

# Bí Cineálta Policy For Elphin Community College

April 2025



## Table of Contents

|                                                                                              |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Mission Statement .....                                                                      | 1  |
| Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour ..... | 2  |
| Definition of Bullying .....                                                                 | 3  |
| Targeted behaviour .....                                                                     | 4  |
| Repeated behaviour .....                                                                     | 4  |
| Imbalance of power .....                                                                     | 4  |
| Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour .....                                               | 4  |
| Criminal Behaviour .....                                                                     | 5  |
| Types of Bullying behaviour deemed to be inappropriate: (this list is not exhaustive) .....  | 5  |
| This policy applies .....                                                                    | 7  |
| Rights and Responsibilities of Each Member of the School Community .....                     | 7  |
| Rights and Responsibilities of students and staff .....                                      | 8  |
| Rights and Responsibilities of Parents .....                                                 | 8  |
| Rights and Responsibilities of bystanders/witnesses .....                                    | 8  |
| Preventing Bullying Behaviour .....                                                          | 8  |
| Bullying Prevention aligned with Key Areas of Wellbeing Promotion .....                      | 9  |
| Culture and Environment .....                                                                | 9  |
| Curriculum .....                                                                             | 9  |
| Relationships and Partnerships .....                                                         | 9  |
| Policy & Planning .....                                                                      | 9  |
| Supervision & Monitoring .....                                                               | 10 |
| How to Report a Concern .....                                                                | 11 |
| Addressing Bullying Behaviour .....                                                          | 11 |
| Recording of Bullying Behaviour .....                                                        | 14 |
| Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred .....                                        | 14 |
| Engagement with Students and Parents: .....                                                  | 14 |
| Factors to Consider: .....                                                                   | 14 |
| Review of Strategies: .....                                                                  | 15 |
| Agree on a Timeframe: .....                                                                  | 15 |
| Further Action if Bullying Continues: .....                                                  | 15 |
| Disciplinary Sanctions: .....                                                                | 15 |
| If Parents/Guardians are Unsatisfied: .....                                                  | 15 |
| Complaint to Ombudsman for Children: .....                                                   | 15 |

|                                                                                                                       |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Request to take no action: .....                                                                                      | 15        |
| Support.....                                                                                                          | 16        |
| Students who experience Bullying or Witness Bullying: .....                                                           | 16        |
| Students who display bullying behaviour: .....                                                                        | 16        |
| Outside agency support: .....                                                                                         | 17        |
| Link with other policies: .....                                                                                       | 17        |
| Oversight.....                                                                                                        | 17        |
| <b>Appendix A .....</b>                                                                                               | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Identifying if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred .....</b>                                                           | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Appendix B.....</b>                                                                                                | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Alleged Bullying Incident Student Statement Form .....</b>                                                         | <b>20</b> |
| <b>Appendix C .....</b>                                                                                               | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Elphin Community College .....</b>                                                                                 | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Student Behaviour promise .....</b>                                                                                | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Appendix D .....</b>                                                                                               | <b>23</b> |
| <b>Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management Meeting of Elphin Community College .....</b> | <b>23</b> |
| <b>Appendix E.....</b>                                                                                                | <b>24</b> |
| <b>Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy .....</b>                                                                         | <b>24</b> |
| Bí Cineálta Policy Review .....                                                                                       | 24        |
| <b>Appendix F .....</b>                                                                                               | <b>27</b> |
| <b>Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy.....</b>         | <b>27</b> |
| <b>Appendix F .....</b>                                                                                               | <b>33</b> |
| <b>Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy 2026 .....</b>   | <b>33</b> |

# Elphin Community College

## Mission Statement

*Our school exists to serve the educational needs of the community we serve.*

*We aspire to provide an environment that acknowledges educational achievement, enhances student self-confidence, and promotes life skills and attitudes that will enable students to live fulfilling lives and contribute to the betterment of society. We actively aspire to develop partnerships between teachers, parents, and the wider community.*

The Board of Management of Elphin Community College 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 its negative impact.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend Elphin Community College are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything 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.

Bullying is defined in *Cineálta: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as targeted, online or offline behaviour 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* policy, which

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.

## Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

All members of our school community were given the opportunity to contribute to the development/review of this policy.

|                                                                  | Date Consulted                 | Methods of Consultation           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| School staff                                                     | 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2025 | Staff Meeting                     |
|                                                                  | 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2025     | Bí Cineálta Training Day & Survey |
|                                                                  | 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2025    | Policy Sent for Review            |
|                                                                  |                                |                                   |
| Students                                                         | 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2025     | Student Survey                    |
| Parents                                                          | 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2025     | Parent Survey                     |
| Board of Management                                              |                                |                                   |
| Wider school community, as appropriate, for example, bus drivers |                                |                                   |
| Date Policy was approved: 20/05/2025                             |                                |                                   |
| Date policy was last reviewed: 07/05/2026                        |                                |                                   |

|                     | Date Consulted | Methods of Consultation |
|---------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| School staff        | 30/04/2026     | Survey                  |
|                     |                |                         |
|                     |                |                         |
|                     |                |                         |
| Students            | 30/04/2026     | Student Survey          |
| Parents             | 30/04/2026     | Parent Survey           |
| Board of Management | 30/04/2026     |                         |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |  |  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| Wider school community, as appropriate, for example, bus drivers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |  |
| Date Policy was approved:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |  |
| Date policy was last reviewed: 07/05/2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |  |
| <b>Outcome of Annual Review 2026</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |  |
| <p>The annual review of the Bí Cineálta Policy involved consultation with staff, students and parents through surveys and feedback processes.</p> <p>The following key findings emerged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students generally feel safe; however, some reported experiences of name-calling, exclusion, rumours and online behaviour</li> <li>• A number of students indicated reluctance to report concerns due to fear that the situation may worsen or that no action would be taken</li> <li>• Parents expressed confidence in the school's commitment, but highlighted the need for greater consistency and visibility in how bullying behaviour is addressed</li> <li>• Some parents and students were unclear on how to access the policy or who to contact</li> <li>• Specific locations identified as higher risk include break/lunch times, corridors, toilets, and transitions between classes</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions arising from this review are outlined throughout this policy and will be implemented and monitored during the 2026/2027 school year.</b></p> |  |  |

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as targeted, online or offline behaviour that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

<https://tinyurl.com/yef5y7p2>

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. Suppose the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student. In that case, this is not bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

## Repeated behaviour

Bullying is a systematic pattern of behaviour that 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 that is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can, therefore, be seen as bullying behaviour.

## Imbalance of power

In bullying incidents, the student experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves due to 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, becoming

a repeated behaviour. Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or remain friends, is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclusion or dislike by others, including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups. Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties, making 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 that 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 must know 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 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 1989<sup>11</sup>, 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.

## Types of Bullying behaviour deemed to be inappropriate: (this list is not exhaustive)

|                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>General behaviours which apply to all:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation, e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying, etc.</li> </ul> |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Name-calling</li> <li>• Slagging</li> <li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> <li>• The "look"</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed</li> <li>• Exclusion</li> <li>• No innocent bystander</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Cyber</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Denigration:</b> Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation</li> <li>• <b>Harassment:</b> Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• <b>Impersonation:</b> Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name</li> <li>• <b>Flaming:</b> Using inflammatory language or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>• <b>Trickery:</b> Fooling someone into sharing personal information, which you then post online</li> <li>• <b>Outing:</b> Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>• <b>Exclusion:</b> Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>• <b>Cyber Stalking:</b> Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for their safety</li> <li>• Silent telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> <li>• Abusive communication on social networks, e.g. Facebook/Snapchat, etc., or on games consoles</li> <li>• Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures</li> <li>• Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul> |
| <b>Identity Based Behaviours</b>  | <b>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation</b> (gender, including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the traveller community).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Homophobic and Transgender</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>• Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>• Name calling e.g. gay, queer, lesbian.... used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>• Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>• Threats</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

|                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the traveller community</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>• Exclusion based on any of the above</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Relational</b>                                                                     | <p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malicious gossip</li> <li>• Isolation and exclusion</li> <li>• Ignoring</li> <li>• Excluding from the group</li> <li>• Taking someone's friends away</li> <li>• "Bitching"</li> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> <li>• Breaking confidence</li> <li>• Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>• The "look"</li> <li>• Use of terminology such as "nerd" in a derogatory way</li> </ul> |
| <b>Sexual</b>                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>• Harassment</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Special Educational Needs Disability – Learning difficulties and Gifted</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name-calling</li> <li>• Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues</li> <li>• Mimicking a person's disability</li> <li>• Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>                                     |

#### This policy applies

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

#### Rights and Responsibilities of Each Member of the School Community

| Right | Responsibility |
|-------|----------------|
|-------|----------------|

|                                         |                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ✓ 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

| <b>I have a right to be:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>I have the responsibility to ensure that:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Treated with respect</li> <li>✓ Physically safe and expect my property to be safe at school</li> <li>✓ Free from all forms of bullying</li> <li>✓ Able to learn and teach without disruption</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Others are treated with respect</li> <li>✓ Others are physically safe, and the property of others is safe</li> <li>✓ Others are free from all forms of bullying</li> <li>✓ Others/students can learn without disruption</li> <li>✓ Bullying behaviour is acted upon as appropriate</li> </ul> |

## Rights and Responsibilities of Parents

| <b>I have a right to:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>I have the responsibility to ensure that:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Treated with respect</li> <li>✓ Physically safe and expect my property to be safe at school</li> <li>✓ Free from all forms of bullying</li> <li>✓ Able to learn and teach without disruption</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Others are treated with respect</li> <li>✓ Others are physically safe, and the property of others is safe</li> <li>✓ Others are free from all forms of bullying</li> <li>✓ Others/students can learn without disruption</li> <li>✓ Bullying behaviour is acted upon as appropriate</li> </ul> |

## Rights and Responsibilities of bystanders/witnesses

| <b>I should:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>I should not:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Say 'no' or 'stop' when you see or hear someone behaving unfairly – be assertive but not aggressive</li> <li>✓ Seek help immediately from an adult if the situation is dangerous</li> <li>✓ Tell when you know a student is being bullied</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Join in bullying behaviour, for example, laughing at, sneering, 'slagging' or fighting, etc.</li> <li>✓ Cheer on somebody who is bullying</li> <li>✓ Stay in dangerous situations, e.g. a fight</li> <li>✓ Bully the 'bully'</li> </ul> |

## Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that our school will use. 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). **As part of ongoing prevention work, we will place increased emphasis on:**

- Raising awareness of bullying behaviour and its impact
- Ensuring students understand the consequences of bullying behaviour
- Regularly revisiting the Bí Cineálta policy with students through SPHE and Wellbeing programmes.
- Promoting a culture where students feel confident to report concerns.

## Bullying Prevention aligned with Key Areas of Wellbeing Promotion

| Culture and Environment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Curriculum                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Door Policy</li> <li>• Active Student Support Team</li> <li>• Active Mentoring System</li> <li>• Establishment of a Safe Telling Environment</li> <li>• Seating Plans</li> <li>• Visible Displays around the school</li> <li>• Display of Students' work</li> <li>• Designated area to report bullying issues – Student Voice Post Box</li> <li>• Empowerment of student voice – Students' Council, Class Prefects, Parents Association, Focus Groups</li> <li>• Designated areas for students – base classrooms for lunchtime</li> <li>• Anti-bullying Week, Friendship Week, Internet Safer Day</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various awareness weeks throughout the school calendar e.g. Friendship Week, Anti-Bullying (Cyber Bullying) week, Stand-Up Awareness week, Internet Safety Week, Think Languages Campaign, Ethos Day/Week (Inclusion &amp; Diversity), Wellfest Week</li> <li>• A variety of programmes are run in SPHE/Digital Media Literacy/Wellbeing/Guidance Classes, e.g. Lockers, Fuse, Alert, The Respect Effect, Be in Ctrl.</li> <li>• Peer Teaching</li> <li>• Wellbeing is at the centre of all subject plans</li> <li>• Wellbeing indicators addressed in all areas of Learning &amp; Teaching</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Year transition programme through SPHE</li> <li>• Drama – School show</li> <li>• AEN/ASD: Weekly AEN meetings, school culture of inclusion, world dyslexia awareness day, updates to staff from management &amp; AEN meetings, whole school AEN, yearly meetings of AEN lead teachers and class teachers</li> <li>• Staff CPD on areas of anti-bullying</li> </ul> |
| Relationships and Partnerships                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Policy & Planning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linking with external services, e.g. NEPS, CAMHS, Tusla, Gardaí</li> <li>• Linking with BOM, PA, Students' Council, Local Clubs, YSI Community Activities, Mini Projects, Subject-specific CBAs, e.g. CSPE Action</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bí Cineálta Policy</li> <li>• Code of Behaviour Policy</li> <li>• Acceptable Use Policy</li> <li>• Child Safeguarding</li> <li>• Data Protection</li> <li>• iPad Acceptable Use Policy</li> <li>• Internet Acceptable Use Policy</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Project, SPHE CBA Class Events, Fundraising events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Support Team</li> <li>• Guest Speakers</li> <li>• Garda visits</li> <li>• Extra-Curricular – Coaches, Choreographers, Artists</li> <li>• Jigsaw One Good School</li> <li>• Planet Youth</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media Policy</li> <li>• Staff are aware that they are all mandated persons. Child protection procedures are handed out each year as a reminder, and they complete the Children First E-Learning Programme.</li> <li>• Principal &amp; Deputy Principal complete DLP/DDLP training and refreshers.</li> </ul> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Supervision & Monitoring

Elphin Community College has the following supervision and monitoring policies to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

In addition to all the practices identified under Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Planning and Policy, and Relationships and Partnerships, Elphin Community College has the following supervision and monitoring policies to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

- **Yard and Corridors and in class:**  
A weekly schedule of student supervision on corridors and yard is developed to monitor student behaviour and wellbeing. 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.
- **Student Support Team:** The Student Support Team meets weekly and operates a check-and-connect system where teachers meet students whose concerns may have been brought to their attention. We also operate a 'lean-in, lean-out' system where teachers are notified of students needing more support.

As part of the annual review process (May 2026), particular attention has been drawn to the need for increased supervision at key times and locations, including:

- Break and lunchtime
- Corridors and transitions between classes
- Toilets and less supervised areas

Supervision arrangements will be reviewed and adjusted annually to respond to identified needs.

## How to Report a Concern

Students and parents can report concerns in the following ways:

- Speak to any teacher
- Speak to the Year Head
- Contact the Student Support Team (Ms Healy, Mr Spellman, Ms McPhillips, Mr Noone, or Ms Gilleran)
- Contact the school office
- Use the student voice box (outside DP office)
- Submit the concern using the QR code in the student's school journal/posters.

### **What happens When A concern is reported:**

- **The concern will be acknowledged promptly**
- **The matter will be investigated in a sensitive and fair manner**
- **Parents/guardians will be informed, where appropriate**
- **Appropriate actions will be taken**
- **Follow-up will take place to ensure the behaviour has stopped and to support those involved.**

**We are committed to ensuring that all concerns are taken seriously and acted upon.**

Students may bring a friend when reporting a concern and will be supported through the process. We acknowledge that some students may feel hesitant to report concerns due to fear that the situation may worsen or that no action will be taken. The school is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment where all reports are treated seriously, handled sensitively and followed up appropriately.

## Addressing Bullying Behaviour

All teachers are responsible for 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 promptly
- Inform parents of those involved.

The steps that the school will take 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):

- Where a teaching staff member has a concern about a student being bullied, either through personal observation or through receiving a report from a third party, the teacher should, without delay, refer the matter to the Year Head, Deputy Principal, or Principal.
- In investigating or addressing bullying behaviour in any way, Year Heads are welcome to seek the assistance and support of the principal, the deputy principal or the student support team at any time. Indeed, given the extent to which the principal and deputy principal are privy to all kinds of personal information about students, it would be prudent for year heads to check in with either of them before taking any action in relation to bullying behaviour.
- The school reserves the right to investigate allegations of bullying (and to take disciplinary action where necessary) where a member of the school community perpetrates bullying and it impinges on the work or well-being of a student in the school, even where the bullying acts are committed outside of the school/college.
- The school reserves the right, in accordance with section 6 Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools, to seek the assistance of agencies such as NEPS, the HSE, and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary to deal effectively with bullying behaviour. In any case, where the school deems bullying behaviour to be potentially abusive (Section 2 Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools) it will consult with the HSE's Children and Family Services to assist it in drawing up an appropriate response or to obtain advice or to make a formal child protection report to the HSE or the Gardaí (a appropriate) in accordance with the DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary (revised 2023).

- Concerns about or allegations of bullying will be investigated and addressed in accordance with Section 6 *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools*. These are summarised as follows:
  - ❖ 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 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 \*

*\* Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role in addressing bullying behaviour in partnership with the school. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties will be contacted early 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.*

When identifying bullying behaviour, relevant teachers will consider what, where, when and why.

- If a group of students are involved, each student will be engaged individually at first.
- Thereafter, all students involved will 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).

When a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the school will develop an appropriate plan to support the student and inform their parents.

The school will consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents, such as literacy, digital literacy, or language barriers.

## Recording of Bullying Behaviour

Those involved in investigating and resolving bullying behaviour will note and report developments as follows. In doing so, they will comply with relevant data protection legislation. All records of bullying incidents must be objective and factually.

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

- Record all incidents of bullying behaviour (using Appendix B)
- Document the following details:
  - Type and form of bullying behaviour (if known).
  - Where and when it took place.
  - The date of the first engagement with the students and their parents.
- Include the views of students and parents on actions to address the bullying.
- Track the review process with students and parents to check if the bullying behaviour has stopped and get their feedback.
- Record the date of each engagement and when it is confirmed that the bullying has ceased.
- Note any involvement with external services or supports.
- Keep the records according to the school's record-keeping policy and in line with data protection rules.
- If there is a Student Support File, place a copy of the record there to help the support team provide consistent help for the student's wellbeing.

## Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

### Engagement with Students and Parents:

- The year head/deputy principal/principal must engage with the students involved in the bullying and their parents.
- This engagement should occur no later than 20 school days after the initial contact.

### Factors to Consider:

- During this engagement, important factors to consider include:
  - The nature of the bullying behaviour.
  - The effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying.
  - The relationship between the students involved.

### Review of Strategies:

- If the bullying behaviour has not stopped, the year head/deputy principal/principal should:
  - Review the strategies used to address the bullying.
  - Consult with the students involved and their parents to determine next steps.

### Agree on a Timeframe:

- A timeframe should be set for further engagement and follow-up until the bullying behaviour ceases.

### Further Action if Bullying Continues:

- If bullying continues, the school should consider using strategies from the school's Code of Behaviour to address the inappropriate behaviour.

### Disciplinary Sanctions:

- If disciplinary sanctions are necessary, the matter should be handled between the student, their parent, and the school.

### If Parents/Guardians are Unsatisfied:

- If a parent is not satisfied with how the bullying has been addressed, they should refer to the school's complaints procedures, as outlined in the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

### Complaint to Ombudsman for Children:

- If a parent remains dissatisfied after the complaint process, they can contact the Ombudsman for Children if they believe the school's actions negatively affected the student.

### Request to take no action:

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a staff member do 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 staff member shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work together on 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 inform schools of bullying behaviour 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 parents' request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.*

## Support

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):

### Students who experience Bullying or Witness Bullying:

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- Pupils may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, develop their friendship and social skills, and build resilience whenever needed.
- In this regard, the relevant Student Support Team will work closely with the student to ensure they are actively supported in school and engage in school-based activities they enjoy. They may be placed on our school's "lean in/out" support list and/or engage in check-and-connect.
- The school's guidance department will also put in place a program of support in conjunction with the Year Head.
- The learning strategies applied within the school will also allow for enhancing the pupils' self-worth.

### Students who display bullying behaviour:

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- Pupils who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.
- The Year Head, in conjunction with the relevant Student Support Team, will work closely with the student on this matter.

### Outside agency support:

- The school, in certain circumstances, may also seek the support and advice of TUSLA, EWO, NEPS, NCSE, second-level support services, HSE and any other agency deemed appropriate to support the school in dealing with bullying incidents.

### Link with other policies:

- Code of Behaviour
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- iPad Acceptable Use Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- (Wellbeing policy???)

### Oversight

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents 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 been reported since the last meeting, 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
- Any wider strategies to prevent and address the bullying behaviour, where relevant
- 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 needs urgent review in advance of the annual review.

This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

The minutes of the board of management meeting will document the number of new incidents of bullying behaviour, the number currently ongoing, and the total number of incidents of bullying behaviour since the beginning of the school year.

The minutes will also note where the board has considered the bullying behaviour, the verbal update, and the document, and when the board has decided that an urgent policy review is required.

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, in the student's school journal, 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 a material change in any matter this policy refers to.

The Board of Management will receive updates on the implementation of actions arising from the annual review of the Bí Cineálta Policy. This will include monitoring trends, reviewing the effectiveness of interventions, and ensuring continuous improvement.



## Appendix A

### Identifying if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour, the teacher should consider the following questions:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group?
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, and it should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

Note: In certain circumstances, one-off incidents may be considered bullying. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it is highly likely to be shared multiple times and thus becomes 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.



## Appendix B

### Alleged Bullying Incident Student Statement Form

**Date:**

---

**Student:**

---

**Details: Include time, place, names of alleged perpetrators, and bystanders. Detail both sides of the event**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## Appendix C

### Elphin Community College

### Student Behaviour promise

**Student**

**Name:**

**Class:**

I recognise that my fellow students and I are all unique in many ways – such as our hair colour, skin colour, clothing, height, weight, size, accents, religions, nationalities, sexual orientations, past and current homes, hobbies, personalities, academic abilities, study habits, athletic skills, musical preferences, and much more.

I do not want to be treated unfairly or made to feel bad because of any of these differences, or simply because someone might not like me.

I understand that I have the right to be different, and no one has the right to treat me unfairly or be unkind because of that.

I know I am entitled to fair and respectful treatment both in Elphin Community College, in line with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy and Code of Behaviour, and outside of school as well.

Likewise, I recognise that all students deserve to be treated with fairness, equality, and respect. It is wrong to treat anyone in any other way. Therefore, I promise to treat all my fellow students with fairness, equality, and respect, regardless of our differences or personal feelings.

In particular: Handwrite below: *"I will always treat Name equally, fairly and respectfully"*.

|  |
|--|
|  |
|  |



# ELPHIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## COLÁISTE POBAIL AIL FINN



**gretb**  
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
na Gaillimhe agus Ros Comáin  
Galway and Roscommon  
Education and Training Board

**Signed:**

**Student:**

**Date:**

**Teacher:**



## Appendix D

### Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management Meeting of Elphin Community College

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:

|                                                                                                                 | Number |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| <b>Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting:</b> |        |
| <b>Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing:</b>                                       |        |
| <b>Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school year:</b>        |        |

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 include the form of bullying behaviour, the type of bullying behaviour, if known, the location of bullying behaviour, where 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 E

### Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

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

#### 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 <i>Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ? Insert the date when the school last adopted the Bí Cineálta policy. | ____/____/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 and student-friendly policies been communicated to parents?                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                 |                                |
| 6. Have all school staff been made aware of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and the <i>Bí Cineálta Procedures to</i>                                                                                                                                                   | Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> | No<br><input type="checkbox"/> |



|                                                                                                                                                                         |                                 |                                |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?                                                                                            |                                 |                                |  |
| 7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the school's strategies to prevent bullying?                                                                                    | Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> | No<br><input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 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<br><input type="checkbox"/> | No<br><input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 9. Has the Board discussed how the school addresses all bullying reports?                                                                                               | Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> | No<br><input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy?                                   | Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> | No<br><input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?                                                                                          | Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> | No<br><input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies to prevent bullying?                                                                                    | Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> | No<br><input type="checkbox"/> |  |
| 13. How have (a) Parents, (b) Students and (c) school staff been consulted as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?                                             |                                 |                                |  |
| (a) Parents:                                                                                                                                                            |                                 |                                |  |
| (b) Students:                                                                                                                                                           |                                 |                                |  |
| (c) School Staff:                                                                                                                                                       |                                 |                                |  |
| 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 because 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

☐



## Appendix F

### Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management of Elphin Community College confirms that the board's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the Board's Meeting on \_\_\_\_\_.

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: Mary Mullarkey

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025

*Chairperson of the Board of Management.*

Signed: Anne Giligan

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025

*Principal*

Date of next review: May 2026



# Appendix E

## Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy 2025/2026

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.

Surveys sent out to parents/students/staff 30/04/2026

### 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.

20/05/2025

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

In every classroom, at eye-level.

2. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student-friendly policy on the school website? 21/05/2025

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

At student assemblies  
Through SPHE classes

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

Through surveys  
On school website

5. 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

6. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour?

☐ Yes ☐ No



7. 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
8. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No
9. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy? ☐ Yes ☐ No
10. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented? ☐ Yes ☐ No
11. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No
12. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

We surveyed students/parents and staff on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2026.

13. 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:

- A clear student-friendly reporting pathway for students is needed
- A step-by-step response process will be outlined for students and parents
- Increased supervision in identified areas and times
- Reminders to students once-a-term of the procedures
- Greater emphasis on student awareness of consequences and supports
- Continued promotion of student voice and wellbeing initiatives
- Ongoing staff training and review of procedures
- Enhanced communication with parents regarding the policy



14. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?

### Areas for Improvement and Action Plan (with Timeframes)

- Following analysis of feedback from staff, students and parents, a number of areas for improvement were identified. These relate primarily to **clarity of reporting processes, consistency and visibility of response, student confidence in reporting, and supervision at key times and locations.**

#### 1. Clarity of Reporting Processes

##### Finding:

Some parents and students indicated uncertainty regarding how to report concerns and who to contact

##### Action:

- Develop and include a **clear, student- and parent-friendly reporting pathway** within the policy
- Create a simplified visual version (poster/student journal/website)

##### Timeframe:

- June-August 2026 (for implementation at start of school year)

#### 2. Student Confidence in Reporting

##### Finding:

A notable number of students indicated they may not report concerns due to:

- fear it would make things worse
- belief that nothing would happen

##### Action:

- Explicitly address this within the policy (commitment to listening, acting, and follow-up)
- Deliver targeted inputs through SPHE/Wellbeing on:
  - how to report
  - what happens after reporting

##### Timeframe:

- Policy update: August 2026
- Student inputs: Ongoing from September 2026 (review each term)

#### 3. Consistency and Visibility of Response

##### Finding:

Parents and students highlighted the need for:

- more consistent application of the policy
- clearer evidence that action is taken

##### Action:

- Include a **step-by-step response process** in the policy
- Reinforce consistent implementation through staff meetings and guidance
- Ensure follow-up is systematically recorded and reviewed

##### Timeframe:

- Policy update: August 2026
- Staff reinforcement: Croke Park hours / first term meetings (Sept-Oct 2026)
- Ongoing monitoring throughout the year

#### 4. Supervision in Identified Areas

##### Finding:

Staff and student feedback identified higher-risk areas/times:

- break and lunchtime
- corridors and toilets
- transitions between classes
- bus/unsupervised times

##### Action:

- Review and adjust supervision rota
- Increase visibility of staff in identified areas



- Monitor effectiveness through ongoing review

**Timeframe:**

- Review of supervision: June 2026
- Implementation: September 2026
- Review: End of Term 1

### 5. Awareness and Understanding of the Policy

**Finding:**

Some parents and students have not seen or are not familiar with the policy

**Action:**

- Increase visibility of the policy through:
  - school website
  - student journal
  - assemblies / SPHE
  - Revisit policy with students at the start of each school year and periodically thereafter
- **Timeframe:**
- August-September 2026
- Reinforced termly

### 6. Ongoing Staff Training and Support

**Finding:**

Staff requested:

- refresher training
- guidance on early intervention and conversations

**Action:**

- Provide annual refresher training
- Include Bí Cineálta as a standing item in staff meetings
- Share best practice approaches

**Timeframe:**

- Annual training: 2026/2027 school year
- Ongoing review each term

**Conclusion**

- An action plan has been developed in response to the findings of the annual review. The plan focuses on improving **clarity, consistency, student confidence, supervision, and communication**, with actions scheduled for implementation from **June-September 2026** and ongoing review throughout the 2026/2027 school year.



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

No

16. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour?

☐ Yes ☐ No

17. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?

☐ Yes ☐ No

18. 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



## Appendix F

### Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy 2026

The Board of Management of Elphin Community College confirms that the board's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the Board's Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2026.

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: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 07<sup>th</sup> May 2026

*Chairperson of the Board of Management.*

Signed: Anne Giligan

Date: 07<sup>th</sup> May 2026

*Principal*

Date of next review: May 2027