



Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Introduction

The Board of Management of S.N Naomh Treasa 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	May 2025	Half day closure
Students	May 2025	Interviews with principal Surveys
Board of Management	Jan-Jun 2025	Mentioned at board meetings/ Board sub committee meetings
Date policy was approved: 21/07/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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

Culture and environment

A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behavior. We strive for our school environment to be a space where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.

Aims and Actions:

- **To create a school climate that is welcoming of difference and diversity:**
 - Display inclusive artwork, positive messaging, and a school and playground charter created by students. Include displays on the rights of children
 - Celebrate cultural days and diversity through school-wide events.
 - explicit teaching of the rights of children
 - Conduct an **annual school culture audit** to assess inclusivity and wellbeing. (see appendix)
- **To encourage the disclosure and discussion of bullying:**
 - Promote the concept of a trusted adult; ensure visibility through classroom posters.
 - Install “Kindness Boxes” or anonymous reporting boxes for students to report concerns safely.
- **To promote positive and caring relationships among the school community:**
 - Facilitate regular staff CPD on empathy, restorative practices, and student wellbeing.
 - Encourage peer appreciation activities such as weekly “kindness circles.”
 - employ the principles of universal positive regard toward all in our school community.
- **To support parental involvement in the prevention of bullying:**
 - Facilitate parent workshops on the signs and management of bullying.
 - Share anti-bullying commitments in the home-school agreement.
- **To ensure a consistent school-wide approach to bullying:**
 - Have clear procedures for staff handling of bullying- procedures available in staff handbooks and in the staffroom.
 - Involve the children in the creation and review of the Bí Cineálta policy and have the Child friendly version displayed in all classrooms.

Curriculum (Teaching and learning)

We are committed to using the curriculum to foster respect, collaboration, and resilience among students while educating them on the impacts of bullying.

Aims and Actions:

- **To deliver collaborative and respectful teaching and learning:**
 - Integrate cooperative learning strategies in classroom practice.
 - Facilitate conflict-resolution role-plays within SPHE classes.
 - Curricular and Extracurricular activities can help to develop a sense of self worth, working together, inclusion and respect.
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 - Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.
- **To support student self-worth and personal development:**
 - Celebrate individual and class achievements through “Strength Spotting” sessions.
 - Teach the concept of growth mindset at all class levels
 - Display student work that promotes pride and self-esteem. E.g a wow wall
- **To teach about bullying and its impact:**
 - Teach SPHE and RSE content which fosters student’s well-being and self confidence as well as promoting personal responsibility for their own behaviours and actions.
Programs: FUSE
 - Teach the Stay Safe program at all levels which teaches the concepts of trusted adults
- **To acknowledge and celebrate diversity in the school:**
 - Use art, storytelling, and events to showcase diverse cultures and backgrounds.
 - Include multicultural resources and visuals in learning environments.

Policy and planning

We are committed to building an evidence-informed policy that integrates prevention, reporting, intervention, and support measures.

Aims and Actions:

- **To raise awareness of bullying as unacceptable:**
 - Launch policy through whole-school assemblies and information sessions for parents.
 - Create visual infographics and videos to communicate key messages.
- **To promote a safe telling environment:**
 - Create age-appropriate, accessible reporting systems (e.g., via iPads or classroom forms),

- **To ensure effective supervision and monitoring:**
 - Conduct supervision of common areas.
 - Use student feedback to identify and respond to “hot spots” around the school.
- **To support pupils involved in bullying incidents:**
 - Provide tailored programs of support plans involving class teachers, SETs, SNAs, and parents for children affected by bullying.
 - Staff training on restorative practices
 - To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.
- **To integrate the policy into other school plans and documents:**
 - Update the Code of Behaviour, AUP, and SEN policies to align with the *Bí Cineálta* framework.

Relationships and partnerships

Strong relationships within the school and with the wider community are foundational to bullying prevention.

Aims and Actions:

- **To foster strong interpersonal connections:**
 - Implement buddy systems between younger and older students.
 - Encourage participation in initiatives such as “Secret Friend Week.”
- **To raise awareness through reflective learning:**
 - Use SPHE lessons to explore themes of kindness, empathy, and impact of bullying.
 - Use reflection journals and classroom discussion prompts.
- **To involve all stakeholders in the school community:**
 - Provide awareness training for bus drivers, extracurricular providers, and school visitors.
 - Engage with outside organizations to support delivery of workshops and campaigns.
- Launch a **Parent Kindness Pledge** campaign.
- **To support active participation in policy development:**
 - Host student and parent policy consultation events.
 - Include pupil voices in annual reviews of the Child Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy.

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):

Preventing Cyber Bullying, Homophobic/Transphobic bullying, Racist bullying, Preventing sexual harassment

As well as the strategies outlined above the school has the following in place to help prevent bullying behaviour of any kind.

- Staff at all times endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- Full Implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Digital Media Policy includes learning about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship. AUP also developed for technology in our school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff.
- Involvement of pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Kindness/ anti-bullying week, and other activities that can help to pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Refer to appropriate online behaviour when using devices and in SPHE lessons.
- Promote online safety events or material for parents
- 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, www.antibullyingcentre.ie>fuse, www.webwise.ie
- Shared folder of resources for teaching of bullying including lessons from above websites – shared Google drive for all teachers to access.
- Challenge gender- stereotypes – equal participation of all. Equal recognition.
- Raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour and encourage students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.
- Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated and students “see themselves” in the school environment.
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- 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

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is (are) as follows:
Principal/Deputy Principal, Class teachers and S.E.T 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

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):

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.

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

- 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
- Parents of all involved with an incident of bullying behaviour should be informed early in the process.
- 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

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
- 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 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's 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

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):

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:**

Our aims are to:

- End the bullying behaviour promptly and effectively.
- Restore the child's sense of safety and belonging.
- Foster empathy and understanding among peers.

Key Strategies:

- Ensure the bullying is addressed quickly, and pupils are reassured that the situation is not their fault.
- Reinforce this message through awareness campaigns and SPHE lessons.
- Promote kindness and respect through class discussions and whole-school initiatives.
- Encourage participation in structured group activities and teams to help develop friendships and confidence.
- Recommend school-based or external counselling services where needed.
- Involve parents early in the process to provide coordinated support at home and in school.
- Follow up regularly with the pupil to monitor their wellbeing.

Additional Suggestions:

- Create a "Circle of Support" group—trusted adults and peer allies identified by the pupil.
- Offer peer mentoring or buddy systems to help pupils rebuild trust and social networks.

- **Supporting pupils who engage in bullying behaviour:**

At our school, we recognise that pupils who engage in bullying behaviour often require support to understand and change their actions. We are committed to a restorative and developmental approach that:

- Encourages accountability and responsibility,
- Promotes empathy and self-awareness,
- Builds capacity for positive behaviour and social connection,
- Reinforces the school's core values of kindness, inclusion, and respect.

Restorative Approach and Positive Reintegration

- Promote a 'Clean Slate' Ethos: Pupils who acknowledge their behaviour and make genuine efforts to change are supported in starting afresh without ongoing blame or stigma.
- Recognise Positive Change: Affirm and praise pupils for taking responsibility, apologising, and making amends, highlighting that doing so is the honourable and right thing.
- Support Rebuilding of Relationships: Encourage restorative conversations or mediated meetings, where appropriate, to help repair trust and promote mutual understanding between peers.

Emotional and Social Supports

- Access to Counselling or Mentoring: Provide individualised support (via school support staff, SETs, or external services) to explore the underlying causes of bullying behaviour and to develop healthier interpersonal strategies.
- Self-Esteem and Belonging Building: Actively encourage participation in:
 - Group work and co-operative learning in class,
 - Structured social skills programs (e.g. *Friends for Life*, *Zippy's Friends*, or similar),
 - Extracurricular clubs, team sports, or leadership roles to help pupils build friendships and self-worth through prosocial engagement.

Learning-Focused Interventions

- Integrate SEL (Social & Emotional Learning): Through SPHE and whole-school learning strategies, support all students in:
 - Developing empathy, communication, and conflict resolution skills,
 - Understanding the impact of their actions on others,
 - Strengthening emotional regulation and decision-making.
- Behavioural Reflection & Coaching:
 - Guide pupils in recognising patterns in their behaviour and triggers,
 - Involve them in setting personal goals for change and accountability,
 - Offer regular check-ins with a trusted adult or mentor.

Family and Teacher Involvement

- Correct the Behaviour, Support the Child: Encourage a shared understanding among staff and parents that challenging behaviour must be addressed, but the child must remain supported and valued.
- Team-Based Approach: Engage parents/guardians, class teachers, and support staff in consistent, compassionate reinforcement of behavioural expectations and progress monitoring.

Outcome-Oriented: Focus on Growth and Resolution

- Resolution-Focused Intervention: Where bullying has occurred, the priority is to achieve resolution and support behavioural reform. Pupils are offered a structured opportunity to:
 - Understand the harm caused,
 - Make amends where possible,
 - Commit to positive change.

- Promise and Support Framework: Pupils who commit to reform may be offered a “fresh start agreement”, supported by adult guidance and peer encouragement, ensuring they are not defined by past actions but by their efforts to grow.

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and PostPrimary Schools

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: *Connie Garling Squire* (Chairperson of board of management)

Date: 21/07/2025 Signed:

____ Date: _____ (Principal)