



## Bí Cineálta

# Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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Date of Commencement:	May 2025
Date of Review:	Annual Review

## 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	May 2025	Whole staff (teachers, snas, ancillary and admin) workshop conducted during half day closure.
Students	May 2025	Presentation to student council by Ms G O Connor (Policy Coordinator)  Wellbeing Survey of students (SSE) by Mr O Marron (Appendix 5)
Parents	May 2025  September 2025	Presentation to Policy Sub Committee of the Parents/Guardians Council by Ms G O'Connor (Policy Coordinator)  Presentation to Parents/Guardians Council of Draft Policy by Ms B Kelly (DP)
Board of Management	May 2025	Presentation to Board of Management Meeting of Bi Cinealta procedures by Mr M O'Byrne (Principal)
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	April/May 2025	Presented to individually (Bus driver, Bus Escort, Canteen staff) by Mr M O'Byrne (Principal)
Date policy was approved: Bi Cineálta Draft Policy – May 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 16 <sup>th</sup> September 2025		

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

The Board of Management of Confey 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 the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

### **Link to Mission Statement**

We believe we can make a difference by providing a quality education to our students in a caring, inclusive environment. We strive to provide a holistic approach to achieving excellence, enabling students to develop as mature, well-rounded, informed and valued members of society. We value respect, fairness, equality and everyone's right to be themselves. We aim to help and empower our students to become their best selves and to appreciate the rights of others. We strive for kind, collaborative relationships between our students, our staff and our parents. We educate our students not only for now, but also for life's journey.

Our school motto is Meas ar chách/respect for all. In our school everybody is valued. Difference of any type does not make it acceptable to bully a person. Silence allows people to suffer. We speak out when we know we should. All people in this school have the right to be themselves, and the responsibility to treat others as they would like to be treated.

This policy also aligns with the KWETB core values; Excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community and Respect.

### **Rationale**

This Bí Cineálta policy has been developed to prevent and address bullying behaviour within the school community. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact it can have on the lives of pupils. At Confey College, we believe that all members of the school community have a shared responsibility to care for one another and provide a supportive and safe environment, free from the fear or reality of being bullied

## Policy Alignment

This policy is consistent with the following policies in Confey College:

- Admissions Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy
- KWETB Dignity in the Workplace Policy
- KWETB Equality Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Health and Safety Statement

## Goals

The Board of Management is fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour:

- a) 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 nonthreatening environment; and
  - Promotes respectful relationships across the school community
- b) Effective leadership
- c) A school-wide approach
- d) A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact
- e) 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 including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- f) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils
- g) Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies) and
- h) On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta policy.

## Scope

This policy addresses bullying behaviour, harassment and sexual harassment.

This policy applies to all students enrolled in Confey College.

The school reserves the right to apply its Bí Cineálta policy in respect of bullying behaviour that occurs at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, if in the opinion of the Principal and/or the Board of Management the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at school for the victim, has infringed on the rights of the victim at the school and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

This policy applies in the following contexts:

- In class
- Between classes
- On the school premises
- On the way to and from school
- On any school related activity
- Online

## Limitations of the School's responsibility

While Confey College takes all reports of bullying behaviour seriously, it is important to acknowledge that the School cannot monitor or police all interactions that occur outside of School, on social media or in students' personal lives or during holiday periods of School closure. The School will only intervene in instances where bullying behaviour outside of School has a direct and significant impact on the student's experience at School, as outlined above. Parents and guardians play a key role in monitoring social interactions, particularly in online spaces. Where necessary, concerns about bullying behaviour occurring outside of School should be referred to An Garda Síochána or other appropriate authorities.

## Definition of bullying

### What bullying is:

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'.

Key characteristics of bullying behaviour: Alleged incidents of bullying are however often complex and will be considered on a case by case basis. There are also many different motives for bullying behaviour which can be understood on an individual level. At Confey College, we believe every student deserves to feel safe, respected and valued. Bullying behaviour disrupts this sense of safety and well-being. It can take many forms, but it always involves the following key elements:

- Targeted behaviour

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted and harmful. It occurs when someone intentionally behaves in a way that causes distress or harm to another person. Unlike accidents or thoughtless actions, bullying is purposeful and the person displaying this behaviour knows it will hurt the student experiencing it. The harm caused may be physical, social or emotional.

- Repeated behaviour

Bullying isn't a one-time incident; it's a pattern of negative behaviour that happens repeatedly over time. Even so, a single harmful post, image or video shared online, especially when it is likely to spread, can be considered bullying because of its enduring impact. One-off incidents of inappropriate behaviour that don't involve bullying are still taken seriously and may be addressed under the School's Code of Behaviour.

- Imbalance of power

Bullying often involves a situation where the student experiencing the behaviour feels unable to defend themselves. This imbalance of power might come from differences in size, age, strength, social status or other factors like family background, disability, gender identity or ethnicity. In online bullying, the imbalance might arise from the anonymity of the bully or the difficulty in

removing harmful content.

It is important to recognise that bullying behaviour can sometimes be disguised as joking or teasing. While humour and playfulness are normal parts of some student interactions, a behaviour crosses into bullying when it is intentional and causes hurt, distress or harm to another person. Phrases such as "I was only joking" or "I was only messing" cannot excuse actions that are directed at undermining, embarrassing or upsetting someone else. Equally, it is not the fault of the person experiencing the behaviour for "not getting the joke" or "lacking a sense of humour"; rather, it is the responsibility of the person making the comment or engaging in the behaviour to act with kindness and respect.

### **What bullying is not:**

Some conflicts and disagreements are not bullying, though they still require support. Examples include:

- **One-off incidents:** A single instance of unkind behaviour or disagreement isn't bullying but will still be addressed.
- **Disputes between friends:** Arguments or changes in friendships are a normal part of growing up unless they involve repeated attempts to exclude, manipulate or harm, they are not considered bullying.
- **Behaviours linked to additional needs:** On occasion, some students, particularly those with additional educational needs, may act in ways that hurt others unintentionally.
- **Unintentional harm:** If a student's actions cause repeated harm without intent, this isn't bullying. Even so, the impact will still be addressed.

### **Types of bullying behaviour**

Bullying behaviour shows in various forms, some of which may have severe consequences.

Common types of bullying include:

- **Malicious gossip and spreading rumours**  
This involves deliberately sharing false or hurtful information about someone to damage their reputation. It may also include non-verbal gestures designed to mock or demean the targeted individual.
- **Online bullying (cyberbullying)**  
Online bullying occurs through the misuse of technology, such as sending harmful messages, sharing inappropriate images or posting demeaning comments on social media, gaming platforms or other online spaces. This form of bullying can be persistent, invasive and difficult to escape. A single harmful post, image or video, particularly one likely to be widely shared, can meet the criteria for bullying due to its lasting impact.
- **Identity-based bullying**  
This targets aspects of a person's identity, such as their race, ethnicity (including membership of the Traveller and Roma communities), disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion or cultural background. It may involve discrimination, derogatory comments or exclusionary behaviour. Bullying behaviour can, in certain circumstances, be considered a criminal offence under Irish law.

- **Physical aggression**  
Physical bullying involves behaviours such as pushing, hitting, slapping, kicking, tripping or other forms of violence intended to harm or intimidate the target. In some cases, activities like 'mess fights' or 'practical jokes' can cross the line into bullying if used to humiliate or hurt. Severe physical violence may constitute assault under the law.
- **Intimidation**  
This includes using aggressive body language, threatening gestures or a menacing tone of voice to create fear. Intimidation may also involve silent but hostile actions, such as glaring or deliberately excluding someone in a visibly targeted way.
- **Social exclusion and isolation**  
Bullying through exclusion involves deliberately isolating an individual by ignoring them, excluding them from group activities or encouraging others to do the same. This behaviour often includes actions such as giving the "silent treatment," whispering insults to be overheard or spreading damaging notes or drawings. However, it is important to recognise that individuals have the right to choose their own friendships. Deciding not to continue a friendship with someone is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated actions intended to harm, exclude or manipulate the person affected.
- **Relational bullying**  
Relational bullying undermines a person's attempts to form friendships or maintain social connections. It often includes manipulating social groups, turning peers against the individual or undermining their relationships through deceit or exclusion.
- **Name-calling and verbal abuse**  
Persistent name-calling directed at an individual with the intention of humiliating or upsetting them is a form of verbal bullying. This can target physical appearance, accent, personality or academic ability. For example, high-achieving students or those struggling academically may become targets of persistent ridicule.
- **Damage to property**  
This includes acts such as defacing, breaking, stealing or hiding personal belongings. It may also involve scattering items, such as schoolbooks or other materials, to cause embarrassment or inconvenience.
- **Extortion**  
Extortion involves coercing a student to hand over money, possessions or other items, often under threat of harm. This form of bullying is particularly devious due to the fear and helplessness it instils in the victim.
- **Sexting and sharing of explicit content**  
This involves the creation, distribution or possession of explicit images, videos or text messages. Such behaviour is strictly prohibited.

**This list is not meant to be exhaustive and is used merely as a guide as to the various types of bullying that can occur.**

## **Criminal Behaviour**

Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years. Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online.

In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images.

If bullying behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence, it may be considered assault. If bullying behaviour involves discrimination or hate speech targeting a student based on their race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, it may be considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989, 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

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate (see Chapter 5 of the BÍ Cineálta procedures):

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of good practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

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; promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

### **Culture and Environment**

#### **A Telling Environment**

At Confey College, we are committed to fostering a culture in which students feel secure and supported in reporting bullying behaviour. Reporting incidents of bullying is encouraged and recognised as an important responsibility, rather than an act of "telling tales."

- All reports will be handled with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- Clear and accessible reporting channels are provided, including opportunities to report to trusted staff.
- Staff members are appropriately trained to identify and address bullying behaviour.
- Parents and guardians are actively encouraged to raise concerns about bullying.
- A whole-school approach promotes a culture of respect, kindness, and inclusivity.
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This approach ensures that bullying is effectively addressed and a safe, supportive environment is maintained for all members of the school community.

#### **A Trusted Adult**

At Confey College, we recognise the vital role that trusted adults play in supporting students who experience bullying. A trusted adult is someone a student feels safe approaching for help, guidance, and support.

Students are encouraged to identify and seek support from a trusted adult, whether it be a teacher, year head, school counsellor, or other staff member.

Staff are committed to building positive, supportive relationships with students to ensure they feel comfortable reaching out when needed.

Trusted adults listen attentively to student concerns, respond with empathy, and take appropriate actions to address the bullying behaviour.

#### **Safe physical spaces and Supervision**

Bullying "black spots" within the school will be identified and monitored during break times.

Staff will be vigilant in following the procedures as outlined in this policy.

Social networking sites are blocked by Dept of Education firewall on all school devices. The school has a no mobile phone policy, and students cannot use their mobile during the school day (unless with specific permission e.g. students with diabetes).

### **Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)**

Anti-bullying education is embedded across the curriculum to promote positive behaviour, empathy, and respect among students. Various subjects provide opportunities to explore themes of kindness, inclusion, and responsible citizenship.

- Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE): Anti-bullying lesson plans will be implemented in SPHE classes in 1st and 2nd year. In addition to this, when required, targeted workshops take place in SPHE classes in response to issues as they arise.
- Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE): Links are made within the “Human Dignity” and “Rights and Responsibilities” section of the curriculum that will encourage positive behaviour between students.
- Physical Education (PE): Lessons promote teamwork, fair play, respect, and inclusion through cooperative activities and group challenges, fostering positive peer interactions.

This list is not exhaustive, and anti-bullying education may be integrated into various subjects across the curriculum, reinforcing a school-wide culture of kindness, respect, and inclusion.

### **Policy and Planning**

Confey College is committed to preventing bullying through clear policies and structured planning. A whole-school approach ensures that students, staff, and parents work collaboratively to create a positive and respectful school environment. The school’s Code of Behaviour sets clear expectations for kindness, respect, and accountability, reinforcing antibullying principles in daily interactions.

To address bullying effectively, the school has established anti-bullying procedures that outline the steps for reporting, investigating, and addressing incidents in a fair and timely manner. These procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective, relevant, and aligned with national guidelines. Staff training is an ongoing priority, equipping teachers and school personnel with the skills to recognise, prevent, and respond to bullying behaviour.

Student and parental involvement is actively encouraged, with opportunities for consultation and feedback in shaping anti-bullying policies. By embedding bullying prevention into its policies and planning, Confey College endeavours to ensure a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students.

### **Relationships and Partnerships**

Building strong relationships and fostering meaningful partnerships are key to preventing bullying at Confey College. The school actively involves students, staff, parents, and the wider community in initiatives that promote respect, empathy, and inclusion.

A range of anti-bullying initiatives are in place, including awareness campaigns, dedicated anti-bullying week, and peer support programmes. Confey College provides workshops for students focus on developing essential life skills such as empathy, resilience,

conflict resolution, and digital responsibility, empowering them to build positive relationships. Extra-curricular activities—such as sports teams, music, drama, and various clubs—offer students opportunities to develop teamwork, leadership, and social skills in a supportive environment.

To reinforce a culture of kindness, the school recognizes and celebrates positive behaviour. Student mentoring and support programmes ensure that younger students have guidance from older peers, easing their transition through school and fostering a sense of belonging. Staff mentoring programmes like Check and Connect provide support for some students.

Parents and guardians play a vital role in supporting the school's Bí Cineálta efforts. Their engagement is encouraged through information evenings, workshops, and open communication channels, ensuring they are well-informed and involved in bullying prevention strategies.

### **Preventing cyberbullying behaviour**

Confey College is committed to preventing cyberbullying by promoting responsible digital citizenship and ensuring students understand the impact of their online behaviour. Through education, policies, and external support, the school takes a proactive approach to fostering a safe and respectful online environment.

SPHE classes address responsible use of social media, online safety, and the consequences of cyberbullying. Students are encouraged to think critically about their digital footprint, online interactions, and the importance of kindness and respect in online spaces.

A clear Acceptable Use Policy for technology is in place to outline appropriate use of digital devices, social media, and online communication within the school. This policy is regularly reviewed and communicated to students and parents to ensure a shared understanding of expectations and responsibilities.

By integrating cyberbullying prevention into the curriculum, providing guidance, and enforcing responsible technology use, Confey College works to create a safe and respectful digital environment for all students.

Parents/ guardians are responsible for monitoring and guiding their children's use of social media by setting clear boundaries, promoting responsible digital citizenship, and fostering open communication about online experiences. Encouraging discussions about cyberbullying, online interactions, and the impact of social media helps children navigate potential challenges responsibly.

Additionally, parents have the responsibility to regularly review their child's device usage to safeguard their online activity and address any potential risks.

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):

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Who is bullying reported to?

Parents or Guardians suspecting incidents of bullying behaviour should contact the Year Head directly where possible. A student, parent/guardian or any member of the non-teaching staff may bring a bullying concern to any teacher or other member of staff in the school (or directly to the Year Head) who will then report the matter to the Year Head. The Year Head has responsibility for investigating and dealing with suspected bullying behaviour involving students in the relevant year group. Other Year Heads, the Deputy Principal or Principal or Guidance Counsellor may be involved in the investigating phase, particularly where a large group are involved or when time is limited. In certain circumstances (e.g. school trips), the investigating teacher could be any member of the teaching staff. The matter must be referred to the Year Head as soon as possible.

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:

### **Reporting and Recording**

All staff are required to report any concerns regarding bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or reported to them to the Year Head.

All staff must keep a written record of any incidents witnessed by them or notified to them. Any reported incident will firstly be investigated by the Year Head to establish whether or not bullying is actually taking place. The Year Head should complete the 'Record of Investigation' for the alleged bullying behaviour'. The Year Head must inform the Principal /Deputy Principal of all incidents being investigated.

If it is established that bullying has occurred, appropriate records must be kept and filed in a designated confidential folder in the Deputy Principal office and kept for at least seven years. The Year Head will keep written records of the investigation.

### **Investigation**

The Year head will take a calm, objective problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour.

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.

The school authorities will speak to both parties on a no-blame basis to establish what has

happened and encourage them to solve the problem. As part of this process the student(s) involved will be made aware of how hurtful the behaviour is and that it must stop. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the Year Head. It will be made clear to all students that reporting incidents of bullying is not telling – they are behaving responsibly. Parents and students are required to cooperate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible. Incidents will be investigated as discreetly as possible to ensure the privacy of all involved. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned. Students who are not directly involved may also be interviewed. Students involved in a bullying incident may be asked to write down their account of the incident.

#### **Formal Stage 1- Determination that bullying has occurred**

In cases where it is determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to explain the actions being taken.

Where a student is found to have engaged in bullying behaviour it will be made clear to them how they are in breach of the anti-bullying policy and the effect on the other person(s). If disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student being disciplined, their parents/guardians and the school, which will be clarified to all involved (each set of students and parents/guardians).

#### **Formal Stage 2-**

In determining whether the bullying behaviour has been adequately and appropriately addressed, the Year Head must, as part of their professional judgement, take the following factors into account;

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as practicable.
- Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as practicable.
- Any feedback received from the students involved, their parents or the Principal or Deputy Principal.

In cases where the Year Head considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after they have determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, they must file a 'Record of bullying behaviour' with the Principal/Deputy Principal for further action.

In cases of serious physical assault, or threat of assault or where it is considered that there is a significant risk to the Health and Safety of any member of the school community the bullying behaviour needs to be immediately referred to the Principal/Deputy Principal and recorded on template.

In accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the Principal (Designated Liaison Person) may make a referral to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardai as appropriate.

Should a problem persist, the Year Head will refer the matter to the Principal/Deputy Principal. Following further investigation and due process, the Principal may impose a term of suspension on any guilty party.

Repeated instances of bullying behaviour by the same student will be referred by the Principal to the BOM for final decision.

### **Requests to take no action**

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than “look out” for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them. Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school or be facilitated to do so where there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent’s request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

**Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures and has exhausted the school’s complaint procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.**

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 is as follows:

### **Supporting students who experience bullying behaviour**

For students who have been affected by bullying behaviour, we prioritise their wellbeing and aim to create a safe and understanding environment. We will offer the following supports:

- Pastoral support: Students will be cared for through our pastoral support systems tailored to their individual needs. This may involve guidance from the School’s Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor or other staff members. The Student Support Team (SST) will work closely to coordinate other appropriate interventions, ensuring students feel heard, valued and supported.
- Restorative practices: When appropriate, restorative practices help students express their feelings, process their experiences and rebuild a sense of safety and belonging within the School community.
- Parental involvement: We work closely with parents/guardians to ensure consistent care and support. Open communication helps reinforce the care provided at School and creates a united approach to fostering the student’s wellbeing.
- Referral to external services: For students who may require additional support, we can recommend access to external services such as Jigsaw. Referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) may be made by a GP, providing pathways of care.
- Monitoring and follow-up: Regular check-ins are conducted to monitor progress, offer reassurance and adapt supports as necessary to ensure students feel safe and supported over time.

### **Supporting those who witness bullying behaviour**

Students who witness bullying behaviour often carry emotional weight or uncertainty. We are committed to supporting these students by:

- Encouraging reporting: We provide a safe, confidential space for bystanders to share concerns, empowering them to take action in line with the School’s values of kindness

and inclusion. Prefect, for example, are encouraged to report any concerns regarding younger students.

- Education on bystander responsibility: Through various subject specifications and lessons, we guide students in understanding their role in promoting a positive School culture. Students learn constructive ways to stand against bullying behaviour.
- Emotional support: Recognising that witnessing bullying can be distressing, we will offer pastoral support opportunities to help students process their emotions and feel reassured.

### **Supporting those who display bullying behaviour**

Students who engage in bullying behaviour often do so for complex reasons and we are committed to helping them learn, grow and make better choices. Our supports will include:

- Behavioural interventions: We work with students to understand the impact of their actions, build empathy and develop skills for forming healthier relationships.
- Restorative practices: When suitable, restorative practices help students take responsibility for their behaviour, make amends and repair relationships with those affected.
- Parental engagement: Parents/guardians will be active partners in addressing bullying behaviour. We work collaboratively to develop plans that support positive change at home and School.
- Continuous monitoring: Ongoing check-ins will help track progress, celebrate improvements and provide guidance as students work towards more positive behaviours.

### **Whole-School approaches to support**

Our School is dedicated to nurturing a culture of kindness and support. We will promote this commitment into every aspect of school life through the following approaches:

- Regular staff training: Staff will receive ongoing professional development to ensure they are equipped to recognise, prevent and respond to bullying behaviour in a compassionate and effective manner..
- Fostering a culture of kindness: We will implement School-wide initiatives such as the Peer Leadership Programme to encourage students to build strong, respectful relationships with one another.
- Continuous policy review: The School's Anti-Bullying Policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Management and updated to reflect good practices, ensuring our supports remain effective and responsive to the needs of our students.

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

## Section D: Oversight

Oversight at Confey College builds upon the principles of recording and monitoring outlined above, ensuring accountability and transparency at all levels.

### Reporting to the Board of Management

The Principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each Board of Management meeting (Appendix 3). This update will include:

- The number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last meeting.
- The number of ongoing incidents.
- 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 on trends and patterns identified.
- Strategies used to address the bullying behaviour.
- Wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour. This update will not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

### Policy accessibility

This policy is available to our School community:

- Online: On the School's website [www.confeycollege.org](http://www.confeycollege.org)
- In hard copy: Available upon request.
- Student-friendly version: Displayed in the School journal.(Appendix 6)

### Policy review and updates

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed (Appendix 4):

- Annually: Following input from our School community.
- As needed: As soon as practicable after any material change in a matter to which this policy refers.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 1

### Record of Investigation: alleged bullying behaviour

1. Name(s) and class(es) of student(s): (attach additional pages if necessary)

Name:		Class:	

2. All parties spoken to:

Yes

No

3. Details of Incident:

Only details which are pertinent to the incident/case should be recorded. Where suspicions or allegations of bullying are made, this should be clearly indicated.

Date of incident:		Time of incident:	
<b>Details: (What happened? Where? Who was involved? Why?)</b>			

**4. Was it determined that bullying was actually taking place?**

Please tick as relevant:

Behaviour Description	Yes	No
Targeted Behaviour		
Repeated Behaviour		
Imbalance of power		
Online/Cyber incident(s)		

Where it has been determined that bullying has taken place, matter should be investigated fully by Year Head/ Deputy Principal using Form A.

Code of Behaviour matters should be dealt with as such by the Year Head.

**5. If no, what action was taken?**

*This section is only completed where it has been determined that bullying was actually taking place.*

**6. If yes, were parents contacted?**

Yes

No

**7. Action taken**

- Made clear to student how s/he is in breach of the anti-bullying policy
- Student made aware of effect of their behaviour on the other person
  - Sanctions imposed (if any) \_\_\_\_\_
  -

**Any other action**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Update (within 20 school days)**

- |  |                              |                             |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Has the bullying behaviour ceased?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Are issues between the parties have been resolved as far as practicable?             | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Have the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as practicable? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Have the students concerned reported anything since?                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Have their parents reported anything since?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Has anyone else reported anything since?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Based on the above, has the bullying behaviour been adequately and appropriately addressed, in your professional judgement?

- Yes  No

If Yes, then file this record in the student Bullying behaviour record file in the Year Head Office.

If no, complete Record of Bullying Behaviour and submit a copy to the Principal.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2:

### Record of Bullying Behaviour

*(for serious incidents or those not resolved within 20 days)*

#### 1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>	
--------------	--	---------------	--

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

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Class:</b>	

#### 3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es)) (who reported?)

Pupil concerned  Parent  Other

Other Pupil  Teacher

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

School grounds  Corridor  School Bus

Other

Classroom  Toilets

(please detail)

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

--

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

<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/> Cyber-bullying
<input type="checkbox"/> Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/> Intimidation
<input type="checkbox"/> Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Malicious Gossip
<input type="checkbox"/> Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)

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

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

**8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

**9. Details of actions taken**

Signed:

Date:

**Year Head**

Date submitted to Principal:

***Any statement/s made by those involved in the incident should be appended to this document and stored with it.***

***A copy of this form must be placed in the confidential folder in the Principal's office by the Year Head.***

## Appendix 3

### Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

#### Guide to providing 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, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

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

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

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

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

## Appendix 4

### Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

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

#### Bí Cineálta Policy Review

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

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

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

3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student friendly policy on the school website? /\_\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

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

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

6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post- Primary Schools*? Yes No
7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour? Yes No
8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year? Yes No
9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of Yes No

bullying behaviour?

10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy?  Yes  No

11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?  Yes  No

12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour?  Yes  No

13. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

14. Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:

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

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

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

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

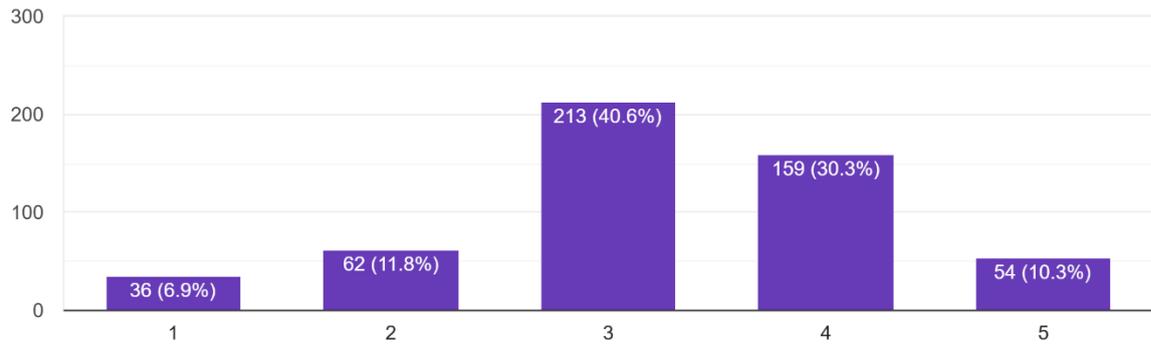
19. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour?  Yes  No

## Appendix 5

### Student Wellbeing Survey May 2025

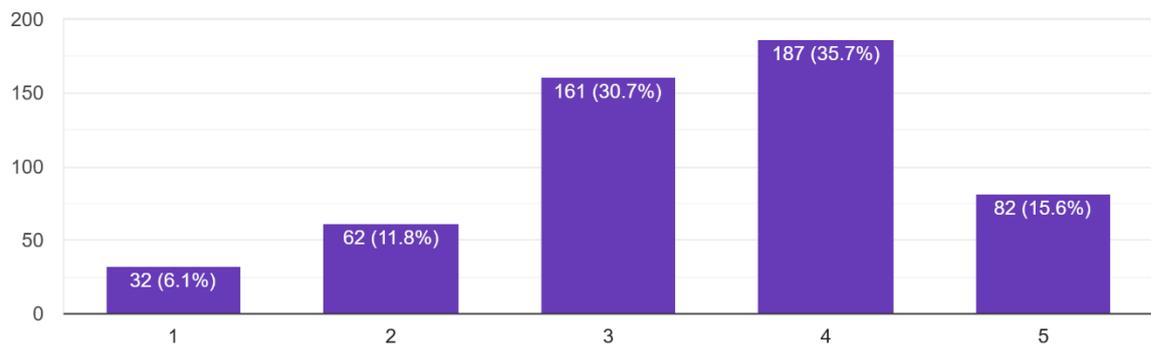
In your opinion, how supported do you feel in our school to prevent and address bullying?

524 responses



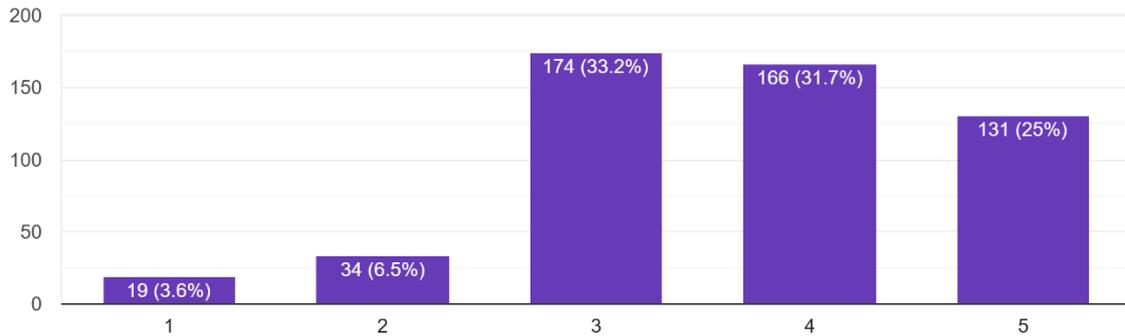
Do you agree that the school environment promotes a culture of kindness and respect among students?

524 responses



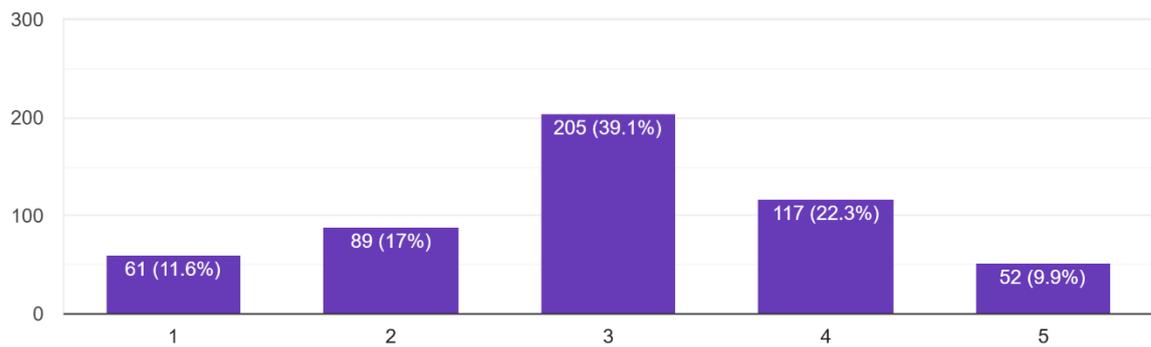
Do you agree the school could do more to involve students in creating and maintaining a safe and inclusive school environment?

524 responses



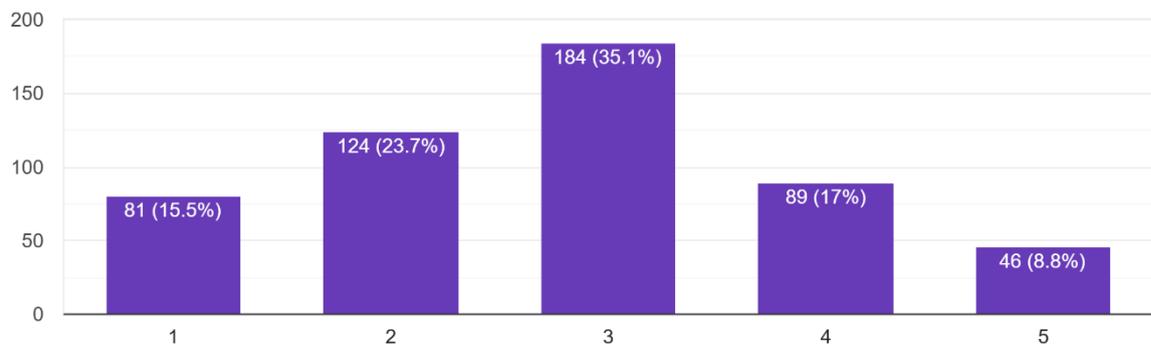
How well do you think the school collaborates with parents and teachers to address bullying issues?

524 responses



Do you feel that the strategies in place to prevent bullying behavior are effective?

524 responses

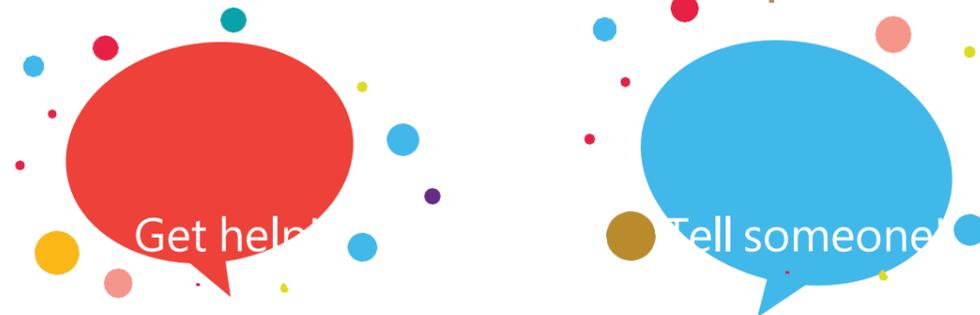


## Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy

### Bí Cineálta!

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. They will know what to do to help.



If a student tells a staff member that they think they are being bullied, we will:

- > talk with the student
- > ask the student what they want to happen
- > work out a plan together
- > talk to their parents
- > talk to the other student(s) involved
- > talk with the other student's parents





