

Coláiste Na Toirbhirte Bandon

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Coláiste na Toirbhirte Bandon 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.

- The right to freedom of expression (Article 13)
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)
- The right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 15)
- The right to privacy (Article 16)
- The right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect ((Article 19)
- The right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health (Article 24)
- The right to education(Article 28)
- The right to enjoy their own culture, religion or language (Article 30)

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

Responsibilities of the school community

The school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour. Schools should work in partnership with their patron, Board of Management, staff, students and their parents to implement their Bí Cineálta policy.

Boards of Management must have oversight of the development, implementation and review of their school's Bí Cineálta policy and ensure that the appropriate preventative strategies are in place and are effective.

School staff can prevent and address bullying behaviour by promoting empathy, intervening promptly and implementing policies that create a positive and inclusive environment that fosters kindness among students. The primary aim in addressing bullying behaviour is to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

Students have an important role to play by supporting their peers, reporting incidents of bullying behaviour and working in partnership with their school community.

Parents also have an important role to play. Collaboration between parents and school staff is essential to effectively prevent and address bullying behaviour. Schools should promote active partnership with parents which can help reinforce values that discourage bullying behavior

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)

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Building on many years of international research, the core definition above sets out clear criteria to help school communities to prevent, correctly identify and address bullying among students. Alleged incidents of bullying are however often complex and must be considered on a case by case basis.

There are many different methods of bullying behaviour, including physical, verbal and relational forms, and it can take place online and offline. There are also many different motives for bullying behaviour which can be understood on an individual level (for example, desire for dominance, status, revenge) and/or on a societal level (for example, identity based bullying such as racist, disablist, sexist or LGBTQ+ bullying). Bullying behaviour in schools is often strongly influenced by attitudes, behaviours, norms and power dynamics that are deeply engrained in our society.

The core elements of the definition are further described below:

Targeted behaviour

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the student displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example, personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example, withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and longterm negative impact on the student experiencing the bullying behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying but, importantly, must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

Repeated behaviour

Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online, and which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

Imbalance of power

In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity,

technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted student to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

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

Criminal behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years.

Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the farreaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, criminalises the nonconsensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images.

If bullying behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence, it may be considered assault. If bullying behaviour involves discrimination or hate speech targeting a student based on their race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, it may be considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989, and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges.

If bullying behaviour involves sexual harassment or sexual assault, this may also be considered criminal behaviour. An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour

Child Protection Concerns

Generally, bullying behaviour can be addressed without the involvement of Tusla. However, bullying behaviour may become a child protection concern when it results in significant physical or emotional harm, or where it becomes a persistent and severe problem and measures taken to address it are not effective.

In determining when bullying behaviour should be reported to Tusla the following factors should be considered:

- > the impact on the child
- > protective/appropriate action taken by the parents
- > protective/appropriate action taken by the school
- > engagement of child/family with support services such as NEPS

If there is doubt about whether bullying behaviour is a child protection concern schools should contact Tusla's

social work department for advice. This will enable the social worker to explore the situation with school staff and provide advice on the best course of action

How bullying behaviour occurs

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Direct bullying behaviour:

Physical bullying behaviour:

Physical bullying behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While students can often engage in “mess fights” they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

Personal property can be a focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, schoolbooks and other learning material or interference with a student’s locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Verbal bullying behaviour:

Continual namecalling directed at a student which hurts, insults or humiliates the student should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often namecalling of this type refers to physical appearance; for example, size or clothes worn or gender identity. It can also refer to a student’s accent, distinctive voice characteristics, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.

Written Bullying behaviour

Written bullying behaviour includes writing insulting remarks about a student in public places, passing around notes about or drawings of a student.

Extortion

Bullying behaviour can involve extortion. Extortion is where something is obtained through force or threats

Indirect bullying behavior

Exclusion

Exclusion bullying behaviour occurs where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.

Relational

Relational bullying behaviour occurs when a student’s attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. Common forms include control: “Do this or I won’t be your friend anymore”; a group of students ganging up against one student; nonverbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a student; giving a student the “silent treatment”; and the deliberate manipulation of friendship groups to make someone unpopular.

Online bullying behaviour:

Online bullying behaviour (cyberbullying) is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This form of bullying behaviour can include:

- sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
- posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent
- making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other

students

- excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game

Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.

As online bullying uses technology to carry out bullying behaviour and does not require face-to-face contact it can occur at any time. Many types of bullying behaviour can be facilitated through online bullying. In many cases online bullying can relate to an “offline” experience with someone known to the student. This type of bullying may involve forms of sexual exploitation including but not limited to, sextortion and the nonconsensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence.

Where bullying behaviour can occur

Bullying behaviour can happen anywhere, online or offline and at any time.

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.

Types of bullying behavior

- There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include the following which is not an exhaustive list
- 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

Impact of experiencing bullying behavior

When students experience bullying behaviour, it can have a severe and profound impact on them in both the short and long term. Students may develop feelings of stress, insecurity, humiliation and anxiety and therefore become more vulnerable. Experiencing bullying behaviour can have a detrimental effect on their experience of education and education outcomes. The student's self confidence may be damaged with a resulting lowering of their self esteem which can continue into adulthood. While they may not talk about what is happening to them, their suffering can be indicated through changes in mood and behaviour. Extreme cases of bullying behaviour may contribute to mental health difficulties.

Impact of witnessing bullying behaviour

Students who witness bullying behaviour can also be impacted in a similar way to those who experience bullying behaviour. These students may be afraid to tell someone because of a fear of reprisals for telling or a fear of making the situation worse. Students who witness bullying behaviour may feel guilt or anxiety for not helping the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour. For example, they can feel vulnerable particularly in the case of racist or identity based bullying behaviour if they share the same race or identity as the student who is experiencing the behavior.

Impact of engaging in bullying behaviour

There can also be a negative impact on those who engage in bullying behaviour. Those who engage in bullying behaviour can display aggression, antisocial behaviour and lower academic achievement. Students who display bullying behaviour often fail to recognise the impact of their actions and may lack empathy. They may avoid responsibility and deny or minimise their actions when confronted

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		Survey
Students		Survey
Parents		Survey
Board of Management		Principals report
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

While every staff member has a responsibility to implement the school's Bí Cineálta Policy, the Class Tutor, Year head and /or Care Team have particular roles and overall responsibility for addressing bullying behavior.

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

Coláiste Na Toirbhirte promotes a positive and inclusive school culture and environment that is essential to prevent and address bullying behavior. The school environment is a space where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported. Relationships between all members of the school community are based on respect, care, integrity and trust. Open communication between CEIST, Board of Management, school staff, students and parents helps to foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibilities in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behavior.

A Shared Approach

The **school leadership team** influences the school culture and sets the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing and addressing bullying behavior

Each member of **school staff** has a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behavior

Students can shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all

Parents, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying behavior is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect

A "Telling" Environment.

Our school community supports a "telling" environment. Students should feel comfortable to talk about concerns regarding bullying behavior.

A Trusted Adult

The concept of the "trusted adult" can be an effective strategy to encourage students to report if they or another student is experiencing bullying behavior. Staff in Coláiste Na Toirbhirte support this strategy by taking part in initiatives such as "One Good School" (Jigsaw) and by letting students know that they can talk to them.

School Management

- Ensures that the school is well lit and that hidden spaces in the building are minimized.
- Ensures that the school building is well maintained and welcoming for students
- Ensures that students are adequately supervised in school and on school activities.
- Ensures that the school is monitored by CCTV and that this is well sign posted.

Staff

School teaching staff foster a safe environment for learning by

- Ensuring that students are not left unsupervised in classrooms once class has commenced
- Creating a safe and respectful environment in classrooms
- Managing class-room dynamics in seating and grouping arrangements
- Knowing and using their student's names

- Being mindful of methodologies that suit varying abilities
- Being mindful of maintaining a professional distance while remaining friendly and approachable
- Incorporating anti-bullying themes in class where practicable

Induction

At the start of the school year all student groups are made aware of the school's anti-bullying/Bi Cinealta policy as part of back to school induction

Assemblies

At the start of the school year and at regular year group assemblies the Year - Head emphasizes the need for mutual respect. The school ethos of kindness, inclusion, community and respect for the uniqueness of each person is communicated to students. This message is modelled and re-enforced by all adults working with students in the school.

Meetings

The implementation and effectiveness of the school's Bi Cinéalta policy is included

- As an agenda item for staff meetings and Board of Management meetings where necessary
- As an agenda item at Year – Head meetings.
- As an agenda item in weekly CARE Team meetings

This is to ensure that concerns about the policy or the welfare of individual pupils can be shared and effectively addressed.

Non-Teaching Staff

All staff are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behavior witnessed by them or mentioned to them to any member of the teaching staff, or to the Deputy Principal or Principal

Themed Weeks

Themed weeks such as Wellbeing week, Activity Week, Neurodiversity Week, Culture Week, Stand –up week etc. highlight the importance of empathy, diversity and inclusivity among our school community.

Clubs and Activities

A sense of belonging and inclusion is fostered by a wide variety of clubs and extra-curricular activities that cater to a diverse range of talents and skills.

A “Telling” Environment.

Our school community supports a “telling” environment. Students should feel comfortable to talk about concerns regarding bullying behavior. Students are reminded of this at regular assemblies, by Tutors and Year Heads and are encouraged to “tell a trusted adult” of any concern.

A Trusted Adult

The concept of the “trusted adult” can be an effective strategy to encourage students to report if they or another student is experiencing bullying behavior. Staff in Coláiste Na Toirbhirte support this strategy by taking part in initiatives such as “One Good School” (Jigsaw) and by constantly letting students know that they can talk to them.

Curriculum (teaching and Learning)

Teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful is promoted.

Students have regular opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which can help build sense of connection, belonging and empathy among students. The curricular subjects offered to students provide opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity.

Our school provides opportunities for students to develop a sense of self worth through both curricular and extra-curricular programmes.

The school provides the options of Transition Year, Leaving Cert Applied or Traditional Leaving Cert at Senior Cycle. Student choice informs subject options available at Junior and Senior Cycle. Access to these options are intended to be inclusive of all learners and to respect the individual needs and preferences of students.

The school provides a very extensive Special Educational Needs programme led by the Sen Co Coordinating team. A complete timetable of Learning Support and Resource teaching is provided to those who need specific tuition. The SNA team and all teachers endeavor to build up the self-esteem of the students in their care.

The school has two ASD classrooms which act as a learning hub and a safe space for students with ASD. ASD students are also encouraged and facilitated to participate in mainstream classes and activities.

The updated SPHE specifications aim to help students to feel empowered to create, nurture and maintain respectful and healthy relationships with themselves and others. The RSE strand of the specification also provides space for post primary students to examine and consider relationships and human sexuality which can foster an understanding of diversity which may help to reduce gender and identity based bullying as well as sexism and sexual harassment.

Students can also consider diversity and inclusion through the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment's Religious Education specifications/syllabus. As well as this, diversity and inclusion can be experienced via CEIST'S core values which aim to encourage respect and understanding of different beliefs, perspectives and ways of living.

In Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE), there is a focus on the interdependence of people in communities, at local as well as national and international levels.

History is used to raise awareness of racism and colonialism. By examining historical and contemporary examples of racial discrimination and colonial legacies, students can develop an understanding of the root causes of bias and prejudice. (This is not an exhaustive list)

The school support team meets weekly
Year heads meet regularly as a group

Policy and Planning

The wellbeing of the school community should be at the heart of school policies and plans.

There are a range of policies, such as the school's Acceptable Use Policy, Data Protection Policy, Child Protection Policy, Inclusion Policy, and Code of Behaviour Policy that supports the implementation of the school's Bì Cinéalta Policy. Supporting the participation of students in the development and implementation of school policies and plans can help increase awareness and ensure effective implementation. Engaging in appropriate teacher professional learning courses can support school staff to prevent and address bullying behaviour. School staff also share their experiences and examples of best practice. There is a range of training available for school staff which relates to promoting inclusion and diversity in schools. Calendars and timetables from CESC and Oide are shared by senior management.

Relationships and Partnerships

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. These interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures. The following are some examples of how we strengthen relationships and partnerships between members of our school community:

- There are awareness initiatives that look at the causes and impacts of bullying behaviour including those dealing with navigating friendships, identity based bullying, racist bullying, homophobic/transphobic bullying, sexism and sexual harassment e.g. Stand Up Week, Friendship week, Wellness week, Culture Week etc.
- We support the active participation of students in school life e.g.: Student Council, Sports Prefects, Meitheal, student ambassadors at Open Night and other school events and the promotion of student voice.
- We support the active participation of parents in school life such as the Parents Council, parent coffee mornings, inviting parents in for celebratory events etc. Parents/guardians are recognized as playing a vital role as the primary educators of their children. They instill values such as the importance of mutual respect, the recognition that bullying is “not cool” and that “telling” or “reporting” is the responsible and courageous thing to do. Parents/guardians roles are also recognized as vital in supporting the schools policies and procedures and thus ensuring that school is a safe place for all.
- Workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents are conducted to raise awareness of the impact of bullying
- Activities that build empathy, respect and resilience are promoted here in school.
- Peer support such as the Meitheal programme.
- A debating culture is nurtured through our debating teams.
- The school's Student Support Team supports the development, implementation and review of the school's strategies to prevent bullying behaviour.
- The schools Pastoral Care system includes a ladder of referral including subject teachers, class tutors, Year Heads, Deputy Principal and Principal which is communicated to all students and staff at the beginning of the school year.
- Through on-going communication and regular engagement with external agencies such as TUSLA, TESS, EWO, CEIST, JMB, NAPD and Gardai Síochána and others school staff can maintain positive working relationships with an aim to better understand and tackle incidents of bullying as they arise.
- Visitors to school are expected to meet all Gardai vetting and child protection requirements
- On enrollment to Coláiste Na Toirbhirte parents and students are asked to become familiar with and agree to support school policies especially the school Code of Behaviour.

Preventing cyberbullying behaviour

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of life that can impact even the youngest members of society. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour. Our school proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments. Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following

- Operating a NO Mobiles During the school day Policy
 - Implementing the SPHE curriculum
 - Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
 - Developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology
 - Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour
 - Promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online
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- Holding an Internet Safety Day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour

Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour

All students including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students, have a right to feel safe and supported at school. Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour include the following.

- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- Challenging gender stereotypes
- Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behavior

Preventing racist bullying behaviour

Students attending our school come from many different cultures and backgrounds. Students from diverse backgrounds may face discrimination and prejudice and may be subject to racist bullying behaviour. Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following

- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students “see themselves” in their school environment
- Having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of racism
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
- Providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
- Providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveler and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents
- Inviting speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- Ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds

Preventing sexist bullying behaviour

Schools should focus on gender equality as part of the school’s measures to create a supportive and respectful environment.

Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following

- Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex
- Celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students
- Organising awareness campaigns, workshops and presentations on gender equality and respect
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home

Preventing sexual harassment

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. Schools must make it clear that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter. Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include the following

- Using the updated SPHE specifications at post primary level to teach students about healthy relationships and how to treat each other with respect and kindness
- Promoting positive role models within the school community
- Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

SECTION C

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The primary aim for the relevant teacher in addressing reports of bullying behaviour is to stop the bullying and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame)

The relevant teacher will primarily be the Year – Head. The Year Head may work in consultation with a member of the Student Support Team.

In certain circumstances where it is deemed appropriate and necessary referral will be made to relevant external agencies and authorities for advice or intervention or both

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behavior has occurred ,to address bullying behavior and to review progress are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bi Cinéalta procedures)

The following steps will be taken to determine if bullying behavior has occurred

- When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the relevant teacher will consider the following: what, where, when and why?
- They will complete a form to record the incident (**Appendix 1**)
- If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged with individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved may be met as a group if deemed appropriate.
- 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 views. Each student should be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting.
- Students involved may also be asked to write down their account of the incident.
- The definition of bullying provided in Chapter 2 of the Bi Cinealta Procedures sets out clear criteria to help schools identify bullying behaviour.
- Parents/Guardians and pupils are required to cooperate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring , as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties as quickly as possible.
- Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within our school's Code of Behaviour.

Given the complexity of bullying behaviours it is generally acknowledged that no one approach works in all occasions

Where bullying behaviour has occurred

Where it is determined that bullying behavior has occurred school staff will complete a form (**Appendix 2**)

The 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.

Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in the school, but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school will support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken.

Our school staff will be fair and consistent in their approach to addressing bullying behaviour. Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support

The following principles will be adhered to when addressing bullying behaviour: The relevant teacher will:

- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to 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
- Restorative practice may take place

Requests to take no action

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than “look out” for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult 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 schools 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 or be facilitated to do so where there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. **However, while acknowledging the parent’s request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour**

Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased

The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than **20** school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention. Important factors to consider as part of the review 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

Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour. It can take time for relationships to settle and for supports to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behaviour occurred.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents 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, then the school should consider 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 our school.

Recording bullying behavior

All incidents of bullying behaviour are recorded using recording bullying Behaviour Form (Appendix 2)
All written records of bullying behavior are given to the Deputy Principal. A summary report of bullying incidents is given at a board of management meeting.

These records will be kept in line with our schools GDPR and Data Protection Policy

Complaint process

If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.

In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and/or parent may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student.

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
- 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: _____ Date: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Principal)

Appendix 1

Recording instance of negative behavior to determine if bullying has occurred

Name of student subjected to negative behaviour and class group

1. Name_____ Class_____

2. Name(s) and class (es) of student(s)engaged in negative behaviour

3. Description of negative behaviour and its impact. What? Where? When? Why?

4.Details of action taken

Signed_____ (Relevant Teacher) Date_____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal_____

APPENDIX 2

Colaiste Na Toirbhirte, Ard Aoibhinn, Bandon, Co. Cork

ANTI BULLYING RECORD SHEET 1

1. Name of pupil being bullied

Class _____

2. Names and classes of pupils engaged in bullying behavior

3. Name of person who reported the bullying concern

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant boxes)

Playground	☐	Classroom	☐
Corridor	☐	Toilets	☐
Locker room	☐	School Bus	☐
Other (please list)			

5. Type of bullying behaviour (tick relevant boxes)

Physical Aggression	☐	Cyber Bullying	☐
Damage to property	☐	Intimidation	☐
Isolation/Exclusion	☐	Malicious Gossip	☐
Name Calling	☐	Other (specify)	☐

6. Brief description of bullying behaviour and it's impact

7. Details of actions taken

Signed: _____ Date _____