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 Scoil Bhríde, Clara 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.

It is very important to note that this policy is fully aligned with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* and that it should be read in conjunction with the procedures. Schools are required to follow the procedures fully, as set out by the Department of Education.

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

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	September 2026	**Staff Survey** - Survey shared with staff to review policy.
	May 2025	**Staff Meeting** - Shared draft policy with staff.
	March - June 2025	**Staff focus group** - weekly meetings to develop Bí Cineálta policy.
	March 2025	**½ Day closure** - Staff provided with the opportunity to discuss our current prevention strategies and supports.
Students	September 2026	**Student Survey -** Shared with 4th, 5th & 6th Class. **Student Council Meeting** - reviewed student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy. The student council communicated changes to class teachers and students.
	May 2025	**Student Council Meeting -** discussed and decided on the development of our student friendly Bí Cineálta policy.
	September 2024	**Student's Survey**
Parents	September 2026	**Parent's Survey**
	June 2025	**Parents Association** - Shared draft policy with PA.
	September 2024	**Parent's Survey**
Board of Management	September 2026	Shared reviewed Bí Cineálta Policy.
	June 2025	Shared draft policy with BOM.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	June 2025	**Draft policy** - Shared the Bí Cineálta draft policy with the wider school community - bus drivers, escorts, caretakers, cleaning staff.
Date policy was approved: September 2026		

- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages. Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines (D.F.L.). Catch them being good-notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school-this includes homophobic and racist language that is belittling of any pupils.
- Development and promotion of the Bí Cineálta child friendly policy for the school-to be displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly. *88.7% of pupils feel there is an adult in the school they could talk to if they were being bullied.*
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell e.g.
    - Direct approach to teacher at appropriate time, for example after class.
    - Hand note up with homework.
    - Contact the school or a trusted teacher in the school.
    - Anti-bully or worry box.
    - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
    - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

- *The Student Council updated the school's student-friendly Bí Cineálta Policy during our Sep 2026 review. They included sections on who to tell and how to tell.*
- *100% of parents surveyed think their child would be comfortable speaking to a member of staff if they had a worry or concern about bullying behaviour.*
- *88.7% of pupils surveyed think that they could speak to a member of staff if they were being bullied.*

Open communication between all members of the school community to foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibilities in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

- Involve parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated.

<u>Ways in which we work to achieve these goals are as follows:</u>

- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.
- School staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying "hot spots" and "hot times" for bullying in the school. Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas/changing rooms/corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision. As pupils told us in a survey, the toilets, the yard and the school gate are the main areas. Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- All staff actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour. Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision. Non teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.
- Display restorative questions and key respect messages in the yard and classrooms.
- Access to a calm down space in the mainstream or SET classrooms, when possible.
- Access to the Nurture Room.
- Catch them being good-notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by positive attention.
- Having a classroom rewards system of encouragement.

- The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.
- Code of behaviour, Child protection/safeguarding statement, Supervision, attendance, special education teaching, wellbeing and code of behaviour policies to support implementation of our schools Bí Cineálta policy.
- Embedding Inclusion and diversity across all policies.
- Support the participation of students in the development and implementation of school policies and plans e.g. Student friendly Bí Cineálta Policy.
- Engage in appropriate teaching professional learning courses to support school staff to prevent and address bullying behaviour.
- Information Events and guest speakers for Parents.
- Monitoring Attendance
- Engagement with School Completion Programme

Relationships and Partnerships

We strive to:

- Support interpersonal connections through a range of formal and informal structures such as our parents' association, home-school community welfare officer, board of management, student council and green schools committee.
- Encouraging peer mentoring and peer support.
- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Supporting active participation of students in school life and active participation of parents in school life also.

Ways in which we work to achieve these goals are as follows:

- An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements through internal staff knowledge/expertise and external sources. Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teacher(s)
- Support for parents - information seminars/training in the area of prevention of & dealing with issues.
- Dedicated notice board in the school and classrooms on the promotion of friendship and bullying prevention.
- Review regularly during school assemblies
- Wellbeing initiatives, celebrations and activities which support the development of relationships and partnerships:

- Positive Week
- Creative Schools/Drama
- Amber Flag
- Colour Run
- Christmas Concert & Coffee Morning
- Witch Walk
- Celebrating World Book Day
- St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Sports Days
- School Tours and Trips
- Grandparents Day
- Book Fair
- Choir

Preventing Sexist bullying behaviour:

- Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students and staff equally irrespective of their gender.
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home

Preventing Sexual harassment:

- Promoting positive role models within the school community > challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

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):

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and Practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

- Supervision Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- SPHE
- Code of Behaviour
- School Tours
- Swimming
- DEIS plans - retention

Supervision and Monitoring

We strive to:

- To develop a framework that effectively ensures, as far as is practicable, the safety of children while at play on the yard or while engaged in school related activities. *94.3% of pupils surveyed stated they feel happy and safe in school.*
- To observe and monitor behavioural patterns outside the confines of the classroom
- To comply with relevant legislation.

Ways in which we work towards achieving these aims:

- Our supervision policy and duty timetables are reviewed and updated continually. Updates are shared with staff online and posted in the staff room.
- Rules of the school yard are reviewed and revised with staff and students continually and communicated to children regularly.
- Positive interaction monitoring - observe and promote kind and inclusive behaviour, praise, recognition, and restorative questions
- Response to negative behaviour - immediate, calm intervention, using school-wide strategies e.g. restorative conversations. Recording incidents
- Regular review of data to identify hot spots
- Visibility of staff in key areas
- Monitoring of signs of isolation, bullying social exclusion

power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

Is-it-Bullying.pdf

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?

- Where one student is reported to be involved, the student should be engaged individually at first.
- Thereafter, this student and the student who is reported to be experiencing the bullying behaviour should be met together if the student experiencing bullying feels comfortable.
- 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, if appropriate.
- 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)

Stage 2: 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 will 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 as outlined in the school's Bí Cineálta policy.
- 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. In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the school should develop an appropriate plan to support the student and for how their parents will be informed.
- Schools should consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents, for example, literacy, digital literacy or language barriers.
- All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded. A record should be kept of the engagement with all involved. This record should document the form and type of

- 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

Complaint Procedure

- 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
- Additional Information relating to schools' complaint procedures are available at the following link: Schools Complaint Procedures - Additional information for parents and students
- In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and/or parent 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 Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie.

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.

We will use resources, as appropriate - including those developed by NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service), Oide (support service for schools), Webwise, National Parents Council, DCU Anti-Bullying Centre and Tusla and from programmes/sites such as Webwise.

Approaches such as restorative practice and mediation will be used to address bullying behaviour when the teachers involved have been trained in how to engage in these methods and the students involved have agreed to their use.

The following approaches will be used to support students experiencing bullying behaviour, those who witness bullying behaviour and those displaying bullying behaviour. This list is not exhaustive. The approaches will be reviewed continually and each support will be considered on a case by case basis.

- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil.
- Speedy identification of those involved.
- Morning check-ins with SET.
- Play/Art therapy, if funding is available.
- Work with pupils to develop self-compassion and self-esteem of those involved.

Appendix A

Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

This template is only to be used when bullying behaviour has been identified, in line with the Bì Cineálta Procedures.

1. Date of initial engagement with pupil(s) and parent(s)

_____

2. Initials of pupil who has experienced bullying behaviour and class group

Initials _____Class_____

3. Initials and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

Initials _____Class(es)_____

4. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es)*		**5. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es)***	
Pupil Concerned		Yard	
Other Pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
Other		Other (Specify)	

6. Initials of person(s) who reported the bullying concern and/or relationship to the pupil(s)

_____

7. Dates of when the bullying behaviour occurred

_____

6. Form of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box/boxes) See page 21

Direct Bullying behaviour		**Indirect Bullying behaviour**	
Physical Bullying Behaviour		Exclusion Bullying Behaviour	
Verbal Bullying Behaviour		Relational Bullying Behaviour	
Written Bullying Behaviour		Online Bullying Behaviour	
Extortion		Other (specify)	

11. Has bullying behaviour ceased?	
12. Views of pupil(s) and parents in relation to this	
13. If bullying behaviour has not ceased, set an agreed timeframe to meet again and review strategies	
14. Engagement with external services or supports (if any)	

If bullying behaviour continues beyond the review timeframes, the school's Code of Behaviour is to be used.

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix C

Restorative Practices 2026/2027

1. **Restorative Conversation:**
    - Calmly discuss the incident with the student.
    - Encourage the student to reflect on their behavior.
    - **Use Restorative Questions:**
        1. What happened?
        2. What were you thinking at the time?
        3. Who has been affected by what you have done?
        4. In what way have they been affected?
        5. What do you think you need to do to make things right?

2. **Restorative Circle (if necessary):**
    - Gather those affected by the incident (if appropriate).
    - Facilitate a circle discussion to share feelings and perspectives.
    - Encourage the student to listen and understand the impact of their actions.

3. **Apology and Repair:**
    - Guide the student in making a sincere apology to those affected.
    - Discuss ways the student can repair the harm done, such as:
        1. Writing an apology letter.
        2. Discuss the issue with your parents.
        3. Helping the affected person with a task.
        4. Creating a poster or presentation on respectful behavior.
        5. Assisting with classroom responsibilities for a week.
        6. Cleaning or tidying the affected area.
        7. Donating time or effort to a school initiative.
        8. Sharing a positive story or message with the class.
        9. Leading a class discussion on empathy and kindness.

        This list is not exhaustive.

4. **Reflection Time:**
    - Provide the student with some time to reflect on their actions and the discussion. This may be in the classroom or another room.
    - Encourage them to think about how they can avoid similar behavior in the future.

5. **Agreement and Follow-up:**
    - Agree on specific actions the student will take to improve their behavior.
    - Send home the RP sheet for parents to sign, if appropriate.
    - Pupil fills out an RP Form which goes directly to the principal, if appropriate. Click here for referral form.
    - Schedule a follow-up check-in to discuss progress and reinforce positive behavior.

This structure allows the teacher to guide the student through meaningful actions to repair harm while keeping the process streamlined.

- [ ] School may still decide addressing the behaviour is **appropriate based on circumstances**

Recording and Documentation

- [ ] All incidents of bullying behaviour recorded
  - Appendix A - Template for recording Bullying Behaviour
- [ ] Continue to keep a record of engagement with **all on the tracking document.**
- [ ] Document **review meetings** with students and parents to determine if bullying has ceased
- [ ] Share record with the **Principal** and retain records in line with school record-keeping policy and **data protection regulations**

Behaviour Plan & Child Protection

- [ ] Draw up a **behaviour plan**, if necessary
- [ ] If bullying involves a **child protection concern**, follow Child Protection Procedures **without delay**

Stage 3: Follow-Up Where Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

- [ ] Review with students and parents/guardians **within 20 school days** of the initial intervention.
- [ ] Check whether the bullying behaviour has **ceased.**
- [ ] Consider the students' views and the **ongoing relationship between those involved.**
- [ ] Record the outcome and the **date the bullying behaviour is considered to have ceased.**
- [ ] Continue appropriate **support and supervision** where needed even where bullying behaviour has ceased and recognise that **relationships may take time to settle**
- [ ] Note any **engagement with external services/supports**

If Bullying Behaviour Continues

- [ ] Review the **effectiveness of the strategies** used
- [ ] Agree on a **timeframe for further engagement**
- [ ] Consider **Code of Behaviour strategies** for ongoing inappropriate behaviour
- [ ] If disciplinary sanctions are considered, communicate with student, parents

Complaint Procedure

- [ ] If a parent/guardian remains dissatisfied, refer them to the school's **Complaints Procedure.**
- [ ] Provide information on the relevant complaints process, including the **Ombudsman for Children** where appropriate.

Support Approaches

- [ ] Use strategies to support students who **experience, witness, or display bullying behaviour** (see Chapter 6 of Bí Cineálta)

Remember

Listen • Record • Support • Communicate • Follow Up