

# School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

## Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil thulach na nÓg 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                                                    | 11/11/24<br>6/5/25<br>29/5/25<br>4/6/25 | Café Domhanda<br>Cruinniú Foirne<br><i>Foireann Bainistaíochta na Scoile</i><br><i>Foireann Bainistaíochta na Scoile</i> |
| Students                                                        | 21/5/24<br>10/4/25<br>Leanúnach         | Comórtas Cineáltas<br>Suirbhé rang 3 agus rang 5<br>Leanúnach leis an Coiste na nDaltaí                                  |
| Parents                                                         | 1/4/25                                  | Suirbhé do tuismitheoirí                                                                                                 |
| Board of Management                                             |                                         | Cruinniú Bord Bainistíochta                                                                                              |
| Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers | 11/11/24<br>Leanúnach                   | Café Domhanda<br>Comhrá le tiománaithe                                                                                   |
| 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):

### Culture and Environment

- positive school culture and environment
- positive and inclusive school culture
- Positive relationships
- Effective leadership
- Supervision
- Opportunities to raise self-esteem

### Curriculum: Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- Teaching and learning in SPHE

- RSE Curriculum
- Student participation – Student Council
- SPHE methodologies
- Promoting talents and diversity
- Extra-curricular activities to develop positive self-esteem
- Group work/Collaboration
- Role-playing, role-playing - drama
- Circle time

#### Policy and Planning

- Bí Cineálta Policy
- Bí Cineálta Policy that supports students
- Code of Conduct and Discipline
- Child Protection Statement
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Supervision
- RSE Policy
- SEN Policy
- Wellbeing and SSE in Education
- Appropriate TPL (Teacher Professional Learning)

#### Relationships and Partnerships

- Strong interpersonal connections
- Kindness awareness initiatives
- Student and parent engagement
- TPL (Teacher Professional Learning)
- Critical Thinking Skills
- Promoting peer support
- Supporting activities that foster empathy, respect and resilience

Oide

NCSE

NEPS

Foras Patrúnachta

## Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of life that can affect even the youngest members of society.

The age of digital consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their data. In Ireland the age of digital consent is 16.

Therefore, technically, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account.

It is important for their child's safety that parents are aware of their child's use of technology, including smartphones and games consoles.

## Preventing Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying Behaviour

> Fostering and maintaining an inclusive physical environment, such as displaying relevant posters.

> Encouraging students to speak up when they see homophobic behaviour occurring.

## **Preventing Racial Bullying Behaviour**

- > Foster a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students “see themselves” in their school environment.
- > Invite speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

## **Preventing Sexually Bullying Behaviour**

Schools should focus on gender equality as part of their school's efforts to create a supportive and respectful environment. Strategies to prevent sexually bullying behaviour include, but are not limited to, the following:

- > Encourage parents to reinforce these values of respect at home.

## **Preventing Sexual Harassment**

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach focused on education, awareness and clear and enforceable policies. Schools must make it clear that sexual harassment is not tolerated. Sexual harassment should never be trivialized as teasing or bullying.

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):

## Supervision and monitoring

Appropriate supervision is an important measure to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. Schools have a duty to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of their students and to supervise students when they are attending school or school events. Some schools offer a mix of organised activities during break times and schools are encouraged to continue this to cater for a range of preferences and interests.

### Polasaí Páistí ag teacht le chéile ar maidin

1. Osclaíonn doras an halla ag 8.30 i.n.
2. Tosaíonn na páistí ag teach ó 8.30 anonn
3. Déanann an phríomhoide/baill don fhoireann inbhainistíochta maoirseacht ar na páistí sa halla
4. Cuidíonn na cuntóirí riachtanais speisialta ó 8.45 i.n. in anon
5. Caithfidh gach uile páiste teacht isteach go dtí an halla
6. Tá line ag gach rang sa halla
7. Buaileann an cloigín ag 8.55 i.n.
8. Buaileann an cloigín arís ag 9.00 i.n agus tugann na múinteoirí ranga na páistí suas go dtí na scomraí

### Páistí ag dul abhaile gach trathnóna

1. Buaileann an cloigín ag 2.40
2. Tugann na múinteoirí ranga gach rang go dtí an halla
3. Líonann na páistí suas i line de réir rang
4. Deantar line speisialta do na busanna: a) Kidology Childcare  
b) an bus beag (Ongar)  
c) an bus mór (Clonee)
5. Ligtear na páistí do na busanna amach ar dtús agus siúlann siad go dtí na busanna
6. Ansin ligtear na páistí eile amach de réir ranga go deas reidh ag tosú le Rang 1
7. Bíonn na tuismitheoirí ag fanacht taobh amuigh. Caithfaidh na tuismitheoirí na páistí a phiocadh suas. Muna bhfuil an tuismitheoir ábalta teacht, caithfaidh siad ainm an duine atá ag piocadh suas a chur in iúl don múinteoir ranga.
8. Coimeadann an phríomhoide/baill den fhoireann inbhainistíochta, siúl ar gach rud go dtí go bhfuil gach duine imithe.
9. Dá má rud é go bhfuil páiste ag siúl abhaile ina aonar caithfaidh na tuismitheoirí litir ceadaithe a sheoladh isteach chuig an múinteoir ranga.

## Lunch Time

There is a teacher on each playground and an assistant working with a specific student integrating their own playground.

Two people go on each school trip, Teacher/Assistant  
Each playground is fenced and the teachers have a good view of the students  
Adults are not allowed to use mobile phones on the playground except in case of emergency.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Deputy Principal of the School is responsible for drafting and maintaining an up-to-date Supervision Schedule, and for informing the persons listed on the schedule. In the event of a planned absence, that person shall arrange with the next person on the list to alternate supervision duties. In the event of an unexpected absence, the Deputy Principal shall ensure that the next person on the list takes over the duties.

## **Policy Statement**

During break time, teachers and a special needs assistant supervise the playground. If the day is wet, classrooms are supervised. The rules regarding the playground are reviewed regularly, and the children are reminded of them. The supervisor stays in the playground with the classes until the class teacher arrives to collect each class.

All visitors must meet the Principal before entering the school

Visitors are not left alone with students in the school.

## **Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

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

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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):

## Approach

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

1. Is the behavior directed at an individual student or a group of students?
2. Is the behavior intended to cause physical, social, or emotional harm?
3. Is the behavior repeated?

If the answer to each of the above questions is '**Yes**', the behavior is bullying behavior and should be addressed in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Code.

**A single hurtful message posted on social media could be considered bullying behaviour as it is very likely to be shared many times and therefore become a recurring behaviour.**

If the answer to any of the above questions is **No**, the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. The school's **Code of Conduct/Discipline** provides for strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour. When identifying whether bullying behaviour has occurred, the teacher should:

## Parents

Parents are an integral part of the school community and have an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the situation 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 experiencing bullying behaviour on how best to address the situation

. > A record should be kept of the discussions held with all those involved.

> This record should document the form and nature of the bullying behaviour, if known (see Sections 2.5 and 2.7 of the Be Kind procedures), where and when it occurred and the date of initial contact with the students involved and their parents.

> The record should include the views of the students involved and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour where bullying behaviour has occurred.

> The teacher must re-engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial contact.

1. Important factors to consider as part of this discussion include the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
2. The teacher should document the review with students and their parents to determine whether the bullying behaviour has ceased and the students' and parents' views on this.
3. The date on which it was determined that the bullying behaviour had ceased should also be recorded.
4. Any involvement with external services/supports should also be noted.
5. Ongoing supervision and support may be required for the students involved even after the bullying behaviour has ceased.
6. If the bullying behaviour has not stopped, the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students concerned and their parents and a timeline should be agreed for further discussion until the bullying behaviour stops.
7. If it is clear that the student displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, consideration should be given to using the strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour as provided for in the school's Code of Conduct. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the student concerned, his/her parents and the school.
8. If a parent(s) is/are not satisfied with the way the school has dealt with the bullying behaviour, in accordance with the Be Kind Procedures for Preventing and Dealing with Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures.
9. If a parent is dissatisfied with the way the school has dealt with the bullying behaviour, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative impact on the student.

Seo foirm taifid chun tuairisc a dhéanamh ar bhulaíocht:

1. **Cárta taifid**
2. **Ainmneacha na ndaltaí:**
  - o Dalta 1: \_
  - o Dalta 2: \_
3. **Doiciméadú ar fhoirm(Más Eol)**
  - o Fisiciúil
  - o Ar Líne
  - o bulaíochta ó bhéal:
  - o bulaíochta i scríbhinn
  - o Sracadh
  - o Eisiamh
  - o Caidrimh
  - o Eile: \_

4. Doiciméadú ar chineál(Más Eol)
  - Bulaíochta i leith duine atá faoi mhíchumas
  - Bulaíocht ar dhuine ardchumais
  - Iompraíocht bhulaíochta i leith duine mar gheall ar fhéiniúlacht inscne
  - Iompraíocht bhulaíochta homafóbach/trasfhóbach
  - Bulaíocht ar dhuine mar gheall ar a c(h)uma fhisiciúil
  - Bulaíocht chiníoch
  - Bulaíocht bhochtaineachta
  - Iompraíocht bhulaíochta i leith duine mar gheall ar fhéiniúlacht reiligiúnach
  - Bulaíocht ghnéasaíoch
  - Ciapadh gnéasach
5. **Am agus Áit:**
  - Dáta: \_
  - Am: \_
  - Áit: \_
6. **Tuairimí Dalta:**
  - Dalta 1: \_
  - Dalta 2: \_
7. **Tuairim Tuistí:**
  - Tuismitheoir 1: \_
  - Tuismitheoir 2: \_
8. **Plean Comhreiteach:**
  - Céimeanna: \_
  - Freagrachtaí: \_
9. **Dáta Athbhreithnithe:**
  - Dáta: \_

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):

## Where bullying behaviour has occurred

A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the school's care or responsibility. However, where such bullying behaviour has an impact on a school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where bullying behaviour continues in the school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Be Kind policy.

Where the student displaying bullying behaviour is not a student from the school but the student experiencing bullying behaviour is a student from the school, the school should support the student experiencing bullying behaviour and engage in discussions with them and the parents to decide on the steps that can be taken.

School staff should identify the supports required by the student exhibiting bullying behaviour to more effectively manage related difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, it is generally accepted that there is no single approach that works effectively in all situations.

Approaches such as restorative practices and mediation should only be used to address bullying behaviour where the teachers involved are trained in using these approaches and the students involved have consented to their use. To ensure that the school community is clear about how incidents of bullying behaviour can be addressed, the approaches that the school will use should be specified in the school's Be Kind policy. Section 6.7 outlines the supports available and you may find the Resource Guide accompanying these procedures helpful.

## Requests to take no action

A student who reports bullying behaviour may ask a staff member to do nothing about the behaviour other than to "watch out" for them. In this case, parents should make this request to the school in writing or should be encouraged to do so where there are literacy or digital literacy barriers or language barriers. However, when considering the parent's request, schools may decide, depending on the circumstances, that it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Determining whether the bullying behaviour has stopped

Follow the process outlined on page 8, points 1-9

Recording bullying behaviour

Bullying report recording form: to be completed and followed

### Complaints Process

If a parent is not satisfied with the way the school has dealt with bullying behaviour, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure. Further information relating to the school's complaints procedures is available at the following link: [Complaints Procedures for Schools](#) If a parent is unhappy with the way a complaint has been handled, the parent may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative impact on the student. The Ombudsman for Children's Office can be contacted at [ococplaint@oco.ie](mailto:ococplaint@oco.ie)

## Supports

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National Educational Psychological Service (NES)

Teacher

Webwise

UDC Anti-Bullying Centre

Tusla

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: *Seamus Caomhánach* Date: *14/9/26*  
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: *Seán Ó Fáinche* Date: *14/9/26*  
(Principal)