



Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Bhun Cranncha has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The Board of Management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

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

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

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as:

Targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

(The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures.)

Each school is required to develop and implement a *Bí Cineálta* policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:

- If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour, but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying, but, importantly, must be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.
- Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that these behaviours may not be deliberate or planned, but in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they cannot control. The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils

to respond appropriately.

- Disagreement between students is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Examples of bullying Behaviours

The following is an extensive, but non-exhaustive list of examples of bullying behaviour:

<p>General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The “look” • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed.
<p>Cyber</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology

Identity Based Behaviours Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).	
Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person’s sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone’s friends away • “Bitching” • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The “look” • Use or terminology such as ‘nerd’ in a derogatory way
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching ➤ Harassment
Special Educational Needs, Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Name calling ➤ Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs ➤ Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying ➤ Taking advantage of some pupils’ vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. ➤ Mimicking a person’s disability ➤ Setting others up for ridicule

Isolated or one-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school’s Code of Behaviour. However, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful private or public message, image or statement on a social network site or other forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school’s code of behaviour.

Section A: Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	27/01/25 07/04/25 16/05/25	Oide course Bí Cinealta (2 staff members) Staff survey (including all staff members: Teachers, SNAs, Secretary) Half Day closure – planning / open forum (all staff members)
Students	07/04/25	Student Survey (Infants to Sixth class)
Parents	07/04/25 06/25	Parent Survey Open communication Draft copy of policy
Board of Management	18/06/25	Policy Review at BOM Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	06/25	Open communication Bí Cinealta policy published on website.
Date policy was approved: 18/06/25		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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

Culture and Environment

- A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.

Through programmes such as the Cool School Programme (PDST), children learn about human rights, self-esteem, confidence, reinforce the difference between right and wrong and celebrate personal differences.

- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. Neurodiversity explained and celebrated within the classroom / school.

Where a child has special needs, particular attention will be paid to their ability to respond appropriately to bullying behaviour and to promote their inclusion in every aspect of school life and this will be documented in their profile and Support Plan where appropriate.

- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.

Kindness Committee

Wellbeing Committee

Active Schools Committee

Green Flag Committee

Sports Teams – football, soccer, athletics etc

Chess Team

Cairde Cinéaltais

Cártaí Cinéaltas – given by supervising teacher / class teacher for acts of kindness.

Teastas Cinéaltas at school assembly

Zones of Regulation in each classroom

Art projects – initiatives in community, e.g. with local nursing unit

- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff members develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it- prevention and intervention.

- Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s) – Friends for Life

- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.

- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.

Pupils who access the curriculum via online devices which are password protected, do so with supervision.

Relationship and Partnerships

- Involvement of the student committees (Kindness, Wellbeing, Active, Green Flag) in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy bench, Cairde Cinéaltas (blue bibs in the yard) and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Development and promotion of the pupils' Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and parent(s)/guardian(s) and copies are available on our school website.

Parents and children will be informed of this updated anti bullying policy. Children will be encouraged and helped to say no to bullying behaviour and to report experiences of bullying.

- Friendship /Anti-Bullying Week.

Each year in November during International Anti-Bullying Week the Health Promotions Unit of the H.S.E. issue a themed pack to participating schools which includes lesson plans, suggested whole school activities as well as information for parents and staff. We welcome this pack which forms a significant strand of the school's anti-bullying education. At Gaelscoil Bhun

Cranncha during the week:

- *An annual review of the anti-bullying policy is undertaken*
 - *A formal lesson on the theme is taught in each class daily*
 - *Class novel/story is read on the theme of bullying to each class daily*
 - *Children and parents read and sign the anti-bullying contract (copy enclosed)*
 - *The school undertakes a whole –school activity to promote bullying awareness and celebrate the week.*
 - *A bullying questionnaire is distributed to all pupils to gather information and promote discussion on the theme at home.*
 - *Information is distributed to parents regarding websites to access, specialist talks to attend, support networks available and general anti-bullying strategies via daily text messages and newsletter.*
 - *Internet Safety speaker invited every second year for workshops facilitating parents, staff and pupils.*
 - *Webwise.ie is actively promoted among parents, pupils as an excellent source of internet safety information.*
 - *The Friends for Life Programme is taught to Rang 3 annually where trained staff are available.*
 - *It should be noted that the themes and strategies visited during Anti-Bullying Week are regularly re-visited during the school year.*
- Promotion of a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
 - Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Teachers and children will be encouraged to use a "Worry Monster" or a "Worry Box" in their classroom
 - Teachers may choose to implement a buddy system in class and/or on yard.
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.

Curriculum

- The Stay Safe & RSE Programmes will be taught from Junior Infants to Sixth Class and there are lessons specifically aimed at bullying at every class level which promote self-esteem and resilience. The teachers will also use lessons from #UP2US, The Walk Tall Programme, On My Own Two Feet as is needed.
- SPHE lessons in 5th & 6th Class (following the Webwise programme) will teach the children about staying safe on the internet. The children will be taught about how to behave correctly on line in a manner that keeps both themselves and other people safe. The following are the titles / resources used for a School wide delivery of lessons on **Relational aggression** (Cool School Programme: A Friend in Deed), **Cyber Bullying** (#UP2US, Be Safe-Be Web wise, Think Before you Click, Let's Fight it Together, Web wise Primary teachers' resources), **Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying** (Growing up LGBT, Stand Up Programme, The Trust pack) **Diversity and Interculturalism** (Amber Flag Programme).
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying.
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

Policy and Planning

- The development of an Acceptable Use of Internet Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.

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):

Links to other policies

This Anti-Bullying Policy runs concurrently with all school policies and compliments in particular the following policies:

- *Code of Good Behaviour*
- *Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment*
- *Acceptable Use of Internet Policy*
- *Health and Safety Statement*
- *Enrolment Policy*
- *Policy on Use of Mobile Phones*

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Mainstream class teachers and SETs. The Principal/Deputy Principal will provide support and advice and will become involved where appropriate.

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):

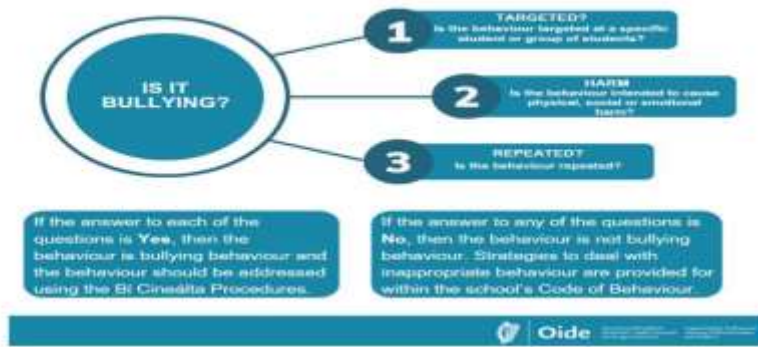
Reporting Bullying Behaviour

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

In accordance with Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and Appendix C of the procedures, our school will follow these steps when a report of bullying behaviour is made:

Determining if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

- Staff will assess whether the reported behaviour meets the definition of bullying by considering the following:
 - Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group?
 - Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social, or emotional harm?
 - Is the behaviour repeated over time or likely to be repeated (e.g., through online sharing)?



- If the answer to all three questions is yes, the behaviour will be considered bullying and will be addressed under these procedures.
- 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.
- Once-off incidents will be assessed to determine if they constitute bullying in context (e.g., a single harmful post shared widely online).

The steps taken to determine whether bullying has occurred and to respond to bullying, when it has occurred, are laid out below.

Stage 1:

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred, teachers should consider what, where and when? as follows:

(Note that these steps are required – as outlined in the Procedures):

- Where one student is reported to be involved, the student should be engaged with individually at first.
- Thereafter, this student and the student who is reported to be experiencing the bullying behavior should be met together as long as this isn't deemed likely to cause undue stress.
- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first.
- Thereafter, all students involved and the student who is reported to be experiencing the bullying behaviour should be met as a group as long as this isn't deemed likely to cause undue stress.
- 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).
- Parents will be supported by the school, if needed, with recommendations for useful resources/guides to help them support their children

Stage 2:

Where bullying behaviour has occurred

- Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred the parents of the students involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour.

- It is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.
- All bullying behaviour will be recorded (*Appendix 3, which is available on Aladdin*). This will include the form and type of behaviour if known (see pages 20-24, Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the BÍ Cinealta procedures for descriptions/examples of the forms and types of bullying 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.
- The record is shared with the Principal.

Stage 3:

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

- The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement. Important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
- The teacher should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this. The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.
- Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.
- Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.
- If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the BÍ Cinealta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures.
- If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour (see Chapter 6 of the BÍ Cinealta procedures):

Supports

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

- Discussion of the incidents with the victims and witnesses, reassuring them that they were right to bring the events to the attention of staff, that they were not telling tales and their actions will help others, they will be reminded that they should tell again if they have any new concerns.

- The teacher(s) involved and the principal will check from time to time with the child that everything is ok.
- Close communication between the child's home and school will form a vital part in the child's recovery from being bullied. Class teachers will contact the child's parents regularly to ensure that problems have not persisted.
- Children who have engaged in bullying behaviour also need support and close communication between school and home.
- The class teachers of the alleged bullies and victims will work on rebuilding the children's self-esteem in small group and whole class settings. Further work will be done on friendships, social skills and resilience development.
- A buddy system will be set up if deemed necessary.
- The school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies for pupils requiring counselling for further support. NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service), Oide (support service for schools) and from programmes/sites such as Webwise and FUSE.

As previously stated, the primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore/improve, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved rather than to apportion blame.

In any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required and issued to pupils, this is an entirely private matter between pupils being disciplined, their families and relevant school staff.

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

Section D: Oversight

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information (See Chapter 7 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures).

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on our website and in hard copy on request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed: *Colm Ó Tuathaláin*

Date: 18/06/25

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: *Pól Mac Daibhéid*

Date: 18/06/25

(Principal)