



# Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent & Address Bullying Behaviour

## BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

The Board of Management of Bunscóil Rinn an Chabhlaigh 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 Catholic 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.

### 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 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.

	<b>Date consulted</b>	<b>Method of consultation</b>
<b>School Staff</b>	Jan 2025	Google forms, surveys, focus groups, Meetings
<b>Students</b>	Feb 2025	Survey, focus group, Student Council
<b>Parents</b>	Feb 2025	Survey, Parent Association
<b>Board of Management</b>	Feb 2025	Meeting
<b>Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers</b>	Feb 2025	Email
<b>Date policy was approved: May 2025</b>		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

## 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):

In developing the 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 our 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 our board of management and staff meetings.

## **CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

We are mindful of the culture and environment of our school and seek to enhance the pupil experience in everything we do. We commit to developing the following areas:

- Embedding the school's mission statement in all its work – the mission statement is displayed around the school and different elements are focused on monthly
- Modelling and promoting respectful behavior at all times
- Encouraging involvement in a variety of extra-curricular activities
- Creating a positive working environment
- Promoting inclusivity- inclusion and wellbeing club
- Celebrating culture and diversity
- Promoting involvement with student committees – student council, Bí Cineálta committee, Green Schools, library committee, active school committee, book club, EAL club, wellbeing club etc
- Promoting the involvement of the families and communities – Parent Association, Grandparents' Day, School Plays etc
- Learning and using Lámh signs
- Exposure to multi-cultural awareness
- Promoting an environment where children feel they can tell – use of 'student voice boxes' and chat boxes in classes and corridors so that students can tell if they witness bullying behaviour
- Discouraging the use of mobile phones and similar devices among children
- Activities on yard at break times to keep children active and engaged
- Supervision on yard and in corridors
- Normalising the use of sensory spaces, quiet zones, ear defenders, visuals etc
- Playground Pals at yard times and games on yard for children with SEN
- Sport on the field during breaks to promote wellbeing
- Reverse inclusion to our Special Classes
- Peer tutoring
- Appropriate pairings
- Inclusion practices - Autism Friendly Schools.
- Inclusive ambassadors so that students 'see themselves' in their school environment
- Daily Check-ins and Emotional Check-ins by staff for vulnerable pupils
- Use of Worry Dolls
- Use of Colour Monsters
- Open door policy
- Physically safe environment with closed gates, hi-vis vests for excursions, accessible spaces
- Rhonda's Four Freedoms – the freedom to make mistakes; choose our own methods; ask questions; think for ourselves
- Challenging gender stereotypes

## **CURRICULUM (TEACHING & LEARNING)**

We commit to explicitly teaching:

- The mandatory programmes in their entirety
- Relationships & Sexuality Education
- SPHE Programmes: Stay Safe; Weaving Wellbeing; Walk Tall; Mo and Ko; Friendship Terrace, Internet Safety

- Making sure our lessons are inclusive for all children
- Free writing and reading in different languages to celebrate and teach about cultures
- Grow in Love
- Facilitating movement breaks for regulation purposes
- Diversity to learn about different abilities/ cultures
- Life Skills – Social and Self Esteem
- More inclusive representations in Books, Posters, Visuals etc
- Movement Groups regulation
- Small groups
- Say Yes to Languages, access to different language books in libraries and encouraging the involvement of parents for a variety of ethnic backgrounds
- Older classes working with younger classes reading
- Mixed groupings within classes in relation to ability, gender, culture etc
- Restorative Practice and the modelling of same

## **RELATIONSHIPS & PARTNERSHIPS**

Teaching children how to foster, develop and, when necessary repair relationships is at the core of preventing bullying behavior. As a school we commit to:

- Age appropriate initiatives to support friendship building such as Playground Pals, Kindness Awards, Kindness Walls, Wellbeing Week, Internet Safety Days etc
- Supporting and fostering an environment where the all feel welcome and part of the community through the use of visuals in our external communication, hosting themed coffee mornings and making our website translatable
- Providing training for staff in relation to restorative practice approaches and teaching the children the approach using visuals supports at every classroom door
- Encouraging lots of peer support and peer mentoring at class level and at whole school level through the Student Council and other student-voice committees.

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 further 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.

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):

## **POLICY & PLANNING**

School policies support the school in the implementation of the Bí Cineálta policy.

We commit to adhering to and regularly reviewing the following policies:

- |                           |                                      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ▪ Curriculum Plans        | ▪ Attendance Policy                  |
| ▪ Code of Behaviour       | ▪ Inclusion Guidelines               |
| ▪ Supervision Policy      | ▪ CCTV Policy                        |
| ▪ Acceptable Usage Policy | ▪ Guidelines on Birthday Invitations |
| ▪ SEN Policy              | ▪ School Uniform Policy              |
| ▪ Staff Rotation Policy   |                                      |

## SECTION C: ADDRESSING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

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

Class teachers and support teachers in consultation with the deputy or 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 procedures outlined in BÍ Cineálta Chapter 6 will be adhered to in full. They will be the first point of reference when an allegation of bullying is made. They are summarised as follows:

1. Identify if bullying behaviour has occurred
  - Investigate what, where, when and why through interviews
  - Gather evidence as necessary
  - Proceed to next step if bullying has occurred
2. Identify the location of the bullying
  - If the bullying occurs outside the school, the school does not deal with behaviour when the children are not under the care or responsibility of the school
  - The school will support the students involved as necessary
  - If bullying has occurred in the school, the children will be consulted on next course of action and the school will proceed to the next step
  - Parents will be contacted in the early stages
3. Support the students involved
  - A restorative approach is encouraged taking the children's lead at an appropriate pace
  - Supports may include general talks to the whole class, teaching / review of particular lessons / programmes, individual conversations
4. Determining if bullying has ceased
  - Teachers will engage with the students no more than 20 days after initial discussions to review progress around any planned interventions
  - Ongoing supervision will be given to both pupils as necessary
  - Further meetings to review strategies may be necessary at this time if the behaviour has not ceased
  - Use of the school's Code of Behaviour may be considered at this time

### **Requests to Take No Action**

It is important that students who report bullying behaviour feel safe. When a child requests no action be taken in relation to bullying behaviour, staff will listen with empathy and next steps will be explained clearly. Parents may also make such requests in writing.

However, while acknowledging the request, the school may decide to proceed to address the bullying behaviour with full consideration of the circumstances.

### **Recording of Bullying Behaviour**

Records of the facts of the incident will be maintained on the children's school file including the allegation itself, views of the parents as necessary and follow up.

### **Complaints Process**

The school complaints procedure is an agreed mechanism for parental complaints. If a parent is dissatisfied about how the complaint was handled, the Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted.

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):

A range of supports will be made available to children so that points of view are understood, impact of the behaviours are understood, so that apologies can be made / received and relationships, where possible, can be repaired.

#### **Individual Supports**

- Time speaking with staff to process issues
- Targeted work in support plans to build relationships, give purpose etc
- Access to sensory areas / regulation breaks
- Behavioural plans
- Onward referral to professional services such as NEPS or Tusla

#### **Group Supports**

- Circle time
- Direct discussion
- Specific social & emotional programmes as required

#### **Whole Class Supports**

- Specific work on areas of behavioural need through social stories / social & emotional programmes
- Direct discussion with class

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.

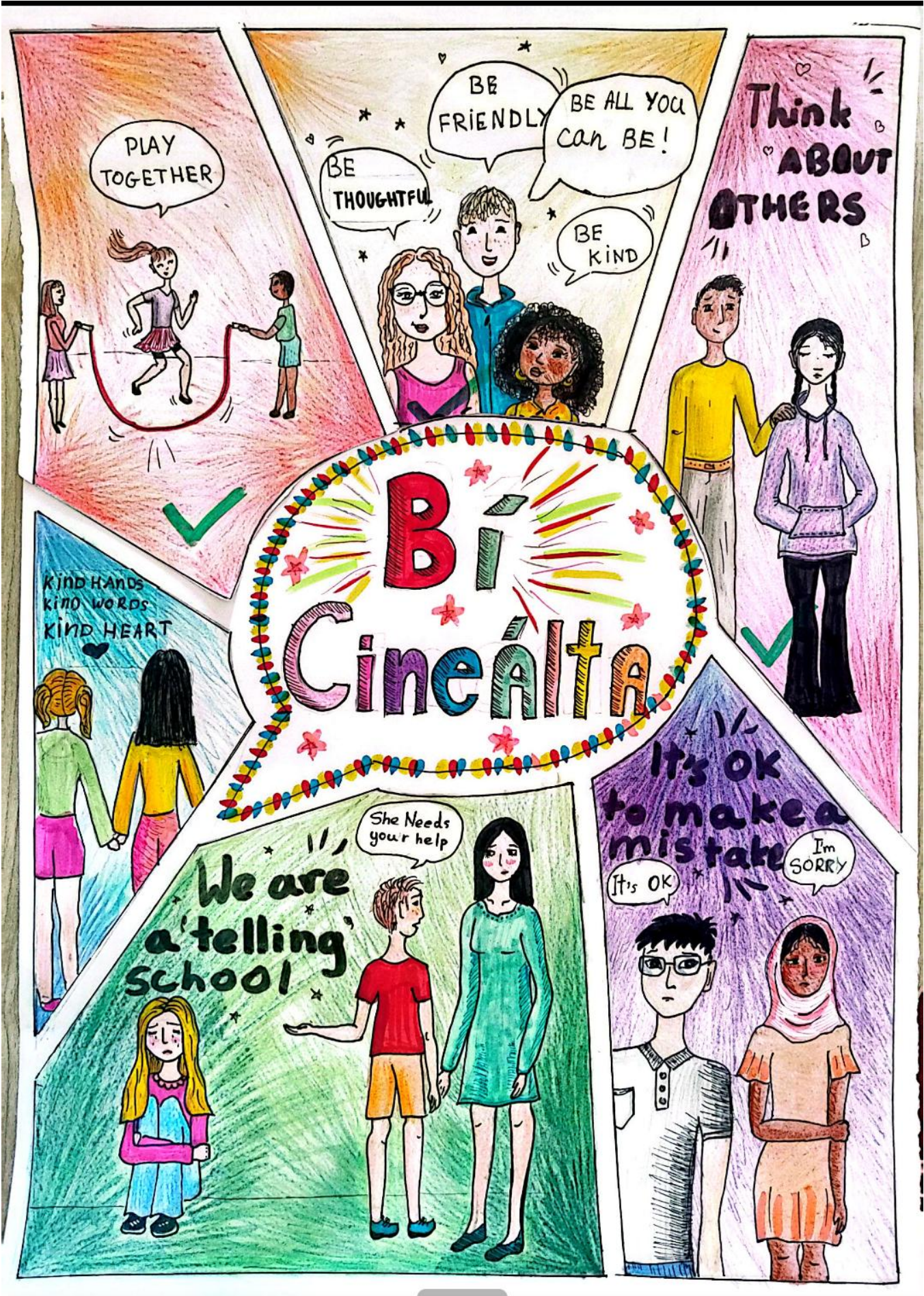


Signed:  
Chairperson of Board of Management



Principal

Date: June 2025



PLAY TOGETHER



BE THOUGHTFUL

BE FRIENDLY

BE ALL YOU CAN BE!

BE KIND



Think ABOUT OTHERS



KIND HANDS  
KIND WORDS  
KIND HEART



**B**  
Cineálta

We are a 'telling' school



She Needs your help



It's OK to make a mistake

It's OK

I'm SORRY

