RUSHALL NATIONAL SCHOOL
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Bí Cineálta Policy
(to address and prevent Bullying Behaviour)

The Board of Management of Rushall National 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.

Ireland ratified the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child1 in September 1992. In doing this we committed to promote, protect and fulfil the rights of children. Bullying is a children's rights issue. Bullying interferes with the following rights of the child:

- The right to freedom of expression (Article 13)
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)
- The right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 15)
- The right to privacy (Article 16)
- The right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect (Article 19)
- The right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health (Article 24)
- The right to education (Article 28)
- The right to enjoy their own culture, religion or language (Article 30)

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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.

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.

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:

- A targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm.
- The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature.
    - Physical (eg: personal injury, damage to or loss of property)
    - Social: (eg: withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion)
    - Emotional: (eg: low self esteem, depression, anxiety)
- 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 p is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a 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.

Behaviour that is not 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 be addressed under the school ‘s code of behaviour.
- 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 cannot control.
- Disagreement between students is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Types of Bullying:

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include directing bullying at someone focused on the following: disability, exceptional ability, gender identity, LGBTQ+ , physical appearance, racism, poverty status, religious identity, sexism and sexual harassment. This is not an exhaustive list.

Bullying can be:

Direct:

- Physical: pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. Physical assault. Destruction of personal property.
- Verbal: continual name calling which insults, humiliates the student – this may refer to physical appearance, clothes, gender, accent, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.
- Written: Writing insulting remarks in public places, passing notes or drawings about the student.
- Extortion: where something is obtained through force or threats

Indirect:

- Exclusion: where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.
- Relational: Where a student’s attempts to form friendships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined, threats, non-verbal gesturing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours, silent treatment and manipulation of friend groups etc can all form relational bullying for a student.

Online bullying behaviour:

Cyber bullying is carried out via text, direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This can include:

- Sending or sharing of insulting and offensive or intimidating messages or images via online means as mentioned above.
- Posting information which is personal, private or sensitive without consent.
- Making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students.
- Exclude/disrupt access to a student on purpose on online chat groups/access to accounts/from an online game.

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	September 2024	Bí Cineálta procedures received by school and circulated to staff
	October 2024	Principal attended Leadership Webinar Learnings shared with staff
	December 2024	Principal and Deputy Principal attended Leadership Workshop Session Learnings shared with staff
	May 2025	Pupil Survey completed in school Parent Survey link shared Staff Survey completed in school
	May 2025	Half day closure to engage with the policy/ procedures/ resources.
	May 2025	Policy development
	May 2025	Policy development/draft policy sharing/ Policy Amendment
	June 2025	Policy ratification/ sharing
	June 2026	Review of Policy
Students	May 2025	Pupils introduced to Bí Cineálta during collaboration Poster element of the policy explored and discussed
	May 2025	Students were given a questionnaire to seek their input in developing an Anti-Bullying policy in Child Friendly Format – their wording, examples and suggestions were all considered when drafting this Policy.
	May 2025	
	May 2025	Pupil Policy Development
		Policy Development/ Draft policy

	June 2025	sharing/ Policy Amendments
		Policy ratification/ Sharing
	June 2026	Policy Update
Parents	May 2025	Feedback sought from parents and children on current practices and formation of policy (survey)
		Updated definition of Bullying shared with parents to encourage talk and discussion in the home.
	May 2025	Policy and child friendly policy drafted and sent out to parents/children to review together. Policy amended.
	June 2025	Policy Sharing
	June 2026	Policy Update
Board of Management	April -June 2025	Engaging with policy procedures. Reviewing pupil, parent and staff feedback. Developing draft policy. Reviewing new policy draft. Final ratification following amendments made. Publishing policy on school website Publishing notification of policy review on school website
	June 2026	Review of Policy
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	N/A	N/A
Date policy was approved: June 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 3rd June 2026		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The board of Management has overall responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective, sustainable and measured. The Board of Management must ensure that accountability is of the highest standard and frequently appraise the outcomes of the strategies and measures contained within this policy. All staff are responsible in ensuring that there is a whole school approach to modelling appropriate behaviour and preventing and tackling bullying. School endeavours to put in place appropriate systems to ensure that ALL relevant members of the school community (pupils, parents, staff and wider community) have a shared understanding of what constitutes 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.'

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 and Environment:

We strive to:

- Create a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.
- Involve parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated.
- Support the idea that our school is a telling environment. We ensure to revisit the key messages of the Stay Safe Programme regularly.
- Promote the concept of a trusted adult – stay safe linkage – who to tell and who can help.
- Create safe spaces in our school building and yards –ensuring adequate

supervision and inclusion of pupil voice when completing our annual reviews.

- Remove barriers that would impinge on visibility of all pupils e.g. in classrooms/ corridors/ on yard etc. Staff circulating during supervision on yard.
- Incorporate artwork and signs to promote our school values – creation of a school charter promoting rights – equality, inclusion and respect.
- Encourage a sense of belonging with ownership over their own space through art and creativity.
- Create a positive school culture and climate which:
  - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  - promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

Rushall National School is a Bí Cineálta School. We follow these anti-bullying procedures (2024) and we consider the following to be key elements of a positive school culture:

- We acknowledge the right of each member of the school community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- We acknowledge the uniqueness of each individual and their worth as a human being.
- We promote positive habits of self-respect, self-discipline and responsibility among all its members.
- We have a clear commitment to promoting equity.
- We have the capacity to change in response to our pupil's needs.
- We identify elements of the curriculum through which positive and sustainable influences can be exerted towards forming pupil's attitudes and values.
- We take particular care of 'at risk' pupils and use systems to identify needs and facilitate early intervention where necessary – thus responding to the needs, fears/ anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.
- Staff are briefed on the uniform approach we must take to handle all reports of bullying – this is distributed to staff and a copy is displayed on the Office notice board for ease of access also.
- Friendship week events and activities such as Random acts of Kindness homework, Poster making, slogan making, well-being homework etc. form part of the school's initiatives to support an anti-bullying culture.
- Playground helpers – students in higher classes volunteer to support younger classes on yard to help with games and positive interactions.

- Stay safe and SPHE lessons focusing on positive behaviour form part of curricular content in all classes.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
- Class and School Behaviour Expectations (Rules/ Charter) development as well as notice board to promote kindness and build responsibility amongst pupils.
- Rushall National School recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships within the school community.
- We recognise the rights of parents to share in the task of equipping pupils with a range of life skills.
- We recognise the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying. (Child Friendly Anti- Bullying Policy was formed with pupil and parent input and is distributed to parents, children and staff to discuss. This policy outlines various ways to tell. Parents receive information at times regarding useful information on Anti Bullying.) We understand that the assistance of Gardaí, Tusla and Community Workers may be required in some cases.
- We promote habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
- We promote qualities of social responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying behaviour/ aggressive behaviour by ANY MEMBER of the school community.

Curriculum (teaching and learning)

We strive to:

- Provide teaching and promote learning which is collaborative and respectful, fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Display a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.

Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- Teach SPHE and RSE content which fosters student's well-being and self confidence as well as promoting personal responsibility for their own behaviours and actions. We do this in collaboration with parents.
- Model respectful behaviour towards colleagues, pupils and visitors in our school environment.
- Curricular and Extra-curricular activities can help to develop a sense of self - worth, working together, inclusion and respect.
- Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness

raising measures) that

- build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
- explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

Supports for staff:

- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going discussion/ evaluation/ review of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.
- All staff have a uniform interpretation of what is expected in relation to tackling bullying behaviour, how to identify bullying behaviour, how to manage disclosures and how to deal effectively with incidents of bullying within the classroom context.
- Ongoing CPD in relation to anti0bullying is encouraged/ available to staff.
- Staff are aware that supporting one another is a key aspect to the prevention of bullying behaviours.

Policy and planning

The aim of Rushall National School Bí Cineálta policy is:

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
- To promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.
- The Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision policy, Special Education Policy and Code of Behaviour all support the implementation of the Bí Cineálta policy.
- Effective leadership is a key component with Principal (DLP), Deputy Principal (DDLP), and all staff members focused on supporting the implementation of this policy.

Relationships and Partnerships

- Rushall National School recognises the need to work in partnership with and keep parents informed on procedures to improve relationships within the school community.

- We recognise the rights of parents to share in the task of equipping pupils with a range of life skills.
- We promote habits of mutual respect, courtesy and an awareness of the interdependence of people in groups and communities.
- We promote qualities of social responsibility, under the direction of the Principal, to act in preventing bullying behaviour/ aggressive behaviour by **ANY MEMBER** of the school community.
- Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as our parents' association and our various and multiple student committees and groups.
- Age and stage appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the student body in looking at their own behaviour – promoting acts of kindness and friendship, being an active help to others and looking at the causes of and impact of bullying during SPHE lessons.
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
- Encouraging peer mentoring and peer support
- Supporting active participation of students in school life and active participation of parents in school life also.
- Engaging parents and students in actively contributing to the formation of a Child Friendly Anti Bullying Policy to make them active participants in promotion of and discussion of useful ways to identify and reduce bullying behaviour and highlight procedure and how to deal with it if it does occur.

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):

Preventing Cyber Bullying, Homophobic/Transphobic bullying, Racist bullying, Preventing sexual harassment.

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of the modern age that can impact even the youngest members of society. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour

In addition to above mentioned strategies, the school has the following in place to prevent and address cyber- bullying:

- Staff at all times endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum. Frequent review of key messages of Stay Safe programme.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- AUP also developed for technology in our school.
- The school's Bí Cineálta Policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff and recorded using the template for this. (Appendix A).
- School wide awareness raising on all aspects of bullying, supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Refer to appropriate online behaviour when using devices and in SPHE lessons.
- Promote online safety events or material for pupils and parents.

Preventing homophobic/ transphobic bullying behaviour:

- Challenge gender- stereotypes – equal participation of all. Equal recognition.
- Raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour with pupils, parents and staff and encourage students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour (via workshops and lesson activities.)
- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters.
- Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that homophobic/ transphobic bullying is taking place.

Preventing racist bullying behaviour:

- Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated and students "see themselves" in the school environment. Every child represented in the school (display).
- Ensuring the library has material that reflects the diversity of the world population (from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds).
- Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of sex. •
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that racist bullying is taking place.
- 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

Preventing sexist bullying behaviour:

- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex.
- ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex
- Making clear that our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment of any kind with enforceable policy - See Code of Behaviour.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Mr Monaghan, Ms Conroy, Ms O'Donnell, Ms O'Keeffe

- The class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form
- The DLP will follow up after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased.
- All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.
- Principal will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.

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 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:

a. While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the 'Relevant Teacher(s)', the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' will use his/her/their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.

b. If it is established by the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' that bullying has occurred, the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

c. The 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must record the bullying incident on the school template by adding an Informal Record of alleged Incidents of Behaviour to the relevant folder.

d. The 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must record the bullying incident on the school template by adding an Informal Record of a Incidents of Behaviour to the relevant folder.

e. The 'Relevant Teacher' must inform the Principal.

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). With this in mind the school's procedures are as follows:

- In investigating and dealing with bullying the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the 'Relevant Teacher(s)'. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report instances of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, caretakers and cleaners are

encouraged to report any incidences of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to the Class Teacher.

- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- On being informed of an alleged incident of bullying, the teacher dealing with the report will first interview the victim(s) and discuss the feeling which the victim(s) experienced because of the bullying behaviour.
- Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' should seek answers to questions of what, where, who, when 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 the other's statements.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.
- Where the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' has/have determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- The ''Relevant Teacher'' does not apportion blame but should make an effort to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied. S/he emphasises that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter.
- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the ''Relevant Teacher'' will complete a report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information.
- If a pupil chooses to continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a once off occurrence. In this event parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted. The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for the pupil.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Depending on the seriousness of the bullying the school's Code of Behaviour

may be enacted.

- Repeated incidents of bullying behaviour will result in the imposition of sanctions. Such sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying behaviour. It must be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required that this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent must be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their rights to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
- The School will maintain care for the victim over time. This will be done by speaking to the child a number of weeks after the incident to check on their continuing welfare. The child's parents will also be consulted.
- If a child makes a report of bullying, but asks that nothing is to be done about it, the relevant teacher will support the child appropriately to explore how it will be handled sensitively and how parents may be notified. If a parent does so, they must submit in writing that they require no further action to be taken, but even so, the school may still deem it necessary to be investigated and handled appropriately.

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 school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.

Supporting Bullied pupils:

- Ending the bullying behaviour,
- Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils,
- Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils,
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes,
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations,
- Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become

involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

Supporting Bullying pupils:

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet,'
- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this,
- Making adequate supports available to help those who need it learn other ways of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others,
- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school),
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth,
- In dealing with negative behaviour in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child,
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

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.

Ratification by the Board of Management.

Signed: Danny Keeley Date: 3/6/2026
Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: A. Monaghan Date: 3-06-26
Principal/ Secretary to the Board of Management

Date of next review: June 2027

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: _____ Signed: _____

Chairperson Principal

Date: _____ Date _____

Review: _____

Appendix A: Informal Recording Sheet
(to be completed by the relevant staff member when he/she is sure that bullying is occurring)

Name(s) of the child(ren) that are being impacted by bullying behaviour		

A short description of the bullying behaviour occurring and its impact:

Details of Actions/ Strategies implemented to date:

Signed: Date:

Appendix A: Formal Recording of Incidents of Bullying

(to be completed by the relevant staff member when he/she is sure that bullying is still occurring, after 20 school days, despite efforts to curb it)

Name of pupil impacted by the bullying and class level:

Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaging in bullying behaviour:

Source of bullying concern/ report and location of incidents (tick relevant box(es):

The child (impacted by the behaviour)		Yard	
Another child		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher / ANA		Toilets	
Other source (specify)		Other (specify)	

Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concerns:

Types of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)):

Type of Bullying behaviour	Tick as appropriate	Type of Bullying behaviour	Tick as appropriate
Physical aggression		Cyber bullying	
Intimidation		Name calling/ verbal	
Damage to property		Extortion	
Isolation/ exclusion		Intimidation	
Malicious gossip		Relational	
Written		Other	

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

Homophobic	Disability/ AEN related	Racist	Membership of minority group	Other (specify)

A short description of the bullying behaviour occurring and its impact:

Details of Actions/ Strategies implemented to date:

Follow up/ resolution information:

Signed: Date:

Rushall National School

Bí Cineálta

Student Friendly Policy 2026/2027

We want everyone at our school to feel safe and happy. If you think that you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied, you need to tell a teacher or another adult that you trust as soon as possible. They will know what to do to help.

Get Help!!

Bullying behaviour is when someone keeps being mean or hurtful to others on purpose over and over again. When it happens a lot. Not just once.

Tell Someone!

Please tell someone if you think that you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied.

Use Your Voice

Rushall National School has a Bí Cineálta policy to try to stop bullying behaviour. We look at this policy every year to see what is working well or what could work better. We will always ask you what you think.

If a pupil tells a staff member that they think they are being bullied, we will: talk with the pupil, ask the pupil what they want to happen, work out a plan together,talk to their parents, talk to the other pupil(s) involved talk with the other pupil's parents

Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour

(Appendix C)

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 incidents 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 teacher 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 teacher 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 teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased

> 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

Bullying Behaviour Update to Board of Management

(Appendix D)

Bullying Behaviour Update for board of management meeting of _____.

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous board of management meeting, _____, following information must be reported by the principal 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	

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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.

Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

(Appendix E)

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.

   Initially adopted: June 2025 Last adopted: 3rd June 2026

2. Where in the school is the student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?

   - At all entrances/ exits to school building
   - On school website
   - In each classroom/ SET room

3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student-friendly policy on the school website?

   Initially published: June 2025 Most recent publication: 3rd June 2026

4. How has the student-friendly policy been communicated to students?

   - Pupils consulted in the development of the policy during collaboration
   - Start of term lessons acting as a reminder/ drawing attention to the school policy
   - Displayed throughout the school.

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

   - Discussed at Parent's Association meeting
   - Published on school website

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?

(a) Parents

-Parent Teacher Association Meeting

(b) Students

- discussion during collaboration

(c) Staff

- discussion at staff meeting

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: _____ Date: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Principal/ Secretary to the Board of Management

Date of next review: _____