



**Bí Cineálta**  
**Ballyfeeney NS**

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# Ballyfeeney N.S.

## Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

### **Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**

The Board of Management of Ballyfeeney N.S. 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.

We confirm that we will take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated.

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 each person 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 all have an indispensable 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.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	28/01/2025	Staff Meeting/ Staff Training
Students		School Posters School Assembly
Parents		
Board of Management		Board of Management meeting 20/06/2025
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		Bus escort/ Bus driver
Date policy was approved:20/06/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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<p>This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by this school to address all forms of bullying behaviour, in whatever form and however motivated, including online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.</p>
<p>In developing 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 the school in a real way.</p> <p>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</p>

difference, by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at board of management and staff meetings.

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 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.

## Whole-School Culture of Kindness and Respect

- Promote a positive school climate where diversity is valued and inclusion is actively practiced.
- Reinforce respectful language and behaviour through school rules, displays, assemblies, and daily interactions.

## 2. Curriculum-Based Education and Awareness

- Deliver age-appropriate lessons through SPHE, RSE and Wellbeing programmes that address:
  - **Online safety and cyberbullying**, including responsible digital citizenship, privacy, and respectful online communication.
  - **Respect for diversity**, including ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, culture, and ability.

- **Understanding and challenging stereotypes, prejudice, and bias**, including racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia.
- **Consent, bodily autonomy, and respectful relationships**, to prevent sexual harassment and promote mutual understanding.

### 3. Student Voice and Empowerment

- Encourage students to take part in awareness campaigns (e.g., Stand Up Week, Safer Internet Day, Anti-Bullying Week).
- Involve student representatives in developing anti-bullying initiatives and reviewing school policies.
- Provide anonymous reporting tools to support students in speaking up safely.

### 4. Staff Training and Consistency

- Provide regular staff CPD on recognising and responding to all forms of bullying, including online and identity-based bullying.
- Ensure consistent use of inclusive language and proactive intervention strategies across the school.

### 5. Parental Involvement and Education

- Engage parents/guardians through workshops, newsletters, and policy consultations on topics such as online safety, respectful relationships, and inclusive education.
- Share resources to help families reinforce school messages at home.

### 6. Policy and Practice

- Implement and regularly review Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) to address online behaviour.
- Ensure clear procedures are in place for addressing incidents involving racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, and sexual harassment.
- Foster strong partnerships with external support agencies and equality organisations when specialist support is needed.



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):

#### **Active Supervision of Key Areas:**

- Staff are assigned to supervise high-risk areas such as corridors, school yards, toilets, changing rooms, and school buses during break times, arrival, and dismissal.
- A supervision rota ensures staff visibility and consistent presence throughout the school day.

#### **Structured School Routines:**

- Clear routines and transitions are established to minimise opportunities for bullying to occur during less structured times (e.g., lining up, moving between classes).

#### **Student Engagement and Voice:**

- Regular class check-ins, surveys, and student council feedback are used to monitor student wellbeing and identify emerging issues.
- Anonymous reporting options are available for students who feel uncomfortable speaking directly to staff.

#### **Staff Vigilance and Training:**

- All staff are trained to spot early signs of bullying, including non-verbal and relational behaviours, and are encouraged to intervene early and consistently.
- Staff record and report all concerns promptly to the relevant designated staff member (e.g., Deputy Principal or Anti-Bullying Coordinator).

#### **Use of Technology and Online Monitoring:**

- Online learning platforms and digital communications used in school are regularly reviewed to ensure respectful engagement.
- The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is actively promoted, and breaches are followed up in line with school policy.

#### **Record-Keeping and Follow-Up:**

- All incidents or concerns are logged using the *Bí Cineálta* templates and reviewed

regularly for patterns or repeat behaviours.

- Monitoring includes follow-up with students involved to ensure the bullying has ceased and support remains in place.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

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Diarmuid Sutton (Principal) 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class,

Fidelma Owens (Deputy principal) Junior and Senior Infants

Rachel Lavin (AP11) 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> class

Fiona Duignan (Jobshare) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> class

Ruth Beattie (Jobshare) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> class

John Flynn (SET)

Clare Keville (Shared SET)

Siobhán Carron (Shared SET)

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):

### Determining if Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred:

- **Initial Concern:** All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and responded to promptly.
- **Gathering Information:** The relevant school staff (usually the class teacher or designated liaison) will speak separately with all parties involved, including the target, the alleged person displaying bullying behaviour, and witnesses.
- **Recording Evidence:** Objective and factual notes will be taken in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta* recording templates.
- **Assessment Against Criteria:** The behaviour will be assessed using the definition of bullying from the procedures, considering aspects such as intent, repetition, and impact.

### 2. Approaches Taken to Address the Bullying Behaviour:

- **Restorative Practices:** Where appropriate, restorative conversations or mediation will be used to repair relationships and promote empathy.
- **Supportive Interventions:** Tailored support will be provided to both the student who has experienced bullying and the one who has displayed the behaviour, with input from parents/guardians.
- **Behavioural Expectations:** Clear, consistent expectations will be reinforced. Where necessary, consequences will be applied in line with the school's Code of Behaviour.
- **Preventative Education:** Relevant lessons or workshops may be delivered to individuals or groups to address underlying issues and promote respectful relationships.

### 3. Reviewing Progress:

- **Follow-Up Meetings:** Scheduled check-ins will be arranged with all affected students to ensure the bullying has stopped and that support remains in place.
- **Monitoring and Feedback:** Staff will monitor the situation discreetly, and feedback will be gathered from students and parents to gauge effectiveness.
- **Documentation:** All steps taken will be recorded securely and reviewed regularly by school leadership.
- **Policy Reflection:** The incident and school response may be used to inform updates to anti-bullying strategies and practices.

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):

**Support for Students Who Experience Bullying:**

- Provide immediate reassurance and a safe environment.
- Offer ongoing pastoral support and, where necessary, counselling.
- Monitor and review progress regularly to ensure the bullying has ceased.

**Support for Students Who Witness Bullying:**

- Encourage them to report incidents and validate their concerns.
- Offer guidance on how to be an effective bystander and promote kindness.
- Provide opportunities to discuss their experiences with a trusted adult.

**Support for Students Who Display Bullying Behaviour:**

- Address behaviour in a restorative, educational, and proportionate way.
- Explore underlying causes or needs, including through SEN or wellbeing support.
- Involve parents/carers in behavioural planning and positive interventions.

**Whole-School Prevention and Response:**

- Deliver regular anti-bullying education as part of the SPHE/RSE curriculum.
- Foster a culture of kindness, respect, and inclusion through assemblies and campaigns.
- Review and revise behaviour and anti-bullying policies annually in consultation with students, staff and parents.

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: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)