# St. Colman's National School
# Clara Co. Kilkenny

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## Bí Cineálta Policy



## Introductory Statement

The Board of Management of St. Colman's National School 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 here at St. Colman's National School 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 in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, we will 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.

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single 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 it becomes a repeated behaviour.

**Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour**:

- If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying. This is addressed under the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Disagreements 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.

## Types of Bullying Behaviour (Section 2.7)

It is essential that when we are recording bullying behaviour that we identify and record the type of bullying behaviour in this document. There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include:

Disablist bullying behaviour: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of a perceived or actual disability or additional need

Exceptionally able bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their high academic ability or outstanding talents

Gender identity bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual gender identity

Homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual membership of the LGBTQ+ community

Physical appearance bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their physical appearance. Students who "look different" can be mocked or criticised about the shape, size or appearance of their body

Racist bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their race or ethnic origin which includes membership of the Traveller or Roma community. Racism is defined in the National Action Plan Against Racism as "*a form of domination which manifests through those power dynamics present in structural and institutional arrangements, practices, policies and cultural norms, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.*"

Poverty bullying: behaviour and language that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources.

Religious identity bullying: behaviour and language that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity.

Sexist bullying: behaviour and language that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex.
Sexual harassment: any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex, which affects the dignity of the student.

Forms of Bullying (section 2.5):
*Direct bullying behaviour:*
● Physical: pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. It may also take the form of physical assault.
● Verbal
● Written
● Extortion
*Indirect bullying behaviour:*
● Exclusion
● Relational

**Online Bullying Behaviour**
Cyber bullying is carried out via text, direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, e-mail, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chat rooms and other online technologies.
This can include:
● Sending or sharing of insulting and offensive or intimidating messages or images via online means as mentioned above.
● Posting of information which is personal, private or sensitive without consent.
● Making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students.
● Exclude/disrupt access to a student on purpose on online chat groups/access to accounts/from an online game.

## 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** | Term 1 & 3 2024/2025 | • Croke Park Meetings<br>• Staff Questionnaire, distributed and results collated<br>• Staff and Student Initiative: Bí Cineálta Handprints |
| **Students** | Term 1, 2 & 3 2024/25 | • Assembly<br>• Student Council Meeting<br>❖ Student Council Initiative; Bí Cineálta Poster Competition<br>❖ Winning Poster then painted on school corridor<br>• Student Questionnaire, distributed and results collated |
| **Parents** | Term3<br>May - June 2025 | • Email to parents explaining the Bí Cineálta Policy<br>• Parents Questionnaire, distributed and results collated |
| **Board of Management** | Term 3<br>18th June 2025 | • Discussion at BOM meeting |
| **Wider School Community as appropriate, for example: bus drivers, bus escorts, etc.** | Term 2 & 3 | • Discussion |
| **Date of Policy Approval** | | |
| **Date of Policy Review** | | |

## 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: We strive to:

● Create a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and create a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.
● Create safe physical spaces in our school
● Involve parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated.
● Support the idea that our school is a telling environment.
● Ensure that every child has equal access to engage and participate in school activities irrespective of their gender.
● Promote the concept of a trusted adult - link to stay safe.
● Create a positive school culture and climate which:
➢ Is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity
➢ Encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment
➢ Promotes respectful relationships across the school community.

**Ways in which we work to achieve these goals:**

● Staff are briefed on the uniform approach we must take to handle all reports of bullying
● Anti-bullying week/day celebrated every year
● Stay Safe & SPHE lessons focussing on positive behaviour form part of curricular content in all classes.
● Use of the term Bí Cinealta is used on a regular basis during the daily routines of school life
Child friendly Bí Cinealta posters were created by our pupils
● Parents/Guardians receive information at times regarding useful information on Anti-bullying.
● We promote student voice and student participation. We have an established Student Council and Green Schools Committee which changes each year.
● Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
● Each child is greeted each morning as they arrive at school by the Principal and staff members.
● We have established a buddy system in our school for playground games and a buddy bench to ensure no one is left out.

**Curriculum (Teaching & Learning)** We strive to

● Provide teaching and promote learning which is collaborative and respectful, fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.

● Display a shared understanding of what bullying is and the impact of bullying.

**Ways in which we work to achieve this:**

● Teach SPHE, Stay Safe and RSE content which fosters student's wellbeing and self-confidence as well as promoting personal responsibility for their own behaviours and actions.

● Each year we teach the children about internet safety to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.

● We have devised an Acceptable Use Policy for technology.

● We organise a friendship week each year to promote positive friendships and address bullying.

● Model respectful behaviour towards colleagues, pupils and visitors in our school environment.

● Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.

● Children in the senior classes work in groups to produce projects and teach the younger children about their projects

● Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that:

➢ Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including homophobic and transphobic bullying.

● Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour

● On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

**Policy and Planning**:

We strive to

● Raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.

● Promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.

● Ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school are kept under observation.

● Develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.

● Promote appropriate teacher professional learning courses.

**Ways in which we work to achieve this:**

● We refer to the appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in our Code of Behaviour.
● We have devised and implemented our SPHE whole school plan.
● As part of SSE, we have devised a buddy system for yard games in the school.
● Each year we have a paired reading system with the children from Senior Infants & 6th class and Junior Infants and 3rd Class

There are a range of other policies that St. Colman's NS has created and implemented that supports the Bí Cineálta Policy;

- Acceptable Use Policy
- Special Education Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy
- Equality of Access and Participation Policy

## Relationships and Partnerships

● Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as our Parents' Association, Student Council, our various student committees and groups.
● Age and stage appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the student body in looking at their own behaviour - promoting acts of kindness and friendship, dealing with navigating friendships and looking at the causes of and impact bullying during SPHE lessons.
● Supporting active participation of students in school life and active participation of parents in school life also.
● Conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
● Encouraging peer mentoring such as our buddy reading system.
● Engaging parents and students in actively contributing to the formation of a Child Friendly Anti Bullying Policy to make them active participants in promotion of and discussion of useful ways to identify and reduce bullying behaviour and highlight procedure and how to deal with it if it does occur.

**Ways in which we work to achieve this**

● We promote student voice through our student committees- Student Council, STEM and Green Schools Committee. The members on each committee changes each year.
● We have regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships.

● We provide support to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities and we encourage communication with their parents.
● We encourage parents to reinforce these values of respect at home, through our formal Parent-Teacher meetings in November, and through any whole school community assemblies that we have.
● We seek advice and support from NEPs where and when it is necessary.
● We have a gymnastics teacher who comes into the school to teach a block of gymnastics each year.

**Ways in which we prevent cyberbullying behaviour**

● We implement the SPHE curriculum in its entirety.
● We have implemented a Digital Learning Plan which aims to teach students about respectful and kind relationships online.
● We have regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
● We have developed and communicated our Acceptable Use Policy for technology to the whole school community.
● We refer to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour.
● We host a face to face safety talk with Ger Brick for parents/ guardians who are responsible for overseeing their child's activities online.
● We celebrate Internet Safety Day annually, to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.

**Ways in which we prevent homophobic/ transphobic bullying behaviour**

● We maintain an inclusive physical environment.
● We challenge stereotypes.
● We encourage students to speak up when they witness homophobic/ transphobic behaviour.

**Ways in which we prevent racist bullying behaviour**

● We foster a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment.
● We have cultural diversity visible and on display in our school- welcome posters
● We encourage peer support through our buddy system.
● We provide support to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, and we encourage communication with their parents.
● We ensure that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

**Ways in which we prevent sexist bullying**

● We ensure that members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally, irrespective of their sex.
● We ensure that all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities, irrespective of their sex.
● We celebrate diversity at school and acknowledge the contributions of all students through our whole school assemblies and our achievements noticeboard.
● We encourage parents to reinforce these values of respect at home.

**Ways in which we prevent sexual harassment**

● We use the most up-to-date SPHE specifications at primary level to teach students about healthy relationships and how to treat others with respect and kindness.
● We promote positive role models within our school community.
● We challenge 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)*

In addition to above mentioned strategies, the school has the following in place to prevent and address bullying:
● Staff at all times endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
● 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.
● The school's Bí Cineálta 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 and recorded on Aladdin using the template for this. School wide awareness raising on all aspects of bullying, supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities.
● Children are supervised on the yard and going to and from car park each morning from 8.40am- 9.05am and from 2.40pm - 3pm.
● 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.
● Our Acceptable Usage Policy is discussed with all pupils.
● Promote online safety events or material for parents.
● 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.
● Ensuring the library in each class has material that reflects our diverse school population from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
● Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of sex.
● Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are as follows:
● Class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class - this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form on Aladdin.

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

Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

*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)*

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour schools 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 is **YES**, then the behaviour is bullying and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

If the answer to any of these questions is **NO**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.

**When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers will consider what, where, when and why?**

1. If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged individually at first.
2. Thereafter, all students involved will meet as a group.
3. At the group meeting, each student will be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's view.
4. Each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting.
5. It may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

Note

● Once off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and this 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 is provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

**Where bullying behaviour has occurred**

1. 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.

2. 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.
3. A record will be kept of the engagement with all involved. This record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.
4. 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 has occurred**

1. The relevant teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement.
2. The relevant 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. 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 and the relationship between the students involved.
3. The date that it has been determined that bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.
4. Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.
5. Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.

**Please note the following**:

● 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 their Bí Cineálta policy.

**Requests that take no action**

● A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask a member of staff to do nothing about the behaviour other than 'look out' for them.
● Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation.
● It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.
● Parents may also make the school aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school. However, while acknowledging the parents request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

**Recording bullying behaviour**

● 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.
● Please see **Appendix B** for our recording template. 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.

*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):*
**Supports:**
The school's programme of support for working with pupils who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour, in addition to supports referenced in the steps above, may include but is not limited to the following:
● Listening

● Showing empathy
● Reassuring the student
● Asking them to let you know if the bullying behaviour occurs in school
● Devising appropriate 'check in' mechanisms
● Discussing how the pupils can inform their parents of the situation if they haven't already done so
● Discreet lessons may be taught as appropriate (Drama, SPHE)
● Pupils who have been bullied, witness or engage in bullying behaviour will be supported by the school, within the limits of resources available in the school, through the provision of opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and thereby build resilience and a sense of self-worth whenever this is needed.
● Where relevant and available, a referral for appropriate supports as offered through e.g. The Family Resource Centre may be made.

**Supports available to help prevent and address bullying include the following**:
● NEPS- providing advice on best practice to prevent and address bullying when issues arise in schools and/or training in preventative initiatives pg.46 ● Oide – providing TPL pg.47
● Webwise – online safety awareness raising and education initiative for pupils and parents pg.47
● National Parents Council – online and in person courses to support parents to prevent and address bullying pg. 48
● DCU Anti bullying centre- FUSE programme that can be used to promote a positive school culture and assist in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours. Pg.48
● Tusla – for cases where it is considered that bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern. Pg.48
● Cyberbullying and Internet Safety expert Ger Brick- Parent and pupil seminars.

**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 has been emailed to parents, 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: _____ Date: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Principal)

## Appendices

Appendix A: Student Friendly-Bí Cineálta Policy

Appendix B: St. Colman's NS Bullying Behaviour Incident Report Form

Appendix C: Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Appendix D: Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

Appendix E: Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

Appendix F: Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

Appendix G: Overview of the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Preventing and Addressing Bullying Behaviour

# Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy

# St Colman's NS




Scoil Naomh Colmáin Clarach Cill Chainnigh




## We want everyone at our school to be kind, feel safe and happy

- **Please tell someone if you think that you or someone else is being bullied**
- **If a student tells a staff member that 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 parent**

**Appendix B: St. Colman's NS Recording Bullying Behaviour Form**

## Section 1: Incident Details

1. Students involved & class details: _____
_____

2. Form of bullying (section 2.5): _____

3. Type of bullying (section 2.7): _____

4. Location & time (if known) (2.6) _____

5. Date of initial engagement with parents and students:
_____

## Section 2: Student & Parent Views

6. Views of students to address the behaviour

| |
|---|
| |

7. Views of parents to address the behaviour (only in relation to their own child)

| |
|---|
| |

## Section 3: Review & Follow Up

8. Date of review: _____

9. Has the bullying behaviour ceased? YES/NO _____
10. Student views on outcome:

| |
|---|
| |

11. Parent views on outcome:

| |
|---|
| |

12. Date bullying behaviour ceased (if applicable)

## Section 4: Additional Actions & Support

13. Engagement with external services:
_____
_____

14. If a SSF (student support file) exists for the pupil involved, has a copy of the record been placed in their support file? YES/NO _____

15. If a SSP (student support plan) exists for the pupil involved, has it been updated to incorporate response strategies and associated supports: YES/NO _____

Recorded by: _____

Date: _____

Reviewed by: _____

Date: _____

**Appendix C: Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

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

● Class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class - this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form on Aladdin.

● 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 addressing bullying behaviour, teachers should:
● 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

Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour.

*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):*

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour schools 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 is **YES**, then the behaviour is bullying and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.
If the answer to any of these questions is **NO**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.

**When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers will consider what, where, when and why?**

1. If a group of students is involved, each student will engage individually at first.
2. Thereafter, all students involved will meet as a group.
3. At the group meeting, each student will have the opportunity to present their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's view.
4. Each student will be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting.
5. It may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s).

Note

● Once off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and this becomes a repeated behaviour.

**Where bullying behaviour has occurred**

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. A record will be kept of the engagement with all involved. This record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.
4. 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 has occurred**

1. The relevant teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement.
2. The relevant teacher should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and ascertain the views of students and their parents. 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 and the relationship between the students involved.
3. The date that it has been determined that bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.
4. Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.
5. Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint is 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.

**Please note the following:**

● 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 their Bí Cineálta policy.

**Requests that take no action**

● A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask a member of staff to do nothing about the behavior other than 'look out' for them.
● Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation.
● It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.
● Parents may also make the school aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school. However, while acknowledging the parents request,

schools may decide that based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

**Recording bullying behaviour**

● 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.
● Please see **Appendix B** for our recording template. 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.

**Appendix D: Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update**

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management meeting of _____.

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous board of management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

| | |
|---|---|
| Total number of **new** incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting. | |
| Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing. | |
| Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school year. | |

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which should include the following information where relevant:

- the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc
- the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- if a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the board of management
- if the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.

**Appendix E: Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy**

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual (calendar) review of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and its implementation in consultation with the school community. As part of the review, this document must be completed.

**Bí Cineálta Policy Review**

1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school.*
*____ /__ /2025*

2. Where in the school is the student friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?
_____

3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student friendly policy on the school website? _____

4. How has the student friendly policy been communicated to students?
_____
_____
_____

5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student friendly policy been communicated to parents?
_____
_____
_____

6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools? Yes No

7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour? Yes No

8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year?
Yes No

9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour? Yes No

10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy?

Yes No

11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?

Yes No

12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour? Yes No

13. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

_____
_____
_____

14. Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:

_____
_____
_____

15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?

_____
_____
_____

16. Does the student friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so, why?

_____
_____
_____

17. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour?

Yes No

18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?

Yes No

19. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour?

Yes No

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Principal)

Date of next review: _____

**Appendix F: Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineállta Policy**

The Board of Management of St. Colman's NS confirms that the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of _____.

This review was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education's *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.*

**Signed:**_____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

**Date:** _____

**Signed:** _____
(Principal)

**Date:** _____

**Date of next review:** _____

**Appendix G: Overview of the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Preventing and Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

The following is a guide to the main changes between the requirements of *the 2013 Anti- bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* and the requirements of the *2024 Bí Cineálta procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, which replace the 2013 procedures. This is not an exhaustive list.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Chapter 1 | **Responsibilities of the school community**<br><br>**Legal Basis** | All members of the school community must work together in partnership to prevent and address bullying behaviour at school.<br><br>Legislation underpinning Bí Cinealta:<br>➢ Children's First Act 2015<br>➢ Harassment, Harmful Communications & Related Offences Act 2020 |
| Chapter 2 | **What is bullying behaviour?**<br><br>**Criminal behaviour**<br><br>**Child Protection Concerns** | Updated definition of bullying behaviour based on Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2022).<br><br>Updated information on when bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour.<br><br>Updated information relating to when bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern. |
| Chapter 3 | **Impact of Bullying Behaviour** | Updated information on how bullying behaviour can impact students who experience bullying behaviour, students who witness the behaviour and students who engage in bullying behaviour. |

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| Chapter 4 | **Bí Cinealta Policy** | Schools must engage with the whole school community to develop their Bí Cineálts policy, using template A.<br><br>The policy must list preventative strategies that are used including those to specifically prevent cyberbullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate.<br><br>Schools must list specific support strategies for individuals experiencing bullying behaviour, those who witness bullying behaviour and those displaying bullying behaviour.<br><br>All incidents of bullying must be recorded. The school principal is required to provide a bullying behaviour update at each ordinary board of management meeting.<br><br>The school's Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed in collaboration with the whole school community one each calendar year and sooner if a serious incident occurs and the board of management determines an urgent review is required. |
| | **Appendix A Bí Cineálta Policy** | This template document must be used as a basis for each school's Bí Cineálta Policy. |
| | **Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy** | Every school must develop a student friendly version of its Bí Cineálta policy and display it where |

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| | | students and the school community can see it. |
| | **Appendix B Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy** | This template document can be used by schools as a basis for their student friendly policy. |
| Chapter 5 | **Preventing Bullying Behaviour** | Prevention measures are linked to the four areas of Wellbeing Promotion.<br>Importance of fostering a "telling environment" in schools and the role of the trusted adult.<br><br>Prevention strategies must be provided relating to specific types of bullying behaviour including cyberbullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment, as appropriate. |
| Chapter 6 | **Appendix C Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour**<br><br>**Remit of the school in addressing bullying behaviour**<br><br>**Requests to take no action** | Guide can be used to address bullying behaviour.<br><br>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 their Bí Cineálta policy.<br><br>Guidance for schools on how requests by students and parents to |

| | | |
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| | | "take no action" should be addressed. |
| | **Engagement with students involved in bullying behaviour and their parents** | Schools must engage with students who have displayed bullying behaviour as well as their parents when deciding actions to be taken. Schools must engage with all involved when reviewing progress and determining whether bullying behaviour has ceased. |
| | **Recording Incidents of Bullying Behaviour** | All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded by the teacher addressing the behaviour. |
| Chapter 7 | **Update to the Board of Management** | Principal must provide an update to the board of management at each ordinary board meeting. This report includes the number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board meeting, the number of incidents ongoing and the total number reported since the beginning of the school year.<br><br>The principal must provide a verbal update which will include, where relevant, trends and patterns, the strategies used to address the incidents and whether an urgent review of the policy is needed.<br><br>The update is to inform discussion at each ordinary board of management meeting regarding the effectiveness of the preventative strategies used by the school and the overall effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta Policy. |

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| | **Appendix D Guide to providing bullying behaviour update to the board of management** | Guide can be used to assist principals in providing bullying behaviour updates to the board of management. |
| | **Review of Bí Cineálta Policy** | The Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed once each calendar year, in collaboration with the whole school community, and earlier if the Board determines an urgent review is warranted. |
| | **Appendix E Review of the Bí Cineálta policy.** | The Review template must be completed when the Bí Cineálta policy is reviewed. |
| | **Appendix F Notification of Annual Review** | The template can be used to notify the school community that the annual review has been completed. |