy will be made available in accordance with Section D.2.

Ratification and Renewal

Date the Policy was last reviewed: 22nd October 2026

This Policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's on:

Date of approval: 22.10.26.

Signed: Paschal Harney
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: Andrea Juray-Kajic
Principal / Secretary to the Board of Management