

# Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Inchicore National School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

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

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

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.

## 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	October 2024	SWOT analysis carried out and priorities noted
Students	May 2025	Surveys completed by senior classes
Parents	May 2025	Surveys completed
Board of Management	May 2025	Video on formation of Bí Cineálta policy viewed by the Board
Date policy was approved: June 10, 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: May 2025		

## 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.

## **Culture and Environment**

***We strive to create a positive and inclusive school culture through promoting the following:***

- Open communication
- Collaborative approach
- Staff to develop and maintain a culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and dealt with consistently
- Students to promote kindness and inclusion
- Parents to promote empathy and respect
- A telling environment
- Promoting the concept of a trusted adult
- Prompt a sense of belonging and ownership in the school community through artwork and signs that reflect our school values
- Accommodating a variety of activities and interests during break times
- Ensure that supervision is adequate
- Ensure that the school campus is safe and visible
- Create a positive and inclusive school culture that welcomes difference and diversity
- Ensure that relationships within the whole school community are respectful and inclusive

***Ways we will achieve these goals***

### **Staff**

- Staff will be made aware of the uniform approach the school must take when dealing with bullying behaviour - this will be discussed, circulated and posted in the staffroom
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- Modelling respectful behaviour towards colleagues, pupils, parents and visitors
- Supports for staff;
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

### **Whole School events and practices**

- Friendship Week
- Diversity and Inclusion Week
- Other weeks, such as Seachtain na Gaeilge, Maths Week and Science Week promote cooperative behaviour and shared learning experiences that in turn contribute to the creation of a positive learning environment
- Child friendly Anti Bullying Poster, developed with students, displayed and distributed
- Active Line Leaders
- Posters to promote kind and prosocial behaviour
- Acknowledgment of our diverse school population – celebrating diversity and culture in our school through art, displays, photographs, international events.
- Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated and students “see themselves” in the school environment.
- Challenge gender- stereotypes – equal participation of all, for example in yard games, or attending inter-school events.
- Raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour and encourage students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.
- Ensuring the library has material with reflects our diverse school population from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

- Making clear that our school has a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment of any kind with enforceable policy - See Code of Behaviour.

### **Curriculum**

- SPHE initiatives, such as Stay Safe and RSE, focusing on positive behaviour, to be part of the curriculum content for all classes
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures and a focus on the responsibility of a bystander) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and to explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Place emphasis on promoting personal responsibility, wellbeing and self-confidence through these and other curriculum areas
- Wellbeing initiatives for students, staff and parents to be included in the daily life of the school
- Classroom practice to incorporate opportunities for collaborative and inclusive learning
- Curricular and Extracurricular activities can help to develop a sense of self worth, working together, inclusion and respect.
- Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.

### **Policy and Planning**

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

## Relationships and Partnerships

- Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as our Parents' Association, Student committees, Creative Clusters, School Completion, inter-school soccer league and others
- Age and stage appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the student body in looking at their own behaviour – promoting acts of kindness and friendship, being an active help to others and looking at the causes of and impact of bullying during SPHE lessons, inter-class activities to promote helpful behaviour, such as Shared Reading
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
- Encouraging peer mentoring and peer support
- Supporting active participation of students in school life and active participation of parents in school life also.
- Engaging parents and students in actively contributing to the formation of a Child Friendly Anti Bullying Policy to make them active participants in promotion of and discussion of useful ways to identify and reduce bullying behaviour and highlight procedure and how to deal with it if it does occur.

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



Robust yard supervision teams



Morning supervision where adults are visible and approachable



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Rainy day procedures to ensure children are engaged in social activities and do not have access to digital devices



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Rules for walking on stairs and in corridors to ensure orderly behaviour and easy monitoring



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The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.



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Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.



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All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff and recorded on Aladdin using the template for this.



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School wide awareness raising on all aspects of bullying, supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities.



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Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.



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Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.



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Refer to appropriate online behaviour when using devices and in SPHE lessons.



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Promote online safety events or material for parents



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The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. [www.tacklebullying.ie](http://www.tacklebullying.ie), [www.antibullyingcentre.ie](http://www.antibullyingcentre.ie)>fuse, [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie), Anti-Bullying Campaign and surveys



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Shared folder of resources for teaching of bullying including lessons from above websites – shared Google drive for all teachers to access.

# Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

## The teachers with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is (are) as follows:

The **class teacher** will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form on Aladdin

The **DDL** will follow up after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased.

**All staff** will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.

The **Principal** will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.

The **SENCO** will be included in instances of bullying behaviour involving a child with additional needs

The **in-school management team** will ensure that documentation is maintained and that policy reviews happen in a timely fashion.

## 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

- a. Establish if the behaviour in question is targeted, intended to cause harm and repeated.
- b. While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the Relevant Teacher(s), the Relevant Teacher(s) will use his/her/their professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- c. If it is established by the Relevant Teacher(s) that bullying has occurred, the Relevant Teacher(s) must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- d. The Relevant Teacher(s) must record the bullying incident on the school information management system (Aladdin) by adding an Alleged Bullying Behaviour Report to the relevant pupil's file which will be visible on files on all other pupils named. The Relevant Teacher must inform the Principal.

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved ((rather than to apportion blame). With this in mind the school's procedures are as follows:

- In investigating and dealing with bullying the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the Relevant Teacher(s). In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report instances of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, caretakers and cleaners are encouraged to report any incidences of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to the Class Teacher.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- On being informed of an alleged incident of bullying, the teacher dealing with the report will first interview the victim(s) and discuss the feelings which the victim(s) experienced because of the bullying behaviour.
- Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour the Relevant Teacher(s) should seek answers to questions of what, where, who, when and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non- aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group, if this is appropriate. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about the other's statements.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher.
- Where the Relevant Teacher(s) has/have determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the perspective of the pupil being bullied.

- The Relevant Teacher does not apportion blame but should make an effort to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied. S/he emphasises that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter.
- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the Relevant Teacher will complete a report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. This may be recorded on Aladdin under the BÍ Cineálta tab, and uploading a file “Alleged Bullying Behaviour Report”.
- If a pupil chooses to continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a once off occurrence. In this event parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted. The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for the pupil.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Follow up meetings must take place no later than 20 days after the initial engagement,
- Depending on the seriousness of the bullying some or all of Level 2 Supportive Interventions will be utilized (See School Code of Behaviour)
- Repeated incidents of bullying behaviour will result in the imposition of sanctions. Such sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying behaviour. It must be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required that this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent must be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their rights to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
- The School will maintain care for the victim over time. This will be done by speaking to the child a number of weeks after the incident to check on their continuing welfare. The child’s parents will also be consulted.
- If a child makes a report of bullying, but asks that nothing is to be done about it, the relevant teacher will support the child appropriately to explore how it will be handled sensitively and how parents may be notified. If a parent does so, they must submit in writing that they require no further action to be taken, but even so, the school may still deem it necessary to be investigated and handled appropriately.

**The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:**

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

### **Supporting Bullied pupils**

- Ending the bullying behaviour
- Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils
- Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations,
- Making adequate counselling facilities available to pupils who need it in a timely manner (subject to available funding)
- Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

### **Supporting Bullying pupils**

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

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
- 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
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant.



Serious incidents which have had a serious impact



If a student has left due to a bullying incident



If additional support is needed from the Board of Management



If the BÍ Cineálta policy requires an urgent review

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: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairperson of Board of Management)

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

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal) \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Appendix 1

## Is It Bullying?

DESCRIPTION	DATE/TIME
Signed:	

TO CONSIDER	YES	NO
1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?		
2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?		
3. Is the behaviour repeated?		

## Appendix 2

### Where bullying behaviour has occurred:

NAME	ACCOUNT	PARENTS CONSULTED	DATE

NAME	FOLLOW UP	PARENTS CONSULTED	DATE