

Version	Date First Ratified / Amended by BOM	Date/s Reviewed by BOM
V.1	September 17th 2025	



Scoil Íosa, Oranmore

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scoil Íosa 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.

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

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

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

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: (Derailed definition of bullying is provided in Chp 2 of Bí Cinealta procedures)

- 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 Harm can be :

- Physical harm
 - Injuries, aggressive contact, or damage to property.

- Emotional harm
 - Feelings of fear, sadness, anxiety, embarrassment, or low self-esteem.
- Social harm
 - Exclusion, damage to relationships, isolation, or harm to reputation.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour

- A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.
- Disagreements between students.
- Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others.
- Bullying behaviour is not accidental or reckless. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying but must be addressed under the school’s Code of Behaviour.

Section A:
Development of our BÍ Cinnealta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development of this policy

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	4th April 2025	Staff meeting Half Day closure to facilitate BÍ Cinnelata training

	May 2025	Draft policy distributed to staff for feedback
Students	May 2025 May 2025	Student questionnaire Student council meeting- student friendly policy discussed Safety audit with student council
Parents	April 2025	Feedback sought from parents through a google form in April. newsletter- updates
Board of Management	May 28th 2025	BOM meeting Review of new Draft Policy- leading to final ratification after amendments made were necessary.
Wider School Community	Sep 2025	Publication of draft policy on school website
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 this school to address all forms of bullying behaviour, in whatever form and however motivated, including online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.

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

This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference, by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at board of management and staff meetings.

The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence.

In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate support for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies.

Culture and Environment

- Assemblies
- Relationship building
- Artwork and signage
- Integration
- Open communication across the whole school community
- Promoting an inclusive environment - opportunities to celebrate our similarities and our differences
- Displays throughout the school reinforcing the culture of inclusivity, positivity, friendship and kindness
- A restorative practice approach: promoting positive relationships and connection across the whole school community; fostering empathy and a sense of belonging; when harm occurs we endeavour to try to repair harm caused and restore relationships between those involved
- Whole school initiatives such as Well-being week, Anti-Bullying Week, International Day, Safer Internet Day
- Active participation in student life including opportunities to take part in extracurricular activities such as band, sport, debating, quizzes

- Belonging and a sense of community fostered
- Positive social culture
- Promoting a telling environment
- A trusted adult - opportunities to discuss and identify trusted adults throughout the school
- Safe physical spaces around the school ensuring as much as possible clear visibility
- Organisation of yard spaces during break times including adequate supervision by adults

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- Implementation of SPHE curriculum including Stay Safe, Walk Tall and RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) programmes
- Explicit teaching in First term around bullying behaviour
- High expectations of learners
- Support for all through Continuum of Support
- Group work evident in all subjects in all classes
- Restorative practice. -
- Student voice- council
- Varied teaching methodologies including use of play, story, drama, roleplay, group work and collaboration
- Relationship-building activities within classroom and SET setting which may include circle time, regular check-ins, positive reinforcement, use of games, morning meetings, 'my thoughts about school' checklist
- Supporting emotional regulation - teaching and learning about zones of regulation, use of calm spaces, movement breaks, how my brain works

Relationships and Partnerships

- Student voice - student council, opportunities for input of students in school life
- Culture of open and regular communication between school and parents
- Regular sharing of information through school newsletter, Facebook and Website
- Liaising with wider community eg, community guard, community development association etc
- Parents Association
- Facebook/Website
- Regular meetings with parents - positive feedback opportunities
- Strong home - school links

- Grandparents Day, International Day
- Board of Management meetings
- Links with local preschools and secondary schools

Policy and Planning

- BÍ Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour
- Student Friendly BÍ Cinnelata Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Complaints procedure
- Ongoing TPL (Teacher professional learning) for staff
- SSE (School Self Evaluation)
- Additional school policies related to well-being SPHE, RSE, Child safeguarding statement, acceptable use policy, SEN policy
- Individual/ collaborative teaching planning relevant to well-being (Short term and Long term)
- Inclusion policy
- Behaviours of concern

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

- Supervision policy and supervision roster
- Health and Safety Statement
- Child safeguarding statement
- Code of Behaviour
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Wellbeing Policy Statement and framework for Practice

Specific strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate are detailed below (chapter 5 of the BÍ Cineálta procedures)

Preventing cyberbullying behaviour

- promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments
- Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour can include the following
 - implementing the SPHE curriculum
 - Implementing the DLF across the school, which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship

- having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online
- developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology
- referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour?
- promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online
- holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour

Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour

All students, including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students, have a right to feel safe and supported at school.

- Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour include the following
 - challenging gender stereotypes
 - challenging and exploring the use of homophobic language negatively.
 - encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour
 - maintaining an inclusive environment and culture throughout the school.

Preventing racist bullying behaviour

Students attending schools come from many different cultures and backgrounds. Students from diverse backgrounds may face discrimination and prejudice and may be subject to racist bullying behaviour.

- Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following
 - fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment
 - having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
 - providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
 - supports made available to school staff when necessary to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents
 - ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different

national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds (reference to Oide literacy list)

Preventing sexist bullying behaviour Schools should focus on gender equality as part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment.

- Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following
 - ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex
 - ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex
 - celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students

Preventing sexual harassment

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. Schools must make it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

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- Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include the following
 - promoting positive role models within the school community
 - challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

Section C: **Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

The whole school community has a responsibility to implement our school's BÍ Cineálta Policy in order to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

When bullying behaviour is reported, it is the **class teacher** who has the primary responsibility for addressing this behaviour, with support from other staff as deemed necessary.

What happens when bullying behaviour is reported?

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 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

Procedure to address bullying behaviour

The following steps will be taken by the school when a report of bullying behaviour occurs:

1. Determine if bullying behaviour has occurred.	Teacher investigates considering <i>what, when and where*</i> bullying behaviour has occurred by <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Engaging with pupils involved individually at first● Meeting with students in a group if appropriate allowing all students to give their account of what happened● Providing support, as appropriate, after the meeting To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the teacher considers the following question: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional
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	<p>harm?</p> <p>3. Is the behaviour repeated?</p> <p>If the answer to each of the questions above is Yes, then the behaviour is <u>bullying behaviour</u> and the investigating teacher should proceed to step 2 of procedures to address bullying below.</p> <p>If the answer to any of these questions is No, then the behaviour is <u>not bullying behaviour</u>. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's <u>Code of Behaviour</u>.</p> <p>*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 this Bí Cineálta policy.</p>
<p>2. Address and Record</p>	<p>The following principles will be adhered to when addressing bullying behaviour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inform principal that bullying behaviour has occurred ● inform parents of those involved ● 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 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 <p>Requests to take no action</p> <p>If a parent makes a report of bullying behaviour but requests that the school take no action, they must submit it in writing. School will acknowledge this but may still deem it necessary for a report to be addressed and investigated.</p> <p>Record:</p>

	<p>All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded by the investigating teacher using <i>Recording Template for Incidents of Bullying Behaviour (App1)</i></p> <p><i>Any notes from the investigation will be uploaded on Aladdin.</i></p> <p>If bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter should be addressed without delay in accordance with <i>Child Protection for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i></p>
3. Review	<p>The school will engage with parents no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion regarding bullying behaviour to review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If bully behaviour has ceased ● Nature of bullying behaviour ● Effectiveness of strategies used to address bullying ● Relationships between students involved
4. Determine if bullying behaviour has ceased	<p>If bullying behaviour has ceased ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour.</p> <p>If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher 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.</p> <p>Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school should consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.</p> <p>If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.</p>
5. Bullying Behaviour Update	Principal must include all reports of established bullying behaviour in their update to the BOM (See section D Oversight)
6. Complaint Process	If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.

7. External Supports	<p>It may be deemed appropriate to engage with external supports to address bullying behaviour in schools including from the following agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NEPS ● Oide ● Tulsa ● National Parents Council ● Webwise ● DCU anti-bullying
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The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour

- Restorative Practice
 - engage with pupils involved to establish what happened and why (restorative questions)
 - Endeavour to restore the relationship between the child who experience bullying behaviour and the child who engaged in bullying behaviour
 - Seek to repair harm caused by bullying behaviour - Agreement by those involved as to how to ensure bullying behaviour stops
 - Regular check-ins with pupils involved
 - Whole class circle work
- Encourage open communication where pupils feel they can speak up about bullying behaviour
- Reference for pupils involved to our Bí Cinnealta (student friendly) to acknowledge and understand bullying behaviour that has occurred.
- Parental involvement at all stages of the process is essential to ensuring bullying behaviour is addressed
- Education programmes such as Friends for Life, Lust for Life, Walk Tall, Stay Safe, Webwise can be implemented in a targeted way with classes, pupils who have experienced, witnessed or engaged in bullying behaviour
- Professional support and advice from external services can be sought if deemed necessary
- Involvement in extracurricular activities, group work and collaboration between pupils foster sense of belonging, friendships and connections

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 incident
- the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant

- information relating to trends and patterns identified
- strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant.

This update does not contain personal or identifying information.

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. (App. 2)

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.

Chairperson of Board of Management	Signed:	Date:
Principal	Signed:	Date:

Appendix 1

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour



Recording Template for Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

According to the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour it has been established that bullying behaviour has occurred.

Date _____

Name of person making the report

Teacher responsible for investigating the bullying behaviour

1. Names of Children Involved

Student(s) experiencing bullying behaviour:	
Student(s) engaging in Bullying Behaviour:	
Other Witnesses (if any)	

2. Form of Bullying

(Refer to Section 2.5 – Tick all that apply)

Direct bullying behaviour

Physical (eg hitting, kicking, pushing)

Verbal (eg name-calling, teasing, insults)

Written (eg writing insulting remarks in public places, passing notes or drawing around)

Extortion (eg something obtained through force or threats)

Indirect bullying behaviour

Cyberbullying (eg harmful messages, social media misuse)

Exclusion (eg deliberately isolating, excluding or ignoring someone)

Relational (spreading rumours, silent treatment, manipulation to make someone unpopular)

Online

Cyberbullying (eg harmful messages, social media misuse, posting private information, making fake profiles, excluding access from groups)

Other

3. Type of Bullying

(Refer to Section 2.7 – Tick all that apply)

Disablist/ exceptionally able bullying (based on perceived or actual disability or additional needs or perceived high academic achievement or talent)

Prejudicial Bullying (e.g., based on race, religion, gender)

Sexual Bullying (e.g., inappropriate comments, sexual harassment)

Poverty bullying (e.g., intended to humiliate because of lack of resources)

Other

4. Where and When did the bullying behaviour take place?

(If known)

Location (s):	
Date/Time (s):	

5. Date of Initial Engagement

With Student(s)	
Details of initial engagement	
With Parent(s)	
Details of initial engagement, ie email, phone call, in person	

6. Views of Student(s)/Parent(s) involved

<i>Name:</i>
<i>What happened?</i>
<i>What do you think should happen now? (actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour)</i>

<i>Name:</i>
<i>What happened?</i>
<i>What do you think should happen now? (actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour)</i>

7. Review *(To determine if bullying behaviour has ceased)*

This review should take place no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement

Review Date	
Outcome (Has bullying behaviour ceased?)	Student:
Outcome (Has bullying behaviour ceased?)	Parent:

8. Engagement with External Services/Supports

(If any)

Services Contacted:	
Details of Engagement:	

9. Ongoing Supervision and support if required

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10. Date that the log of actions was updated for support team to access **if applicable**

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10. Recording Teacher

Name: _____

Date Recorded: _____

Appendix 2

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour
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.

Get help! **Tell someone!**

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

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

When it happens a lot. Not just once.

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.

Be Kind

Scoil Íosa Oranmore