

St. Clare's Primary School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of St Clare's Primary 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 acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Each school is required to develop and implement a Bí Cineálta policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Section 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	18 th March 2025	Half day school closure for discussion and draft policy
Students	March 2025-June 2025	Class Discussions
Parents	13 th June	Aladdin Connect
Board of Management	03/07/2025	BOM meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved:		
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):

Culture and Environment

- Positive school environment and school culture.
- Positive relationships
- Effective relationships
- Positive culture and environment
- Concern box in each classroom
- Opportunities to participate in class and whole school activities to raise self esteem
- A telling environment is encouraged through a concern box in each classroom. Each child is given a post it to write their concerns after each anti bullying lesson.
- A trusted adult within the school that children can speak to- class teacher/ student welfare officer.
- Creating safe physical spaces for children to use during break times.
- Structured play areas and introduce playground leaders one day per week.

- Adequate supervision at all break times.

Curriculum:

- Regular anti bullying lessons (1 per month) or as the need arises.
- Teaching and learning in SPHE
- RSE Curriculum
- Student voice: Children collaborate with school rules and child friendly policy.
- Visual representations of diversity and difference through books for promoting inclusion and diversity
- Anti bullying focus group including children from minority groups.
- Stay safe covered in the first term of the school year
- 5 minutes allocated to give children to voice any concerns after lunch each day.
- Group work/Collaboration
- Role-play, acting out scenarios
- Circle time

Policy and Planning:

- Bi Cinealta Policy
- Student friendly Bi Cinealta Policy
- Code of behavior
- Child safeguarding statement
- Acceptable use policy
- Supervision
- RSE Policy
- SEN Policy
- SSE Wellbeing in Education
- Appropriate TPL (Teacher Professional Learning)

Relationships and Partnerships:

- Parental involvement: Focus on developing relationships with Parents/Guardians and wider school community.
- Strong interpersonal connections
- Bullying awareness initiatives
- Student and Parent participation
- TPL (Teacher Professional Learning)
- Critical thinking skills
- Promoting peer support
- Supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience

Preventing cyber bullying behavior: *(Note- the digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their data. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. Children between 13 and 16 must*

have parental permission to sign up to social media services. Most social media platforms have a minimum age requirement and for the majority of these, it is 13years old. Therefore children under the age of 13 should not have a social media accounts)

- Promoting digital citizenship
- Implementing SPHE curriculum
- Open conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online
- Referring to appropriate online behavior as part of the standards of behavior in the Code of behavior
- Promoting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online
- Organise a visit from the community Gardai
- Holding Internet Safety day

Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behavior

- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as a displaying relevant posters
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- Challenging gender- stereotypes

Preventing racist bullying behavior

- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behavior
- Providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communications with their parents
- Ensuring the library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds

Preventing sexist bullying behavior

- Ensuring members of staff model respectful behavior 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 contribution of all students
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home

Preventing sexual harassment:

- Promoting positive role models within the school community
- Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behavior (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Yard Duty books/ supervision policy for school trips which include a adult; children ratio.
- Concern box in each class
- Code of behavior
- Clear signage around the school/ Bi Cinealta posters
- Circle time lessons
- Anti Bullying lessons
- Resilience programs
- Liquid therapy
- Wellbeing for staff- outside speakers
- Webwise workshops
- Information evening/links for parents
- CPD (TPL)
- Wellbeing/RSE/Child safeguarding policies
- Children first program- staff
- Pupil welfare officer
- Student council/student voice
- Teacher observation

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is (are) as follows:Class Teachers/SET/School Management

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

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:

When identifying if bullying behavior has occurred staff might consider the following;

Is the behavior targeted at a specific student or group of students?

Is the behavior intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?

Is the behavior repeated?

If yes to each of the above then the behaviour is bullying behavior and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cinealta procedures.

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

-Identify has the bullying occurred within the school calendar year.

Answering the following questions:

- Where did it occur? When did it happen?
- What form of bullying was it?
- What child/group were involved?
- Why did it happen?

Approaches to address Bullying Behaviour

- After the first incident a reflection sheet is issued to be completed in conjunction with their Parents from 1st class onwards. Two staff members can be present when engaging with children individually initially without parents' notification and presence.
- On the second incident it will be identified as bullying with the exception of online bullying.
- Parents will be contacted and will meet with the class teacher and Principal.

- Strategies will be developed to deal with the bullying behavior which must be agreed by all parties.
- Ongoing supervision and support is ensured for the student who has experienced the bullying behavior as well as the student that has displayed the behavior. All school staff are made aware of the issue through Aladdin and will exercise extra supervision while on yard supervision.
- If the bullying behavior persists the issue will be referred to the code of behavior and strategies to deal with inappropriate behavior will be invoked.

Requests no action taken:

A student who reports bullying behavior may ask a member of staff not to do anything and just 'look out' for them due to not wanting to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behavior. They might 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 the steps that can be taken to address the behavior. It must be made clear that other parties may need to be informed for their welfare.

Parents may also make the school aware of bullying behavior and specifically request that no action is to be taken by the school. Parents should put this in writing to the school. However, schools may decide that based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behavior through Bi Cinealta procedures and/or the Code of behavior where appropriate.

To Review Progress

The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 days after the initial discussion to review progress following initial intervention. Factors to consider in the review include:

- Nature of the bullying
- The effectiveness of strategies used to address the bullying behavior
- The relationship between students involved

Ongoing supervision of both the child experiencing the bullying behavior and the child displaying bullying behavior may be required as well as continued support. It can take time for relationships to settle and for support to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behavior occurred.

If the bullying behavior 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 behavior has ceased.

Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behavior is continuing to display the behavior, then the school should consider using strategies to

deal with the inappropriate behavior 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.

Recording bullying behavior:

All incidents of bullying behavior should be recorded. The following details should be included on the record:

- Form of bullying
- Type of bullying
- Where and when (if known)
- The date of initial engagement with the students and their parents
- The views of the student and their parents* regarding the action to be taken to address the bullying behavior (*only in relation to their own child)
- When review takes place, it should be noted of the bullying behavior has ceased and the views of the students and parents in relation to this.
- Note the date of reviews and engagements
- Note the date that the bullying behavior ceased
- Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted
- If SSF exists for a pupil involved, schools are encouraged to place a copy of the record on the student's support file.

Complaint process:

If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behavior has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school complaints procedure. In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied following the complaints procedure they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for children.

Supports:

School Support Team/ Pupil Welfare Officer (PWO)

NEPS

Oide

Webwise

National Parents council

DCU Anti bullying Centre

CAMHS

HSE

Tusla

CDNT

Gardaí

Family Support Services

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):

Where bullying behavior has occurred:

A school is not expected to deal with bullying behavior that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behavior has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved.

Where bullying behavior continues in school, then school can deal with it in accordance with Bi Cinealta Policy.

It is important for staff to be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour . Both the student who is experiencing bullying behavior and the student who is displaying bullying behavior need support. Engage with the student who is experiencing bullying without delay. School staff should identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behavior to better manage relational difficulties.

It is important that a student's agency is not decreased further by adults deciding what will happen without listening to the student and involving them in deciding on the actions that will be taken.

The following principles must be adhered to when addressing bullying behavior:

No blame policy.

Show empathy and understanding to all parties.

Use restorative practice to resolve the issues.

Ensure privacy for all involved. Conduct all conversations with sensitivity, considering the age and ability of the pupils involved.

Consider the views of the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.

Take action in a timely manner.

Inform the parents of all involved.

Record all incidents.

Parents of both parties 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 behavior as outlined in the schools Bi Cinealta policy. In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the school should develop an appropriate plan to support the student and how their parents will be informed.

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*.


Bullying behavior can be considered criminal behavior under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years. An Garda Síochana is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behavior.

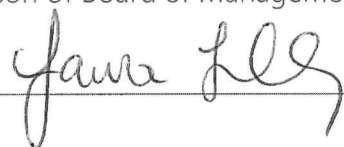
Section D: Oversight

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:  Date: 03/04/2024
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:  Date: 03/04/2024
(Principal)



Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Names of Children involved:

Student(s) Experiencing Bullying:	
Student(s) Engaging in Bullying Behaviour:	
Other Witnesses (if any):	

2. Form of Bullying
(Refer to Section 2.5 – Tick all that apply)

- <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please select Form of Bullying:
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Verbal (e.g., name-calling, teasing, insults)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Psychological (e.g., intimidation, manipulation)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Cyberbullying (e.g., harmful messages, social media misuse)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Relational (e.g., exclusion, spreading rumours)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

3. Type of Bullying
(Refer to Section 2.7 – Tick all that apply)

- <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please select Type of Bullying:
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Peer-to-Peer
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher-to-Student
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Group Bullying
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Prejudicial Bullying (e.g., based on race, religion, gender)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Bullying (e.g., inappropriate comments, harassment)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

4. Where and When
(If known)

Location:	
Date/Time:	



5. Date of Initial Engagement

With Student(s):	
With Parent(s):	

6. Views of Student(s)/Parent(s)
(Regarding the actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour)

7. Date of Review
(To determine if bullying behaviour has ceased) (reminder - 20 days)

Review Date:	
Outcome:	
Views of Student(s):	
Views of Parent(s):	

8. Engagement with External Services/Supports
(If any)

Services Contacted:	
Details of Engagement:	

9. Recording Teacher

Name:	
Date Recorded:	



St Clare's PS

Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Names of Children involved:

Student(s) Experiencing Bullying:	
Student(s) Engaging in Bullying Behaviour:	
Other Witnesses (if any):	

2. Form of Bullying

(Refer to Section 2.5 – Tick all that apply)

- <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please select Form of Bullying:
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Verbal (e.g., name-calling, teasing, insults)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Psychological (e.g., intimidation, manipulation)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Cyberbullying (e.g., harmful messages, social media misuse)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Relational (e.g., exclusion, spreading rumours)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

3. Type of Bullying

(Refer to Section 2.7 – Tick all that apply)

- <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please select Type of Bullying:
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Peer-to-Peer
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher-to-Student
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Group Bullying
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Prejudicial Bullying (e.g., based on race, religion, gender)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Bullying (e.g., inappropriate comments, harassment)
- <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

4. Where and When

(If known)

Location:	
Date/Time:	



St Clare's PS

5. Date of Initial Engagement

With Student(s):	
With Parent(s):	

6. Views of Student(s)/Parent(s)

(Regarding the actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour)

7. Date of Review

(To determine if bullying behaviour has ceased) (reminder - 20 days)

Review Date:	
Outcome:	
Views of Student(s):	
Views of Parent(s):	

8. Engagement with External Services/Supports

(If any)

Services Contacted:	
Details of Engagement:	

9. Recording Teacher

Name:	
Date Recorded:	