

Scoil Mhuire Ógh 1
Loreto Senior Primary School



Bí Cineálta Policy



Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Ogh 1 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, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the travelling community.

We acknowledge that bullying is a children's rights issue. Bullying interferes with the following rights of the child set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

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

We confirm that we will take all steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent all bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated.

Catholic schools have a distinctive understanding of the human person, recognising that every person is created in God's image and likeness and has inherent dignity as a child of God. This is the basis for ensuring that everybody in our school is treated with respect and care, in accordance with the Catholic Schedule.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to respecting the dignity of every individual. No human person is to be devalued and everybody has a part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

Development 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 of this policy.

	Date Consulted	Method of Consultation
School Staff	January-June 2025	Staff Meetings, Information Session, Online Survey.
Students	October 2024	Online Survey
Parents/Guardians	March 2025	Online Survey
Student Council	March 2025	Student Council Meeting, Written Survey.
Board of Management	October '24-June '25	Board of Management Meetings
Date policy was approved: Approved by the Patron Body on 1st October, 2025. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.		

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.

A single hurtful message posted online may be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Direct Bullying Behaviour

- Physical
- Verbal
- Written
- Extortion

Indirect Bullying Behaviour

- Exclusion
- Relational

Types of Bullying Behaviour

- Disablist Bullying Behaviour
- Exceptionally Able Bullying
- Gender Identity Bullying
- Homophobic/Transphobic (LGBTQ+) Bullying
- Physical Appearance Bullying
- Racist Bullying
- Religious Identity Bullying
- Sexist Bullying
- Sexual Harassment
- Cyberbullying

Behaviour that is not Bullying Behaviour

- A once-off instance of negative behaviour
- Disagreement between students
- Instances where students do not want to remain friends
- Non-deliberate behaviours of students with special educational needs

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for in the school's Code of Behaviour.

Preventing Bullying Behaviour: School-wide Strategies

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by this school to address all forms of bullying behaviour, in whatever form and however motivated, including online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.

In developing the preventative strategies which this school will use to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour, we come from the context of our Catholic ethos, where inclusivity permeates our school in a real way.

Scoil Mhuire Ogh 1 has adopted the following measures to prevent bullying behaviour.

1. Culture and Environment:

- This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at our board of management and staff meetings.
- Inclusive environment based on inclusivity and diversity
- Clear expectations communicated to the school community
- Whole-school approach to behaviour management
- Anti-Bullying Month - promotion of a 'disclosing/reporting' environment
- Open communication with parents/guardians
- Respect for pupil voice - Student Council, Bí Cinéalta Survey for Pupils
- Recognition of positive behaviour - Dálta na Seachtaine, Dálta na Téarma
- Respect and tolerance taught through an integrated approach - PE, RE, SPHE and extra-curricular activities
- Social and Emotional Support Groups
- Care Team meetings on a termly basis - children referred for appropriate interventions where necessary
- Classroom Environment - Calm Corner, Sensory Boxes, Regulation Breaks
- Staff model appropriate and respectful interactions
- When surveyed, 100% of staff knew how to access the Anti-Bullying Policy and are aware of their responsibilities in recording and dealing with allegations of bullying

2. Curriculum (Teaching and Learning):

- SPHE Curriculum - Stay Safe and RSE
- Weaving Wellbeing Programme for all class levels

- Anti-Bullying Month - explicit anti bullying lessons
- Visits/Talks from Outside Agencies
- Online Safety Programmes - Webwise: HTML Heroes, All Aboard for Digitown, My Selfie and the Wider World
- Teaching restorative practice, facilitating restorative circles.
- Class/School rules/contracts
- Transition Programme (for incoming 3rd class pupils and 6th class pupils)
- Life Skills - delivered by the School Completion Project Workers
- Education Assistance Dog - promotion of care for animals, respecting boundaries
- Training for Student Council Members
- SARI (Sport Against Racism Ireland) for 5th and 6th class pupils

3. Policy and Planning

- Bí Cineálta Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Cyber bullying training/professional development for staff
- Good Manners Month
- Bí Cineálta Month
- Social Personal Health Education (SPHE)
- School Completion Project - Life Skills
- Restorative Practice approach to behaviour management
- Whole school approach to behaviour management (card and docket system)

4. Relationships and Partnerships

- The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence.
- In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and further engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies”.
- Care Team Meetings
- Board of Management

- School Completion Team (working collaboratively with teachers and pupils)
- Home School Community Liaison (working collaboratively with CLAY, The Brú, The Bosco, Dolphin and Fatima Homework Clubs)
- Yard Buddies (6th class role models)
- 6th Class Leadership Awards
- Positive and welcoming school environment
- Positive relationships with Parents/Guardians
- Good and open communication with Parents/Guardians
- Respectful interactions modelled for children
- Team sports (curricular and extra curricular)
- Education Assistance Dog 'Snow'

Supervision and Monitoring

Scoil Mhuire Ogh 1 ensures appropriate supervision and monitoring within the school day (8:45am - 2:25pm) of classrooms, corridors, PE Hall, yard areas and toilets (where appropriate). School trips, outings and extra-curricular activities are adequately supervised with a general ratio of 1 adult per 10 pupils. Children wear hi-vis vests when leaving the school grounds for tours. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and to report any issues to the relevant teacher or principal. Supervision will also apply to the monitoring of IT equipment within the school.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teachers with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are as follows:

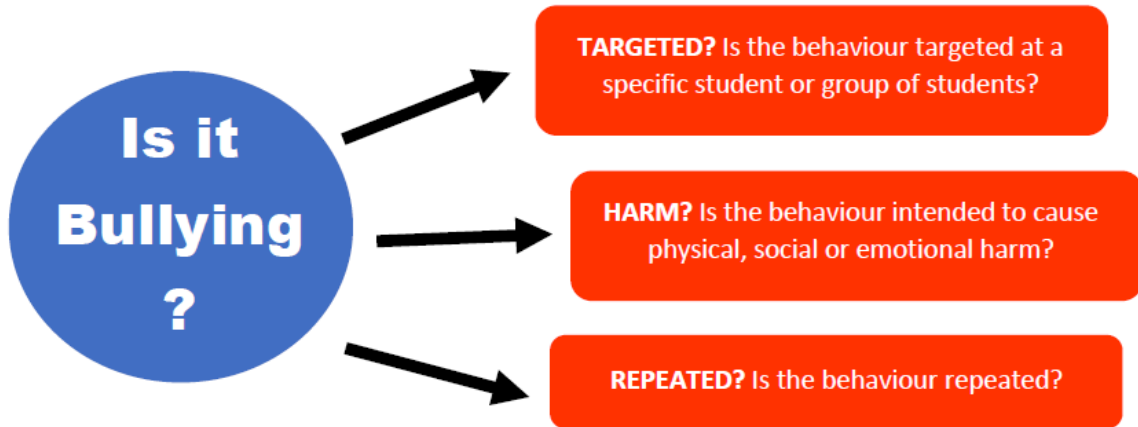
- The Principal
- The Deputy principal
- All teachers

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

Determining if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

When determining if bullying behaviour has occurred, teachers will consider the following: what, where, when and why? Teachers will use the following questions:

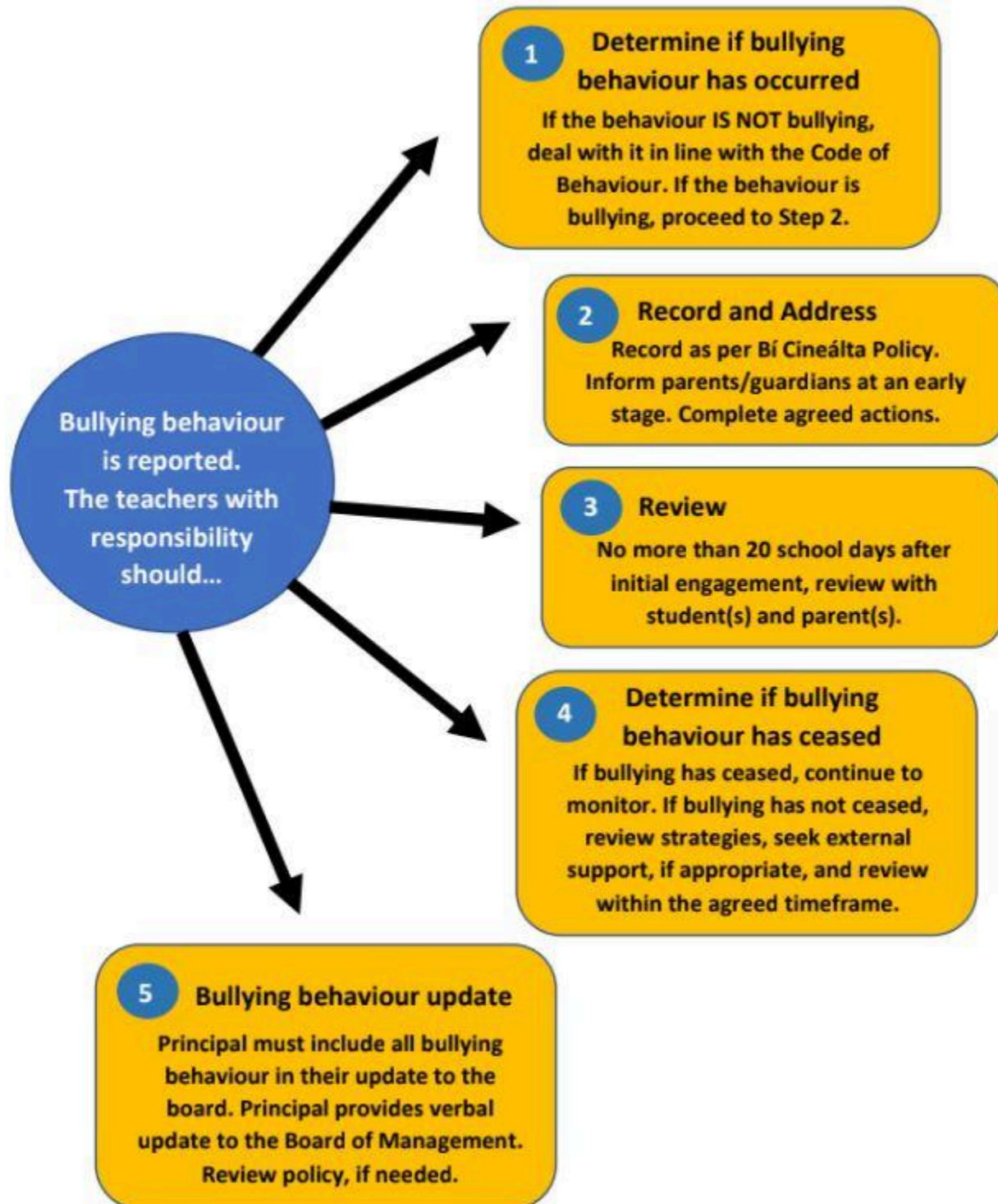


If the answer to each of the questions is YES, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures. If the answer to any of the questions is NO, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour and should be addressed by the Code of Behaviour.

If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged with individually at first. This includes witnesses to the incident where appropriate. Thereafter, all students will be met as a group. At the group meeting, each student will be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone's voice is heard and that the students are clear about each other's views. Each student will be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting. It is sometimes helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident.

Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour



Where Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

School staff endeavour to be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour. Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support. It is important that the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour is engaged with without delay so they feel listened to, supported and reassured. School staff will identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

Bullying behaviour can be very complex and it is generally acknowledged that no one approach works in all situations. International and national research also continues to evolve in this area and the effectiveness of particular approaches continues to be reviewed.

Important Note

As per the BÍ Cineálta Policy, a school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their BÍ Cineálta policy. In Scoil Mhuire Ogh 1 we aim to educate all pupils on the forms and the impacts of bullying. We will support all pupils involved in bullying incidents. Staff will monitor, supervise and support pupils in repairing friendships.

Recording of Alleged Bullying and Bullying Behaviour

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of 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.

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.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website (www.loretoseniorprimarycrumlin.ie) 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: *Fr. Fergal MacDonagh*
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Date: 11th June, 2025.

Signed: *Avril Sheridan*
Acting Principal

Date: 11th June, 2025.