



ST. JOSEPH'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

Mulhussey, Kilcock, Co. Meath, W23 T8YC
maolhosae@gmail.com www.mulhusseyns.ie

Tel: 01 628 5513 Príomh Oide: Meabh Madden Roll No: 18887A



Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Purpose and Rationale

The Board of Management of St Joseph's 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, in line with our Catholic Ethos. 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.

Additional Policies that have informed the development of this policy include:

- 2013 Anti Bullying Policy
- 2015 Children First Act
- 2017 - Child Protection Procedures - primary - Revised 2023
- GDPR (2018)
- Harassment, Harmful Communications and related Offences Act /Coco's Law 2020
- Report on the Implementation of Anti Bullying Measures
- Cinealtas Action plan 2022



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- Perspectives on Bullying Behaviour 2023
- Bí Cineálta 2024

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.

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	12th March 2025 - June 2025	Questionnaire Half day school closure for training Reading, reviewing and giving feedback on policy document



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Students	12th March 2025	Questionnaire
Parents	13th March 2025	Questionnaire
Board of Management	11th June 2025	Policy review and discussion
Wider school community eg bus drivers	N/A	Policy displayed on school website
Date policy was approved: 11 th of June 2025		
Date Policy was last reviewed: N/A		

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:



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Culture and environment:

- Victims should be reassured that if they tell, something will be done about the bullying in a safe manner and all reported incidents will be dealt with
- Positive and inclusive school culture
- Positive relationships
- Effective leadership
- A telling environment
- A trusted adult
- Appropriate supervision



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- Worry box in the classroom
- 'Stop, Think, Do' approach and using 'Wise Speech' all to be displayed in classrooms
- Buddy Benches at break time
- Creating safe spaces such as the sensory garden and outdoor classroom
- Anti Bullying signs displayed throughout the school
- Effective routines/transitions
- Restorative Practice Questions

Curriculum:

- Teaching and learning in SPHE (Stay Safe, Walk Tall, KiVa, Webwise, HTML Heroes), in all classes throughout the school
- RSE Curriculum
- Friends for Life and Fun Friends
- KiVa Anti Bullying Programme being explicitly taught
- Consider the teaching of programmes suitable for students with additional educational needs in the school and adapting existing programmes through appropriate language and methodologies used to teach the programme e.g Childnet Star Toolkit
- Friendship Week, Down Syndrome Day, Autism Awareness etc
- Wellbeing Programmes (Weaving Wellbeing, Zones of Regulation)
- Student Participation
- SPHE methodologies
- Group Work/Collaboration
- Digital Technologies
- Role Play
- Morning Meetings

Policy and Planning:



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- Bf Cineálta Policy - develop a policy that is clear, understood and implemented by all school staff
- Student Friendly Bf Cineálta Policy displayed throughout the school
- Code of Behaviour
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Policy for the Home Use of School Owned Assistive Technology
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Additional Educational Needs Policy
- Supervision Policy
- RSE Policy
- Risk assessments carried out regular intervals throughout the school year - yard, toilets, corridors etc
- Promoting Peers support and inclusive practices throughout the school - buddy benches, paired reading among classes, older students leading yard games etc
- Planning for students with additional educational needs especially at times of transitions from class to class and when transitioning into post primary school
- SSE in Wellbeing
- Appropriate Teacher Professional Learning (TPL)

Relationships and Partnerships:

- Promotion of the student voice through a student council within the school
- Support active participation of students in sporting and other school activities
- External advisors and speakers on anti-bullying for staff, pupils and parents
- Catch the children being good - positive reinforcement
- Reinforce rules at assemblies, raise awareness of anti bullying procedures
- Clear guidelines for staff to report suspected bullying to the KiVa team



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- Clear protocols for a parent who believes their child is being bullied to raise the issue within the school
- Support active participation of parents throughout the school eg. Parents' Association

Cyberbullying:

- Promote digital citizenship through SPHE programmes such as Webwise, Digitown, HTML Heroes, Fuse, KiVa
- Open conversations with the students discussing what cyberbullying is and how we can address it
- Discuss how to behave online, respect and acceptable behaviour and drawing references to the school code of behaviour
- Internet Safety Day in the school
- Up to date AUP Policy
- Organise talks and events for parents of students in the school to raise awareness of cyberbullying and measures to deal with it

Homophobic/Transphobic bullying behaviour

- Maintain an inclusive physical environment such as displaying appropriate posters
- Encourage peer support or peer mentoring and empathy building (eg All Together Now)
- Challenge gender stereotype and encourage the respect of all others

Racist Bullying Behaviour:

- Foster a school culture where diversity is celebrated
- Provide support to staff and students of ethnic minorities
- Teach the history of racism
- Encourage bystanders to report if they see this type of behavior
- Ensure appropriate reading material in the library to support all cultures and backgrounds



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Sexist Bullying Behaviour:

- Teach students the importance of gender equality
- Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of sex.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex.
- Making clear that our school has a zero tolerance approach
- Ensuring that the school community are aware of the Dignity at Work Policy

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

- Children will be supervised by staff at all times. At yard time one teacher and one Special Needs Assistant (SNA) will be present on the yard at each break
- The children will be supervised at all times on wet days in the classroom
- The children will be supervised while entering the school building in the morning as one SNA will monitor the main door and the other SNA will monitor cloakrooms/toilets
- At least two staff members will be present on all school trips
- At extra curricular activities such as football training two adults must be present at all times
- Visitors to the school must be supervised by the class teachers at all times when they are with their class and not left alone with the students
- During yard time the pupils must be in full view of a staff member

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

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Bí Cineálta Policy
- Student friendly Bí Cinealtá Policy



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- Additional Educational Needs Policy
- RSE Policy
- SPHE Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Protected Disclosure Policy
- Dignity at Work Charter
- Supervision Policy

This school uses the KiVa Anti Bullying Programme as its primary mechanism for preventing bullying. KiVa is an anti-bullying programme that has been developed in the University of Turku, Finland, with funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture. This school has been trained in the KiVa anti bullying programme by Archways, who are licenced to deliver the KiVa programme to schools in Ireland. As a KiVa school, we use several universal actions as part of a whole school, participatory approach, with a focus on preventing bullying . All school staff (including admin and auxiliary staff) have been trained in the KiVa Anti Bullying Programme and the KiVa screening process for bullying. KiVa utilises a variety of strategies to prevent bullying behaviour, listed below.

1) Staff meeting:

Each year, a staff meeting is held at the beginning of the school year to ensure that everyone working at the school knows that we are a KiVa school. At the staff meeting, we reiterate what this means in practice:

- Delivering KiVa lessons to specific classes
- Having a KiVa team to deal with cases of bullying
- Hanging posters on walls



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2) KiVa Kick Off event:

The KiVa kick-off event at the start of the school year is a whole school event (often during assembly) whereby the message that 'we are a KiVa school' is reiterated. It helps to create a participatory culture as students are involved through displays of art, music, poetry with an anti-bullying message.

3) Posters:

KiVa posters are displayed in a prominent place in the school (for example at the entrance and on corridors) to remind students that we are a KiVa school and do not tolerate bullying.

4) Guide for Parents and Parents' meeting:

All parents are provided with a copy of the KiVa Parents' Guide (in electronic or printed format). The guide provides basic information about bullying and how parents can help to prevent it. The materials inform parents about how to discuss bullying at home and how to deal with situations where they find out that their child has taken part in bullying.

5) Delivery of KiVa lessons in classrooms:

We deliver KiVa lessons throughout the year to students. The lessons are a key part of the universal actions of the KiVa anti-bullying programme. Unit 1 Lessons are for students from 1st to 3rd class and Unit 2 lessons are for students from 4th to 6th class. The aim is to increase socio-emotional skills and to promote the children's awareness of the importance of the group and bystanders in bullying and stopping bullying. The lessons strive to inspire empathy towards bullied students and provide safe ways to help and support the students who are treated badly. Within the lessons, bullying prevention is based on inspiring a shared sense of responsibility and changes in the norms of the whole group. Children in Junior and Senior infants will learn about the KiVa approach to bullying at assembly, by posters hung throughout the school and by being encouraged to be in a



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telling culture. Formal lessons targeting bullying will be through Stay Safe Lessons and the Walk Tall and RSE programmes.

Kiva lessons involve discussions, group assignments and videos, as well as active exercises, involving games and assignments. See below the themes of each lesson.

Unit 1

1. Let's get to know each other!
2. Emotions
3. Our class – everyone is included
4. Difference is richness
5. We say NO to bullying
6. We will not join in on bullying
7. The bullied child needs your support
8. I will not be bullied
9. Literature lesson
10. The KiVa contract

Unit 2

1. Respect is for everyone
2. In a group
3. Recognise bullying
4. Hidden forms of bullying
5. Responsibly online
6. Consequences of bullying
7. The group and bullying
8. Communicating support
9. Stick up for yourself
10. KiVa school – let's do it together!

6) KiVa Online Games:

Students can play online games which allow them to practice and revise what has been learned in KiVa lessons.

7) Student and Staff Surveys:

Each year, students complete a survey, which provides information to us about the prevalence of bullying in the school and what students feel the school is like. There is a separate survey for staff members with questions about implementing the programme. We use the survey responses to monitor the implementation of the programme and its impact.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour



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The staff with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are the KiVa team:

Meabh Madden
Maeve Beirne
Bronagh Griffin

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 the 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:

- All reports of bullying behaviour will be reported to the KiVa team
- The KiVa team will complete a questionnaire to ascertain if bullying has occurred
- In addition, the following three questions should be considered to determine if bullying has occurred.
 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?
- The KiVa team will use professional judgement to decide if it is bullying behaviour



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- **Where it has been established that Bullying behaviour has occurred**

Staff will have received training on how to deal with bullying behaviour when it is reported to them or when they witness bullying behaviour. They will follow all the steps in this policy. It is important that staff are fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour. Both the bully and the student being bullied will need to be supported. The student being bullied will be supported immediately, reassured and their views sought as to how best they would like us to deal with the situation. Parents will be contacted without delay and an initial meeting set up. A record should be kept of the engagement with all parties involved. See appendix E. The record should include the views of the student and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.

- **Parental Notification and Involvement:**

Parents of students involved in bullying incidents will be informed promptly and will be kept updated on the progress of the investigation and intervention process. The school will encourage parents to work collaboratively with the school to address the bullying behaviour. This information will be kept confidential (as per the school's GDPR policy) and will be used to monitor trends, evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and intervention strategies, and inform future policy development. It may be appropriate to add a note to the Student support File.

- **Requests to take no action**

If the student requests that no action be taken after reporting a bullying incident, we will be empathetic to this situation, deal with the matter sensitively and speak with the student to work out what steps we can take together to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation if we deem this is important in order to keep them safe.

- If parents request that no action be taken, they will then be informed at the beginning of this initial meeting that we, as a school, may still decide to deal with this bullying behaviour if we deem it necessary on the grounds of child protection or in severe cases. Parents who request that no action be taken by the school will be required to put this request in writing to the school or assisted to do so where there are literacy or language barriers.

- **If Bullying becomes a Child Protection Concern / Criminal Behaviour**

If we determine that the bullying behaviour should be reported to TUSLA the following factors will be taken into consideration:

- The impact on the student
- Protective action by the parent



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Protective appropriate action by the school

Involvement of NEPS

Engagement of the student / family with support services.

- **Criminal Behaviour**

The age of criminal behaviour in Ireland is 12 years. If the behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence, it may be considered assault. If the bullying behaviour involves discrimination or hate speech, it may be considered a hate crime and if the bullying behaviour involves sexual assault or harassment, the school will refer this and any incident of physical assault / hate speech to An Garda Síochána who will deal with it according to the law.

- **Investigation and Intervention, Documentation and Record-Keeping:**

A member of the KIVA team will conduct a thorough investigation, gathering information from all parties involved. The school will prioritise stopping the bullying behaviour and restoring, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. The recording template (see Appendix) will be completed initially by the class teacher who will investigate the incident, recording the facts of the incident, including the form of bullying, the type of bullying, the parties involved, the dates and times of incidents, the date of initial engagement, the views of students / parents, the date of the review with the students/ parents to determine if bullying behaviour has ceased , the actions taken and the outcomes of such actions.

Determining if Bullying behaviour has ceased/ Follow up

- A member of the KIVA team will engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial meeting to review progress following the agreed interventions. Ongoing supervision and support may still be required for both parties. If the bullying behaviour has **not** ceased, the Kiva team member should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased. Where the bullying behaviour continues, the school will invoke their schools Code of Behaviour policy to deal with this behaviour. If sanctions are required, this will be a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school. Under GDPR these sanctions will not be shared with other students involved or their parents.



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- **Complaints**

If a parent is dissatisfied with how a bullying incident has been addressed or handled by the school, they can refer to our school's complaints procedure.

Procedure

Section D: Oversight / Evaluation and Review (Appendix E)

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.

External Resources:

Gov.ie <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/e8f46-bi-cincalta-resources-for-primary-schools-post-primary-schools-and-parents/>

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS): Provides psychological assessments, consultations, and support to schools.

Oide: Offers professional development and support to teachers on a range of topics, including bullying prevention and intervention. www.oide.ie

Tacklebullying.ie



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Webwise: Provides resources and support for online safety, including cyberbullying prevention. AUP generator

Html Heroes (3rd and 4th class)

www.webwise.ie/BeKindOnline

All Together Now LGBTQ+ resources: 5th / 6th class

PDST Restorative Practice training

CDI Tallaght Restorative practices

National Parents Council (NPC): Represents parents and provides information and support on various educational issues, including bullying.

Dublin City University (DCU) Anti-Bullying Centre: Conducts research and provides training and resources on bullying prevention and intervention. www.antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse Free programme for 4th 5th 6th from DCU

Tusla: The Child and Family Agency provides support and services for child protection and welfare, including cases where bullying behaviour is a child protection concern.

Conclusion:

St. Joseph's National School is dedicated to creating a school environment where all students and staff feel safe, respected, and valued. The school believes that by working collaboratively as a school community and implementing this comprehensive Bí Cincálta policy, we can effectively prevent and address bullying behaviour and ensure that all students have a positive and enriching educational experience. This policy is available on our website, Aladdin Connect and on display in the school.

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.



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Signed: John J. Keane

Date: 11/06/2025 (Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Meabh Madden

Date: 11/06/2025 (Principal)



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Summary of Appendices

Appendix A	Bí Cineálta Policy	Template document must be used as a basis for each school's Bí Cineálta Policy.
Appendix B	Student-friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	Easy to understand policy must be developed by each school and template can be used by schools for this.
Appendix C	Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour.	Guide can be used to address bullying behaviour.
Appendix D	Guide to providing bullying behaviour update to board of management	Guide can be used to assist Principals in providing bullying behaviour update to board of management.
Appendix E	Review of Bí Cineálta Policy	The Review template must be completed when the Bí Cineálta policy is reviewed.
Appendix F	Notification of Annual Review	The template can be used to notify the school community that the annual review has been completed.
Appendix G	Bí Cineálta - Overview of the Procedures	This is an overview of the key areas of change from the 2013 anti-bullying procedures for schools.

Appendix H	Kiva Programme	Screening and Discussions Documentation
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Appendix A

School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of _____ 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.

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		
Students		
Parents		
Board of management		
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved:		
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):

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):

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

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

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: _____ Date: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Principal)

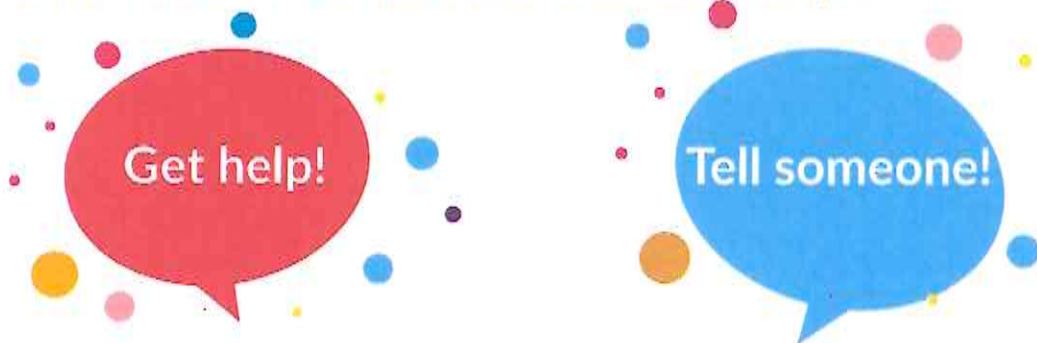
Appendix B

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

Bullying behaviour is when someone keeps being mean or hurtful to others on purpose over and over again.



Please
tell someone if you
think that you are
being bullied or
someone else is
being bullied.

Our school
has a Bí Cineálta policy to try
to stop bullying behaviour.

We look at this policy every year to
see what is working well or what could
work better.

We will ask you what
you think.

When it happens a lot.
Not just once.

Appendix C

Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The whole school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour. Schools should work in partnership with their patron, board of management, staff, students and their parents to develop and implement their *Bí Cineálta* policy.

This appendix is intended as a guide to addressing bullying behaviour. It is based on the information contained in Chapter 6 of the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Approach

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the students involved, rather than to apportion blame.

When addressing bullying behaviour teachers should:

- ▶ ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured
- ▶ seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- ▶ conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- ▶ consider the age and ability of the students 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

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

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.

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

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?

If the answer to each of the questions above is **Yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the *Bí Cineálta* Procedures.

Note: One-off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

If the answer to any of these questions is **No**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.

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

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

- if a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first
- thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group
- at the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views
- each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting
- it may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

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
- a record should be kept of the engagement with all involved
- this record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the *Bi Cineálta* procedures), where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents
- the record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour

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 the school 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 Cineálta 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

Appendix D

Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for board of management meeting of DD/MM/YYYY

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 E

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

<p>1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the <i>Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i>? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school. _____/_____/20_____</p> <p>2. Where in the school is the student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?</p> <p>3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student-friendly policy on the school website? _____/_____/20_____</p> <p>4. How has the student-friendly policy been communicated to students?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student-friendly policy been communicated to parents</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the <i>Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i>? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>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? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
--

9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour. Yes No

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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _____

Appendix F

Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's BÍ Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management of _____ confirms that the board of management's annual review of the school's BÍ Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of _____ [date].

This review was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education's *BÍ Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of management)

Date: _____

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _____

Appendix G

Overview of the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Preventing and Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The following is a guide to the main changes between the requirements of the 2013 *Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* and the requirements of the 2024 *Bí Cineálta procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, which replace the 2013 procedures. This is not an exhaustive list.

Chapter 1	Responsibilities of the school community	All members of the school community must work together in partnership to prevent and address bullying behaviour at school.
	Legal basis	Legislation underpinning Bí Cineálta: Children First Act 2015. Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 also known as Coco's Law.
Chapter 2	What is bullying behaviour?	Updated definition of bullying behaviour based on Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2022).
	Criminal behaviour	Updated information on when bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour.
	Child protection concerns	Updated information relating to when bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern.
Chapter 3	Impacts of bullying behaviour	Updated information on how bullying behaviour can impact students who experience bullying behaviour, students who witness the behaviour and students who engage in bullying behaviour.
Chapter 4	Bí Cineálta Policy	<p>Schools must engage with the whole school community to develop their Bí Cineálta policy, using the template in Appendix A.</p> <p>The policy must list preventative strategies that are used including those to specifically prevent cyberbullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate.</p> <p>Schools must list specific support strategies for individuals experiencing bullying behaviour, those who witness bullying behaviour and those displaying bullying behaviour.</p> <p>All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded.</p> <p>The school principal is required to provide a bullying behaviour update at each ordinary board of management meeting.</p> <p>The school's Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed in collaboration with the whole school community once each calendar year and sooner if a serious incident occurs and the board of management determines an urgent review is required.</p>

Chapter 4	Appendix A Bí Cineálta Policy	This template document must be used as a basis for each school's Bí Cineálta Policy.
	Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	Every school must develop a student-friendly version of its Bí Cineálta policy and display it where students and the school community can see it.
	Appendix B Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	This template document can be used by schools as a basis for their student-friendly policy.
Chapter 5	Preventing Bullying Behaviour	<p>Prevention measures are linked to the four areas of Wellbeing Promotion.</p> <p>Importance of fostering a "telling environment" in schools and the role of the trusted adult.</p> <p>Prevention strategies must be provided relating to specific types of bullying behaviour including cyberbullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment, as appropriate.</p>
Chapter 6	Appendix C Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour	Guide can be used to address bullying behaviour.
	Remit of the school in addressing bullying behaviour	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.
	Requests to take no action	Guidance for schools on how requests by students and parents to "take no action" should be addressed.
	Engagement with students involved in bullying behaviour and their parents	<p>Schools must engage with students who have experienced bullying behaviour to decide the actions to be taken to address the incident of bullying behaviour.</p> <p>Schools must also engage with their parents.</p> <p>Schools must engage with students who have displayed bullying behaviour as well as their parents when deciding actions to be taken.</p> <p>Schools must engage with all involved when reviewing progress and determining whether bullying behaviour has ceased.</p>
	Recording Incidents of Bullying Behaviour	All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded by the teacher addressing the behaviour.

Chapter 7	Update to the board of management	<p>Principal must provide an update to the board of management at each ordinary board meeting. This report includes the number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board meeting, the number of incidents ongoing and the total number reported since the beginning of the school year.</p> <p>The principal must provide a verbal update which will include, where relevant, trends and patterns, the strategies used to address the incidents and whether an urgent review of the policy is needed.</p> <p>The update is to inform discussion at each ordinary board of management meeting regarding the effectiveness of the preventative strategies used by the school and the overall effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta Policy.</p>
	Appendix D Guide to providing bullying behaviour update to the board of management	Guide can be used to assist principals in providing bullying behaviour update to board of management.
	Review of Bí Cineálta Policy	The Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed once each calendar year, in collaboration with the whole school community, and earlier if the Board determines an urgent review is warranted.
	Appendix E Review of the Bí Cineálta policy.	The Review template must be completed when the Bí Cineálta policy is reviewed.
	Appendix F Notification of Annual Review	The template can be used to notify the school community that the annual review has been completed.

4. CHECK WHETHER THE CLASS TEACHER HAS MET WITH A FEW CLASSMATES OF THE BULLIED PUPIL

The class teacher has met with classmates on 20..... (date)

5. FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION WITH THE BULLIED PUPIL

Date 20.....

According to the bullied pupil, the bullying has

- stopped
- decreased
- remained the same
- increased

Notes:

[Faint, illegible text area for notes]

6. FOLLOW-UP GROUP DISCUSSION WITH THE PUPILS INVOLVED IN THE BULLYING

Date 20.....

Is the bullied pupil present at the discussion? (This is not required, but is possible if s/he wants to).

- no
- yes

Notes:

[Faint, illegible text area for notes]

Possible further measures:

[Faint, illegible text area for possible further measures]