



Scoil Chuimsitheach
an Tóchar
Causeway
Comprehensive School

Causeway Comprehensive School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Causeway Comprehensive 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.



Bord Oideachais
agus Oiliúna Chiarraí
Kerry Education
and Training Board

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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	Wednesday 12 th February 2025	☐ Whole school staff presentation ☐ Staff survey
Students	Tuesday 25 th March 2025	Students focus Group & Student Survey
Parents	Thursday 10 th April 2025	Parents Focus Group & Parent Survey
Board of Management	Monday 28 th April 2025	Focus Group format
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, admin, cleaners & caretakers	Wednesday June 4 th 2025	Presentation and Survey
Date policy was approved: June 9 th 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: June 8 th 2026		

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

Core definition of Bullying Behaviour

Bullying is 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.

The core definition above sets out clear criteria to help school communities to prevent, correctly identify and address bullying among students. Alleged incidents of bullying are, however, often complex and must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The core elements of the definition are further described below:

Targeted behaviour

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the student displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example, personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example, withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and long-term negative impact on the student experiencing the bullying behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying but, importantly, must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

Repeated behaviour

Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online, and which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

Imbalance of power

In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity, technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted student to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.

Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups.

Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour.

If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying. These behaviours, while not defined as bullying, can be distressing. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Criminal Behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years.

Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images. If bullying behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence, it may be considered assault.

If bullying behaviour involves discrimination or hate speech targeting a student based on their race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, it may be considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989¹¹, and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges.

If bullying behaviour involves sexual harassment or sexual assault, this may also be considered criminal behaviour. *An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour.*

How Bullying Behaviour occurs

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Direct bullying behaviour:

Physical bullying behaviour:

- Physical bullying behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While students can often engage in "mess fights" they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
- Personal property can be a focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, schoolbooks and other learning material or interference with a student's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Verbal bullying behaviour:

- Continual name calling directed at a student which hurts, insults or humiliates the student should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name calling of this type refers to physical appearance; for example, size or clothes worn or gender identity. It can also refer to a student's accent, distinctive voice characteristics, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.

Written bullying behaviour:

- Written bullying behaviour includes writing insulting remarks about a student in public places, passing around notes about or drawings of a student.

Extortion

- Bullying behaviour can involve extortion. Extortion is where something is obtained through force or threats.

Indirect bullying behaviour:

Exclusion

- Exclusion bullying behaviour occurs where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.

Relational

- Relational bullying behaviour occurs when a student's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. Common forms include control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"; a group of students ganging up against one student; nonverbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a student; giving a student the "silent treatment"; and the deliberate manipulation of friendship groups to make someone unpopular.

Online bullying behaviour:

Online bullying behaviour (cyberbullying) is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This form of bullying behaviour can include:

- Sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
- Posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent
- Making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students
- Excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game

Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.

As online bullying uses technology to carry out bullying behaviour and does not require face-to-face contact it can occur at any time. Many types of bullying behaviour can be facilitated through online bullying. In many cases online bullying can relate to an "offline" experience with someone known to the student. This type of bullying may involve forms of sexual exploitation including but not limited to, sextortion and the nonconsensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence.

Where bullying behaviour can occur

Bullying behaviour can happen anywhere, online or offline and at any time, but there are certain places and times where bullying behaviour can be more likely to occur. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Inside School

School physical environments can have a significant influence on social relationships among students and can impact on the ability of school staff to effectively prevent and address bullying. Well-designed school environments play a vital role in preventing bullying behaviour and promoting inclusion, positive relationships, and a safe and supportive learning environment

School yard:

Bullying behaviour can take place in the school yard. School grounds with hidden or obscure parts may provide an environment where bullying behaviour is more likely to occur. Many common school yard games present opportunities for bullying behaviour because of their physical nature. Continuing provocation may lead to a physical fight and in some cases the student experiencing bullying behaviour may appear to be the aggressor as they give vent to their frustration.

In the classroom:

Bullying behaviour can take place in class. It may occur subtly through glances, looks, sniggers or may take the more overt form of physical intimidation or deliberate isolation. Bullying behaviour may also occur between class periods when the students or the teacher moves.

Other areas: Bullying behaviour can take place in other areas such as toilets, corridors, cloakrooms, locker areas, changing rooms, showers, gym, canteen and assembly hall.

Outside School

A 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 this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

Coming to and from school:

Bullying behaviour can occur in the area immediately outside the school, the local shops and the wider local area. Bullying behaviour can take place at the bus stop or on the journey to and from school whether the students are walking, cycling or on school buses. Bullying behaviour can also take place in organised clubs and groups outside of school such as sports clubs.

Online bullying (cyberbullying) behaviour, along with all other types of bullying behaviour, can cause significant harm and can have a lasting impact on students who experience this behaviour. Access to technology means that online bullying behaviour can happen anytime, and the student's home is no longer a safe place. The nature of these technologies means that digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and the content is almost impossible to delete permanently

Types of bullying behaviour

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- **disabilities bullying behaviour:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of a perceived or actual disability or additional need
- **exceptionally able bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their high academic ability or outstanding talents
- **gender identity bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual gender identity
- **homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual membership of the LGBTQ+ community.
- **physical appearance bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their physical appearance. Students who “look different” can be mocked or criticised about the shape, size or appearance of their body.
- **racist bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their race or ethnic origin which includes membership of the Traveller or Roma community. Racism is defined in the National Action Plan Against Racism¹³ as “a form of domination which manifests through those power dynamics present in structural and institutional arrangements, practices, policies and cultural norms, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin”
- **poverty bullying:** behaviour that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources.
- **religious identity bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity,
- **sexist bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex
- **sexual harassment:** any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of the student

The list of examples below is non-exhaustive, and schools may wish to add behaviours which

reflect their own circumstances.

Examples of bullying behaviours

General behaviours which apply to all	• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space A combination of any of the types listed.
Cyber	• Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • False Reporting • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures
Identity Based Behaviours Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).	

Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • "Bitching" • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look"
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

This Policy Applies

- In class, between classes and while on the school premises
- While in school uniform
- On the way to and from school
- On all school-based activities, school tours etc.
- To anything done in the school name
- To any behaviour that adversely affects the school reputation or the education of any student in the school

Rights and Responsibilities of Each Member of the School Community

<i>Rights</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
I have the right to be safe in school	I have a responsibility to make our school a safe and secure place for others

Rights and responsibilities of Students and Staff

<i>I have a right to be:</i>	<i>I have the responsibility to ensure that:</i>
- Treated with respect - Physically safe and to expect my property to be safe at school - Free from all forms of bullying - Able to learn & teach without disruption	- Others are treated with respect - Others are physically safe and the property of others is safe - Others are free from all forms of bullying - Others/students are able to learn without disruption - Bullying behaviour is acted upon as appropriate

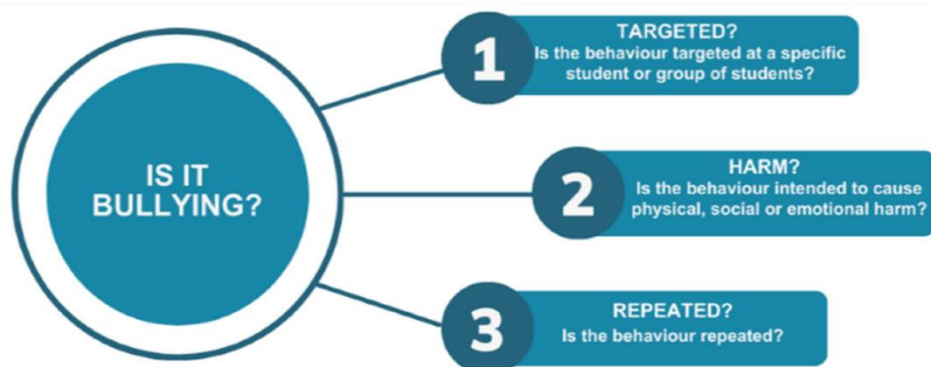
Rights and responsibilities of Parents

<i>I have a right to:</i>	<i>I have the responsibility to ensure that:</i>
Expect that my child is safe in school and can learn without disruption	- I report bullying behaviour to the school - Co-operate fully with the implementation of school policy

Responsibilities of bystanders/witnesses

<i>I should:</i>	<i>I should not:</i>
- Say 'no' or 'stop' when you see or hear someone behaving unfairly - be assertive but not aggressive - Seek help immediately from an adult, if the situation is dangerous. - Tell when you know a student is being bullied.	- Join in bullying behaviour for example, laughing at, sneering, 'slagging' or fighting etc. - Cheer on somebody who is bullying. - Stay in a dangerous situation, e.g. a fight. - Bully the 'bully'.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour



If the answer to each of the questions is **Yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

If the answer to any of the questions is **No**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

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Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying.

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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):

The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows: (See Section 6.5 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

Culture and Environment

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.
- The promotion of the value of diversity addresses issues of prejudice and stereotyping and highlights the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our students through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Students will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- The whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on students' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include students, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.
- The use of mobile phones and all other technological devices, unless school approved, is not allowed during the school day, i.e. 8.00 a.m. – 3.50 p.m.
- Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Mentor system, and other student support activities that can help to support students and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying Charter for the school - to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms, in common areas of the school and in the Student Journal and Teacher Handbook.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with students and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.
- The implementation of regular (e.g. per year/per term/per month/per week) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship, and bullying prevention;
 - Annual Anti – Bullying Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars;
 - Annual or term or monthly student surveys;
 - Regular school or year group assemblies by Personal Safety Board (PSB), Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads etc.
- Ensuring that students know who to tell and how to tell.
- Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
- Encouragement of a culture of open communication with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way students will gain confidence in 'confiding'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all students that when they report incidents of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Hand notes up with homework.
- Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.

- PSB Complaint box
- Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all students.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Identifying clear protocols to encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.

Curriculum

- The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons, #UP2US, 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), Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying (Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme, The Trust pack) Diversity and Interculturalism. The school should list every resource related to the SPHE curriculum and make a list of supports.
- This could include delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at post- primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN students with regard to program implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all students to respond appropriately.

Relationships and Partnerships

- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. GLEN www.glen.ie, BelongTo www.belongto.org, Barnardo's Ireland www.barnardos.ie
- Linking with external services e.g. NEPS, CAMHS, Tusla, Gardaí
- Linking with BOM, PA, Students' Council, Local clubs, YSI Community Activities, Mini Projects, Subject specific CBAs e.g. CSPE Action Project, SPHE CBA Class events, Fundraising events
- Student Support Team
- Guest Speakers
- Garda Visits
- Extra-Curricular- Coaches, Artists, Creative Schools
- Jigsaw One Good School
- Merit System

Policy and Planning

This policy is consistent with other policies in Causeway Comprehensive School

- Bi Cineálta Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy including Internet Safety
- Health and Safety Policy
- SPHE Policy

- RSE Policy
- Whole School Guidance
- Admissions Policy
- Dignity in the Workplace
- RE Policy
- Day Trip Policy
- Code of Conduct for Sports Coaches
- Over-Night Trips Policy
- Mobile Phones Policy
- Special Education Needs Policy
- Student Support Team Policy – Check & Connect
- Wellbeing Policy
- Staff aware that they are all mandated persons, child protection procedures handed out each year as reminder and complete Children First E-Learning Programme.
- Principal & Deputy Principal complete DLP/DDLP training and refreshers

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 & Monitoring

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

In addition to all the practices identified above under Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Planning and Policy and Relationships and Partnerships Causeway Comprehensive School has the following supervision and monitoring policies to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

- A weekly schedule of student supervision on corridors and school grounds is developed to monitor student behaviour and wellbeing.
- 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. Any causes for concern are dealt with and reported to school management.
- All staff are watchful and observe relationships between students in class, note absence patterns and let it be known that high standards of behaviour are always expected
- Survey of Students - Students are surveyed through an online form regularly throughout the year regarding bullying behaviour as part of the school's mentoring sessions.
- Student Support Team – the student support team meet weekly and operate a check and connect system where teachers meet students where concerns may have been brought to their attention
- PSB Complaint box, monitored and checked daily by PSB Coordinator

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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):

The **Relevant Teacher** for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

- A teacher who is a member of the Personal Safety Board (Anti-Bullying Committee)
- Year Head
- Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Any teacher, if the circumstances warrant it.

However, where a student(s) is being bullied they should be able to approach the following people:

- Class Teacher
- Year Head
- Guidance Counsellor
- A member of the Personal Safety Board (Anti-Bullying Committee)
- Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Any teacher, if the circumstances warrant it.
- Any ancillary member of staff

Procedures for Investigation and Dealing with Bullying.

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);

The school's procedures must be consistent with the following approach.

Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including students, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

Reporting bullying behaviour

- Any student or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- All reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher who is a member of the Personal Safety Board (PSB)
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.

Investigating and dealing with incidents: Style of approach

Procedures

- All student bullying complaints are dealt with by the Personal Safety Committee (PSB Committee) which is the school's anti-bullying committee. This Committee is made up of teachers who volunteer their free time to investigate with any bullying cases. The PSB will investigate and give a recommendation of a sanction, if needed.
- If a bullying situation is witnessed or a complaint is made to any teacher. The teacher will then fill in a PSB Complaint Sheet which is situated in the Staff Room. A student can also tell a teacher, their Year head or a member of the Personal Safety Board (PSB).
- If a student is uncomfortable telling a teacher, he/she can inform a member of the Student Council who will pass on the complaint to the P.S.B. Students can also place a note (which must be signed) in the PSB Complaint Box which will be situated in the school's reception area. A member of the Board will check the Complaint Box every couple of days.
- On receiving a complaint, a member of the PSB will meet with the teacher/student who received the complaint and take the details. The PSB will liaise with the Deputy Principal in dealing with the complaint. Following this, two members of the PSB will be assigned to investigate the matter, meeting the individuals involved separately. This will be done in a confidential manner
- In investigating and dealing with a bullying complaint. The PSB must identify if bullying behaviour has occurred. The PSB should consider the following: **what, where, when and why?** The teacher/s will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;
- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned. Students who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;
- School Management and the Personal Safety Board (PSB) will ensure that something is done and will update the student who made the complaint. There will be an investigation into the matter that satisfies the PSB and the students and if found to be true, sanctions will be applied.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant PSB members should seek answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;

- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the teacher; It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant PSB members that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties 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 as outlined in the school's Bí Cineálta policy. In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the school should develop an appropriate plan to support the student and for how their parents will be informed.
- The school should give parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing actions being taken by the school and the supports provided to the students;

Where the relevant PSB members have determined that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied.

- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school;
- A letter to the student being bullied as well as the bully will be sent out after an investigation. The situation will be reviewed at various intervals
- If a bullying situation is witnessed or a complaint is made to any teacher. The Teacher will then fill in a PSB Complaint Sheet which is situated in the Staff Room. A student can also tell a teacher, their Year head or a member of the Personal Safety Board (PSB).

Follow up and recording

- The PSB must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.
- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant PSB member must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account as part of the review:
 1. the nature of the bullying behaviour,
 2. the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
 3. the relationship between the students involved.
 4. Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
 5. Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parent(s)/guardian(s) or the school Principal or Deputy Principal.
 6. Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged.

- Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour. It can take time for relationships to settle and for supports to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before bullying behaviour occurred.
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the PSB should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school should consider 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.

Recording of bullying behaviour

- It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

Informal: pre-determination that bullying has occurred

1. All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. All incidents must be reported to the relevant PSB members.
2. While all reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant PSB members, the relevant PSB members must keep a written record of the reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding the same.
3. The relevant PSB members must inform the PSB co-ordinator, deputy principal or principal of all incidents being investigated.

Informal: determination that bullying has occurred

- If it is established by the relevant PSB member that bullying has occurred, the relevant PSB member must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

- The relevant PSB members will consult with the PSB co-ordinator or Principal about the storage of such records.

Formal

The relevant PSB member must use the recording template at Appendix 2 to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

1. In cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and
2. Where the school has decided as part of its Anti-Bullying Policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

The school will list behaviours that must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal. These are in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.

When the recording template is used, it must be retained by the PSB co-ordinator and stored in the PSB filing cabinet. All PSB records will be stored in the PSB filing cabinet, with access to such files by the PSB co-ordinator, deputy principal and principal. Files should be retained for a similar length to records relating to a student's discipline.

Some established intervention strategies

- Relevant teacher interviews with all students.
- Negotiating agreements between students and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process.
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions.
- No Blame Approach.
- Circle Time.
- Restorative interviews.
- Restorative conferencing.
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires.
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given.
- The traditional disciplinary approach.
- Strengthening the victim.
- Mediation.
- Restorative Practice.
- The Support Group Method.

- The Method of Shared Concern. [Ref. www.bullyingawarenessweek.org/pdf/BullyingPreventionStrategiesinSchools Ken Rigby.pdf]

NOTE:

Any reported allegations of bullying/harassment between students and staff should be dealt with directly by the principal.

In relation to staff to staff incidents, the matter should be referred directly to the Principal where an Incident Report form should be filled out. Refer also to the TUI /ASTI Grievance procedure.

Requests to take no action

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than “look out” for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them.

Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action.

Parents should put this *request in writing to the school or be facilitated to do so* where there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

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):

The student(s) who has been the target of bullying behaviour will receive the utmost privacy and confidentiality in the initial, and subsequent, investigations. He/ She will be given the opportunity of speaking with the Guidance Counsellor, Chaplain and any member of the Student Support Team will be available to talk to him/her. All in-school support and opportunities will be provided for the students affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience.

- If students require counselling of further supports the school will endeavor to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise same. This may be for the student affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- Students should understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.
- The school will address the attitudes of bullying within the school community through the administering of sociograms to all class groups twice a year.
- A series of events will be organised, relating to raising awareness of bullying, during Friendship Week.

Bullying will be incorporated into RE, SPHE and Guidance lessons.

- In a case where sanctions need to be imposed, they will be enforced, as per the school's Code of Behaviour, by the Principal and/or Board of Management.
- Following an investigated incident of bullying, the members of the Personal Safety Board (PSB), Year Head, Class Tutors and break-time Supervisors will monitor the behaviour of the students involved. If deemed necessary a Class Tutor may administer a further sociogram.
- Staff will be informed of necessary developments in bullying incidents, at staff meetings. They will be asked to monitor and observe the students or classes involved in specific incidents and to pass on these observations to the Personal Safety Board
- Parents or guardians will be informed of serious incidents and if necessary they may be required to join in the restorative based approach to resolving the issue.
- The Guidance Counsellor and SPHE teachers will provide training in resilience.
- A referral system will be in place to ensure that all incidents will be dealt with. If those investigating can't resolve the issue it will then be referred onto the following people:
 1. Personal Safety Board (PSB)
 2. Guidance Counsellor
 3. Principal/Deputy Principal
 4. Outside Agencies.

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 A

Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The whole school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour. Schools should work in partnership with their patron, board of management, staff, students and their parents to develop and implement their Bí Cineálta policy.

This appendix is intended as a guide to addressing bullying behaviour. It is based on the information contained in Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Approach

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the students involved, rather than to apportion blame. When addressing bullying behaviour teachers should:

- 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 the students 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

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

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.

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?

If the answer to each of the questions above is **Yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

Note: One off incident may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

If the answer to any of these questions is **No**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider 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 be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

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
- a record should be kept of the engagement with all involved
- this record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bi Cineálta procedures), where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents
- 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

- the PSB 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 PSB 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 PSB 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

- if a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures
- 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 have had a negative effect on the student

Causeway Comprehensive School

Bullying Incident Report Form**1. Name of student being bullied and class group**

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of student(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Student concerned	☐
Other Student	☐
Parent	☐
Teacher	☐
Other	☐

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	☐
Classroom	☐
Corridor	☐
Toilets	☐
School Bus	☐
Other	☐

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

--

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) *

Physical Aggression	☐	Cyber-bullying	☐
Damage to Property	☐	Intimidation	☐
Isolation/Exclusion	☐	Malicious Gossip	☐
Name Calling	☐	Other (specify)	☐

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

--

9. Details of actions taken

--

Signed _____ (Relevant teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Personal Safety Board/Principal/Deputy Principal _

Appendix C

Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for board of management meeting of DD/MM/YYYY

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous board of management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school year.	

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which should include the following information where relevant:

- the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc.
- the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- if a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the board of management
- if the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.

Appendix D

Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual (calendar) review of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and its implementation in consultation with the school community. As part of the review, this document must be completed.

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school. ____/____/20____
2. Where in the school is the student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?

3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student-friendly policy on the school website? ____/____/20____
4. How has the student-friendly policy been communicated to students?

5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student-friendly policy been communicated to parents

6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year? ☐ Yes ☐ No
9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour. ☐ Yes ☐ No
10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy? ☐ Yes ☐ No
11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented? ☐ Yes ☐ No
12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No
13. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?
- _____
- _____
- _____
14. Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:
- _____
- _____
- _____
15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?
- _____
- _____
- _____

16. Does the student-friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

17. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _____

Appendix E

Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management of _____ confirms that the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of _____ [date].

This review was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education's *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of management)

Date: _____

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _____