Clifden Community School

Lux, Pax, Felicitas

SCHOOL BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Date of policy approval: 22nd October 2026

Approved by:

Signed: Michael Maher
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Mary Kelly
(Principal)

Date: 22/10/2026

Date: 2026

Date of next review: October 2027

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Document Control:

Version	Date Approved	Author	Update Information
1.0	29/05/2025	COLF	*New policy developed using the Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2024.*
2.0	22/10/2026	KELM	*No changes*

Appendix A
School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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The Board of Management of Clifden Community School 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	19/03/2025 20/10/2026	Whole Staff Meeting Email/Pastoral Meetings
Students	24/03/2025 20/10/2026	Microsoft FORMs Student Focus Group Meetings
Parents	07/04/2025 20/10/2026	Microsoft FORMs/PA Meeting Email
Board of Management	29/05/2025 22/10/2026	Board of Management Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	19/03/2025	Whole Staff Meeting
Date policy was approved: 22/10/2026		
Date policy was last reviewed: 29/05/2025		

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):

Culture & Environment:

- Bully button on the school's website to report bullying anonymously.
- Student safe spaces at unstructured times; games room, reading room, supervised base rooms.
- Friendship Week
- LGBTQI+ awareness
- Buddy system where TY students support 1st Year students with their transition into post-primary.
- Strategies to promote a sense of belonging; active learning methodologies that promote an engaging learning environment, uniform, engagement in extracurricular activities, student leadership such as student council & student senior leadership, assemblies that reward positive behaviour, attendance and compliance with the school rules and routines, whole school expectations graphic.
- Staff use restorative practice as a core part of teacher-student engagement, behaviour management and conflict resolution.
- Staff supervision of students during break times promotes a safe environment for students.
- Diversity display in the school to foster a sense of belonging for all in our Community School.
- Removal of blind spots in the school – under stairs.
- Student led anti-bullying team that lead on assemblies and promotes the standards for the prevention of bullying.
- Students can report bullying to any teacher in the school who are all known as 'trusted adults'.

- Staff are conscious to listen out for the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or SEN.

Curriculum (Teaching & Learning)

- The implementation of the CSPE and SPHE curricula by staff encourage and foster a culture of respect for all students and members of the school community and the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. The RSE strand in SPHE also aims to provide space for students to examine and consider relationships and human sexuality which can foster an understanding of diversity.
- All students study History at Junior Cycle and it can support students with developing an understanding of the root causes of bias and prejudice towards racial discrimination and colonialism.
- RSE Programme for 2nd years provides opportunities for students to learn about relationships and sexuality in ways that help them think and act in a moral and responsible way.
- FRIENDS Programme 1st Yr. – Designed to increase resilience and decrease anxiety and depression.

Policy & Planning

- Policies listed below can support the implementation of the school's Bí Cineálta policy:
  - Code of Behaviour
  - Relationships & Sexuality Education Policy
  - Suspensions Policy
  - CCTV Policy
- Teacher training in restorative practice.
- CPD on Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering the CSPE & SPHE programmes.
- CPD for staff on FUSE – Anti-Bullying and online safety.

Relationships & Partnerships

- A student-led anti-bullying team will take the lead in delivering assemblies focused on raising awareness about the most prevalent form of bullying identified by the student body: deliberate friendship exclusion. The assemblies will explore the underlying causes of this behavior and highlight the emotional and psychological impact it can have on individuals.
- Student engagement in extracurricular activities is monitored as this promotes active participation in school life.
- Wellbeing – Friendship Week includes activities that build empathy, respect and resilience.
- Bullying workshops are delivered alongside the analysis of the types of bullying in the school is fed back to parents at Parents' Association meetings.
- An infographic will be sent to parents at the start of each year reminding parents how bullying behaviour can be reported anonymously (Bully Button) and who they can contact if their child is being bullied.
- Buddy system where TY students support 1st Year students with their transition into post-primary supports partnerships between students.

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):

- Staff supervision during break times in key areas such as corridors, the school yard and base rooms to ensure students are safe and supervised.
- A rota system for staff supervision that ensures consistent adult visibility throughout the school day.
- Use of CCTV in shared spaces to monitor behaviour and investigate reported incidents promptly.
- Student safe spaces at unstructured times; games room, reading room, supervised base rooms.
- Anonymous reporting systems, such as the *'Bully Button'* on the school's website, allowing students to raise issues discreetly.
- Students Office 365 is monitored to identify any potential cyberbullying.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

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):

These steps can be implemented by any trusted adult in the school, this includes any teacher, Principal and/or Deputy Principal:

- A discussion with the student who is being bullied will take place.
- The bullied student will be asked what they want to happen moving forward.
- A plan of approach will be worked out together.
- A phone call/meeting with the parents of the bullied student will take place.
- A meeting with any other student(s) involved who has caused the bullying behaviour will take place.
- A phone call/meeting with the parent(s) of the student(s) who caused the bullying will take place.
- All involved will be informed of the actions moving forward.
- A follow up will take place no later than 20 days after the initial engagement to ensure the bullying has stopped.
- All notes are recorded and filed under the student(s) school management system, Compass.

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):

Support will be given by a referral to one or more of the following:

- Pastoral Care Team / Year Head
- Referral to Chaplain or Guidance Counsellor
- Referral to the school mentor after consultation with the HSCL
- Referral to the school nurture programme subject to approval following an assessment.

All incidents of bullying are reviewed with the victim(s) and the offender(s) and the parent. Contact will be made with all parties by meeting or by phone.

A review is also carried out at Year Head meetings.

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: Michael Molloy Date: 22/10/2026

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Mary Kelly. Date: 22/10/2026

(Principal)