

S.N. Ros Dumhach

Polasaí Bí Cineálta Scoile chun Iompraíocht Bhulaíochta a Chosc agus Dul i nGleic léi/School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Polasaí Bí Cineálta chun Iompraíocht Bhulaíochta a Chosc agus Dul i nGleic léi/Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of S.N Ros Dumhach 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.

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 everybody in our school is treated with respect and care, in accordance with the Catholic Schedule.

As a school, we are committed to respecting the dignity of every individual. No human person is to be devalued and everybody has a part to play in the school community, regardless of difference."

Sainmhíniú ar an mbulaíocht/Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in Cineálta: 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.

Iompraíocht nach iompraíocht bhulaíochra í/Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another 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.

Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups.

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. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control.

Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying.

These behaviours, while not defined as bullying can be distressing.

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

Mír A: Forbairt/athbhreithniú ar ár bpolasaí Bí Cineálta chun iompraíocht bhulaíochta a chosca agus dul i ggleic léi/ 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	13.06.25	Staff half day in-school training & questionnaire
Students	10-06-25	Questionnaire distributed to students in Rang 3 to 6
Parents	13-06-25	Questionnaire sent to all parents
Board of Management	19-06-25	Board of management meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	N/A	N/A
Date policy was approved:		
Discussed draft policy : 31-03-25		

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):

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 supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies.

General Prevention Strategies

Culture and Environment

- Create an inclusive and respectful school culture where every student feels safe and valued e.g. student council, creative council, religious education, wellbeing initiatives, active parents council supporting school initiatives to benefit all children, green schools committee, school choir, a range of sporting opportunities, the prescribed and hidden curriculum, school assemblies and rewards and positive affirmations from staff.
- Foster open communication with a “telling” environment by ensuring students know who their trusted adults are – class teachers, SEN teachers, Principal and SNA’s.
- Optimise physical spaces with good lighting. Ensure effective and adequate supervision to reduce hidden areas where bullying might occur.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- Embed collaborative learning and group activities that build empathy and respect.
- Integrate SPHE and RSE curricula to promote digital citizenship, healthy relationships, and responsible online behaviour.
- Utilise both curricular and extracurricular programmes to strengthen self-worth and inclusivity – SPHE curriculum, RSE curriculum, religious education, Mindful Matters

Policy and Planning

- Develop a clear anti-bullying policy (e.g., a Bí Cineálta policy) with defined roles and responsibilities.
- Engage all school community stakeholders (staff, students, parents) in the development and regular review of the policy.
- Ensure alignment with the school’s broader code of behaviour and related policies.

Relationships and Partnerships

- Strengthen interpersonal connections through student councils, creative council, sporting activities, drama productions and group work activities.
- Encourage active participation from parents and community partners via talks and regular communication from the school.
- Promote initiatives that celebrate diversity and support bystander intervention.

Specific Prevention Strategies

Online Bullying

- Incorporate digital citizenship into the curriculum (e.g., via SPHE and internet safety lessons) to teach responsible online behaviour.
- Develop and enforce a clear acceptable use policy for technology.
- Engage in regular discussions about respectful digital conduct.

Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying

- Promote an inclusive school environment by supporting all gender identities.
- Display inclusive materials such as posters that challenge gender stereotypes.
- Raise awareness about the impact of homophobic and transphobic behaviour.

Racist Bullying

- Celebrate cultural diversity and ensure that the school environment reflects the rich mix of student backgrounds.
- Celebrate and encourage discussions to raise awareness about racism and prejudice.
- Ensure that school resources (e.g., library materials, displays) represent diverse cultures and experiences.

Sexist Bullying

- Ensure that all school activities and classroom practices promote gender equality.
- Engage in targeted awareness campaigns and role-modelling by staff to challenge gender stereotypes.
- Provide equal opportunities for participation in all school programs.

Sexual Harassment

- Implement a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment.
- Educate students on healthy relationships and respectful behaviour through dedicated curriculum components – RSE curriculum, religious education etc.
- Clearly outline and enforce disciplinary measures for instances of 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):

- ✓ Bí Cineálta Anti-bullying Policy
- ✓ Parental Complaints Policy
- ✓ Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy
- ✓ Code of Behaviour
- ✓ Acceptable Use Policy
- ✓ Special Educational Needs Policy
- ✓ Child Safeguarding Policy
- ✓ Health and Safety Policy
- ✓ Supervision Policy
- ✓ School Self Evaluation
- ✓ Teacher and SNA Continuous Professional Development

Mír C: Ag dul i ngleic le hIompraíocht Bhulaíochta/ Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Dr Anita Ní Héilí – Príomhoide

Máire Bean Úí Nicól – Leas Príomhoide

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):

In accordance with Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and Appendix C of the procedures, our school will follow these steps when a report of bullying behaviour is made:

I. Determining if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

Staff will assess whether the reported behaviour meets the definition of bullying by considering the following:

- Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group?
- Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social, or emotional harm?
- Is the behaviour repeated over time or likely to be repeated (e.g., through online sharing)?

If the answer to all three questions is yes, the behaviour will be considered bullying and will be addressed under these procedures. One-off incidents will be assessed to determine if they constitute bullying in context (e.g., a single harmful post shared widely online).

2. Approaches to Address the Behaviour

- The staff member responsible will engage with the students involved individually, followed by a group meeting where appropriate.
- The aim is to stop the bullying and restore relationships, not to apportion blame.
- Students will be supported throughout, and all interactions will be conducted with sensitivity and confidentiality, taking age and ability into account.
- Parents/guardians of all involved students will be informed at an early stage and consulted on appropriate actions.
- A written record will be kept of:
 - The incident(s) and the nature of the bullying behaviour.
 - Where, when and how it occurred.
 - Initial and follow-up meetings with students and their parents/guardians.
 - Agreed strategies to resolve the issue.

3. Reviewing Progress

- A follow-up engagement will take place within 20 school days of the initial report.
- The teacher will review:
 - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased.
 - The effectiveness of interventions.
 - The current relationship between the students involved.

- If bullying persists, new strategies will be developed in consultation with students and parents, and a new review timeline will be agreed.
- Ongoing supervision and support will be provided as needed.
- Where bullying behaviour continues despite intervention, the school's Code of Behaviour may be used to apply further supports or sanctions as appropriate.

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):

Our school recognises that effective responses to bullying behaviour must include tailored support for all students involved – those who experience bullying, those who witness it, and those who display it. The following measures will be implemented in line with Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures:

I. Supporting Students Who Experience Bullying Behaviour

The school is committed to supporting students who experience bullying behaviour by:

- Ensuring they are listened to, supported and reassured in a safe, confidential manner.
- Taking their views into account when deciding how best to address the situation.
- Engaging with parents/guardians to agree on appropriate support strategies.
- Providing ongoing monitoring and follow-up within 20 school days to assess progress.
- Offering additional supports, such as access to counselling, well-being resources, or referral to external services where needed.
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2. Supporting Students Who Witness Bullying Behaviour

Students who witness bullying behaviour will be supported to play a positive role in promoting a culture of kindness and respect. The school will:

- Promote a 'telling environment' where students feel safe and encouraged to report concerns.
- Reassure students that reports will be handled sensitively and appropriately.
- Provide guidance on the importance of standing up safely against bullying and supporting their peers.
- Include bystander education as part of SPHE and wider school initiatives.

3. Supporting Students Who Display Bullying Behaviour

The school takes a restorative and educational approach when supporting students who display bullying behaviour. Supports include:

- Helping the student understand the impact of their actions on others.
- Providing opportunities to develop empathy, problem-solving and relationship skills.
- Involving parents/guardians in identifying causes and planning appropriate interventions.
- Monitoring progress through structured follow-up and review.
- Providing additional supports, such as mentoring, behaviour plans or referral to appropriate services.
- Applying the school's Code of Behaviour where necessary, if bullying behaviour persists.

These supports aim not only to stop the behaviour but also to rebuild relationships and contribute to a positive, inclusive school culture where all students feel safe, valued and respected.

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.

Mír D: Maoirseacht:/ 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..

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.

Síniú: M. Ó Muilleoir Dáta: 19-6-25

(Cathaoirleach an Bhoird Bhainistíochta)

Síniú: D. Ó hEochaidh Dáta: 14/6/25

(Príomhoide)