

## **Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**

The Board of Management of Scoil Eoin Báiste 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	March 14th	Half day closure, staff meeting, consultation
Students	March 2025	Google Forms
Parents	March 2025	Google Forms / draft policy sent home
Board of Management	May 2025	In person meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved: June 5th 2025		

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that can 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):

- implementing the SPHE curriculum
- implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship
- having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online
- developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology
- referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour
- promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online\*
- holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour
- maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters
- encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- challenging gender stereotypes
- conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour
- encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour
- fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment
- having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
- conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of racism
- encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
- providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
- providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents

- inviting speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex
- ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex
- celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students
- organising awareness campaigns, workshops and presentations on gender equality and respect
- encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home
- promoting positive role models within the school community
- challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

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):

## Supervision and Monitoring Policies

- **Increased Visibility of Staff**

Ensure school staff are present in key areas, such as corridors, school yards, during break times and transitions.

Teachers and supervisors should be **easily identifiable** to students.

- **Safe Physical Spaces**

Remove hidden areas where bullying may occur.

Ensure clear visibility in all outside areas. Including having no go areas.

- **Structured Break-Time Supervision**

Organise **structured activities** during break times to promote positive peer interactions.

Assign specific supervision zones to staff members to ensure **full coverage** of all areas.

- **Use of CCTV**

Monitor high-risk areas through **CCTV surveillance** while ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.

Review footage only when necessary to investigate incidents.

- **Student and Staff Training**

Provide ongoing professional development for teachers on **how to recognise and intervene** in bullying incidents.

The wellbeing team supports students who may be at risk.

- **Encouraging a Reporting Culture**

Promote the role of a **trusted adult** that students can approach with concerns.

Implement an **anonymous reporting system** (e.g., a reporting box or online form) for students who feel unsafe reporting bullying in person.

- **Parental Involvement**

Engage parents by providing updates on supervision strategies and encouraging their input.

Educate parents on recognizing signs of bullying and how they can support their child at home.

- **Monitoring Online Behaviour**

Reinforce the school's **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)** regarding technology and social media.

Provide digital safety workshops to **educate students about cyberbullying risks** and responsible online behaviour.

- **Regular Policy Review**

Conduct **annual reviews** of the school's supervision and monitoring policies.

Gather feedback from students, parents, and staff, to refine approaches as needed

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Each class teacher is responsible for dealing with Bullying Behaviour in their own classroom

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):

### Identify if bullying behaviour has occurred

Ask the following questions:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
3. Is the behaviour repeated?

If all answers are "Yes," the behaviour should be addressed under the Bí Cineálta policy. If not, it should be managed under the school's **Code of Behaviour**.

### Addressing Bullying Behaviour

#### 1. Immediate Response:

- Ensure the student experiencing bullying feels listened to and reassured.
- Maintain the privacy and dignity of all students involved.
- Engage in conversations sensitively, considering the students' age and abilities.
- Take action promptly.

#### 2. Parental Involvement:

- Inform the parents/guardians of all students involved at an early stage.
- Involve parents in deciding on actions to be taken.
- If a student expresses concern about informing their parents, the school should develop a support plan.

#### 3. Support for Students Involved:

- Both the student experiencing bullying and the student displaying bullying behaviour require appropriate support and engage in restorative practice.
- Schools should implement interventions to help students manage relational difficulties.
- The school will provide guidance and additional resources if required.

### Review and Monitoring Progress

#### 1. Follow-Up Meeting/Phone Call:

- A teacher will check in with the students and parents no later than **20 school days** after the initial intervention.
- The review will assess:
  - If the bullying behaviour has stopped.

- The effectiveness of the strategies used.
- The relationships between the students involved.

## 2. Record-Keeping:

- All bullying behaviour incidents will be recorded, including:
  - The type of behaviour.
  - Where and when it occurred.
  - The actions taken and the agreed supports.
- If the incident involves a **child protection concern**, it will be reported in line with **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools**.

## 3. Ongoing Prevention Measures:

- Regular school-wide reviews of the Bí Cineálta policy.
- Student and parent consultations to improve strategies.
- Board of Management oversight to ensure effectiveness

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):

### Approaches to Support Those Who Experience, Witness, and Display Bullying Behaviour

The school will implement the following approaches to support students who experience, witness, or display bullying behaviour.

#### Supporting Students Who Experience Bullying Behaviour

##### 1. Creating a Safe and Supportive Environment

- Ensuring that students feel **listened to and reassured** when they report bullying.
- Providing **confidential support** to reduce any fear of retaliation.
- Implementing SPHE curriculum and SSE and Wellbeing policy
- Implement a buddy system.

##### 2. Providing Emotional and Educational Support

- Engaging with **school counselors** or external psychological services if needed.
- Developing individual **Student Support Plans** where appropriate.
- Encouraging participation in **wellbeing activities** to rebuild self-confidence.

##### 3. Parental Involvement

- Keeping parents informed about interventions and progress.
- Providing guidance to parents on **how to support their child at home**.
- Give parents/guardians opportunities for feedback.

## Supporting Students Who Witness Bullying Behaviour

### 1. Encouraging a 'Telling Environment'

- Teaching students that reporting bullying is an act of **responsibility, not betrayal**.
- Ensuring that students who report bullying feel **safe and supported**.
- Recognising and rewarding **positive bystander behaviour**.

### 2. Education and Awareness

- Delivering **anti-bullying workshops** to teach students about the impact of bullying.
- Including discussions on **empathy, respect, and kindness** in SPHE and Wellbeing lessons.

### 3. Providing Ongoing Support

- Checking in with students who witness bullying to address **any emotional distress** they may experience.
- Encouraging participation in **conflict resolution programs**.

## Supporting Students Who Display Bullying Behaviour

### 1. Understanding the Root Causes

- Identifying **underlying reasons** for the behaviour (e.g., social difficulties, past trauma).
- Implementing **restorative practices** to help students take responsibility for their actions.

### 2. Developing Positive Behaviour Strategies

- Providing **social skills training and Weaving Wellbeing lessons** to improve relationships with peers.
- Whole school positive code of kindness- 'Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet'.
- Engaging in **structured activities** that promote teamwork and positive interactions.

### 3. Monitoring and Follow-up

- Regularly monitoring the student's progress in modifying their behaviour.
- Engaging with **parents and support staff** to ensure long-term change.
- If however, after following the process nothing has changed, we will revert to our Code of Behaviour.

**Please note: if a ceased behaviour reoccurs, we will revert to the Code of Behaviour straight away.**

## Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools

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)