

School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Coláiste Chú Culainn



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Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Coláiste Chú Chulainn 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 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):

The following measures are undertaken to raise awareness of the need of positive school climate among the student body.

- Reinforcing positive student efforts with House Points / Notáí maithe.
- Building student self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Year Group and Whole School Assemblies.
- Senior Student Leadership Team, School Ambassadors and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors.
- 6th yr and 1st yr mentoring programmes.
- Liaising with primary schools.
- Anti-bullying weeks, Positive Mental Health Awareness weeks and Cultural Week.
- Student induction programme for 1st years.
- School tours.
- Clubs and Societies
- Inclusive & Anti-bullying posters/leaflets.
- Ban The Bully Box.
- Parent and Student surveys.
- Visible teacher presence.
- Support programmes (e.g. SEN / RSE / CSPE / SPHE / L2L / DML).
- Clear instructions e.g. “who to tell” & “how to tell” & “what to expect”.
- Cross-curricular instruction in all subject areas on Anti-Bullying Themes.
- Support from HSCL and SCP officers.

Raising awareness among all staff members in the school community is achieved through:

- Regular Staff meetings.
- School Bulletin.
- Subject planning meetings to ensure anti-bullying is addressed in all subject areas.
- Training for new members of staff on the anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- C.P.D.
- Restorative Practice Training
- All staff have a copy of the policy and procedures in their staff handbook.
- Whole staff participation in awareness raising events e.g. Anti-bullying week, Positive Mental Health Awareness week
- Support programmes offered by HSCL and SCP officers

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. A pro-active approach is encouraged during periods of supervision. Supervision is provided before and after school and at morning and lunch breaks. Students are assigned designated areas in which to socialise and can avail of seated areas in the canteen. The school offers a reading and recreation space at designated lunchtimes, and after school in the library. Every base class has a Treoraí Folláine (Wellbeing Mentor) which they will teach a curricular subject to. The TF will act as a coordinator of the wellbeing programme for the group of students under the leadership of a Year Head and School Wellbeing Coordinator. There is a Student Support Team in place that meet on a weekly basis. The SST comprises of Principal, Deputy Principals, Year Head, Guidance Counsellors, Wellbeing Coordinator, ASD Coordinator and SNA.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and/or dealing with bullying can be a:

- ✓ Teacher
- ✓ Guidance teacher
- ✓ Year head
- ✓ Deputy Principal
- ✓ Principal

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):

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are outlined in detail in the school's anti-bullying policy.

All interventions must be recorded by the relevant teacher* on the bullying report form in Appendix 4 on the anti-bullying policy. It is important that the relevant teacher records and documents accurately at all times during the investigation and intervention process using the forms in Appendix 3 and 4.

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. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures. 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

✓ 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 must 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

✓ the school is obliged to fully investigate any alleged incidents of bullying which are reported by parents.



✓ 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

✓ a record should be kept of the engagement with all involved including the initial 'Bullying Incident Report Form' (Appendix 1).

✓ 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

✓ The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents/guardians 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 bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.

✓ The teacher should document the review with students and their parents/guardians to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents/guardians in relation to this.

✓ If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher should review the strategies and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

✓ Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, the school should consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as per the school's Code of Behaviour.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

Referral to and support from:

- ✓ Student Support Team
- ✓ Guidance Counsellors
- ✓ HSCLO
- ✓ SCP
- ✓ SENCO
- ✓ NEPS
- ✓ Oide
- ✓ Webwise
- ✓ Tusla
- ✓ DCU – Anti-Bullying Centre
- ✓ NEART
- ✓ National parents Council

The school may seek the support of any of the following when working with students affected by bullying:

- ✓ Student Support Team
- ✓ Guidance Counsellors
- ✓ HSCLO
- ✓ SCP
- ✓ SENCO
- ✓ NEPS
- ✓ Oide
- ✓ Webwise
- ✓ Tusla
- ✓ DCU – Anti-Bullying Centre
- ✓ NEART
- ✓ National parents Council

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: Mananne Butler Date: 24/09/25
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: [Signature] Date: 24/09/2025
(Principal)

