

Scoil Aoife Community National School

Citywest Drive
Citywest
Dublin 24

Tel: 014215104

Email: scoilaoifecns@sacns.ie

Roll no: 204220



Bí Cineálta

Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scoil Aoife Community National School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2024*.

The board of management 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 Traveler community.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineálta: 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	07/05/2025	Staff Meeting Staff Questionnaire
Students	09/05/2025	Student Questionnaire SPHE/GMGY Lessons
Parents	09/05/2025	Parent Questionnaire
Board of Management	19/01/2025 21/05/2025	Broad Outline of Bí Cineálta policy changes detailed by principal board members. Discussion at BOM Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	N/A	N/A
Date policy was approved: 18/06/25		
Date policy was last reviewed: N/A		

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.

The Board of Management of Scoil Aoife CNS recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

Culture and Environment

- A positive and inclusive school culture and environment which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity in line with our Ethos/Core Values.
- Is a 'telling' environment which encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.
- Promotes and models respectful relationships across the school community.
- Sets high standards and expectations.

- A school-wide approach where each member of staff takes a consistent approach to effective observation and addressing of bullying behaviour.
- Promoting kindness and inclusion in peer groups.
- Active partners in their child's education, fostering an environment where bullying is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.
- A 'trusted adult' who reassures and supports students they have done the right thing by reporting bullying behaviour.
- Creating safe, visible physical spaces in school.
-

Curriculum - Teaching and Learning

- A shared understanding of what bullying is, its impact, and bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies, including awareness raising measures that:
 - Build empathy, respect, and resilience in pupils.
 - Promote inclusion and diversity.
 - Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including homophobic, transphobic, racist, sexist bullying, and sexual harassment as appropriate.
 - Provide teaching and learning in SPHE that equips students with skills to build positive relationships, resolve conflicts, and recognise and deal with bullying behaviour.
- SPHE Curricular Programmes to include:
 - Stay safe program, online safety, digital citizenship, cyber bullying, RSE, healthy and unhealthy relationships, communication, help seeking, etc.
- SPHE methodologies to include:
 - Group work/Collaboration.
 - Role-play, acting out scenarios, case studies.
 - Extra-curricular activities to develop positive self-worth.
 - Co-operative games (particularly in P.E).
- NCSA RE, CSPE and Politics and Society
- ETBI Patrons curriculum GMGY and IMBV

Policy and Planning

- Bí Cineálta Policy developed, communicated, implemented, and reviewed in consultation with all partners.
- Consistent recording, investigation, and follow-up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies).
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta Policy.
- Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy.
- Code of Behaviour.
- Child Safeguarding Statement.
- Acceptable Use Policy.
- Supervision Policy.

- Arrivals and Dismissals Policy.
- SPHE & RSE Policy.
- SEN Policy.
- School outings/trips policy
- Wellbeing Statement and Framework for Practice.
- Health and Safety Policy Statement.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils (both within school and on yard, unstructured activities, trips, swimming etc).
- Teacher Professional Learning and other such relevant supports for staff.

Relationships and Partnerships

- Strong interpersonal connections supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as Student Council, Clubs, Student Support team, Parents' Association, Ethos Ambassadors, focus groups etc.
- DEIS Partnership with Parents and Others Plan.
- Student and parent/guardian active participation.
- Workshops and seminars for students, school staff, and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
- Promoting acts of kindness and activities that build empathy, respect, and resilience e.g. Random Acts of Kindness Day, Well Being Week, Stand Up week, Darkness into Light, Diversity week, etc.
- Culture Day.
- Teaching problem-solving skills.
- Critical Thinking Skills.
- Promoting self-awareness and awareness of others.
- Encouraging peer tutoring and buddying.

Preventing Cyber Bullying Behaviour

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement, and education. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour.

Scoil Aoife Community National School strives to proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments.

Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include:

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum.
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship.
- 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.

- Holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.
- Taking part in Safer Internet Week, having safer internet ambassadors with WebWise.

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:

- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters, having gender neutral bathrooms, etc.
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- Challenging gender stereotypes.
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff, and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour.
- Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.

Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include:

- 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 Traveller 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

Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include:

- 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 contribution of all students.
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home.

Preventing Sexual Harassment

Scoil Aoife Community National School promotes a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. It strives to support this through a focus on education, awareness, and clear enforceable policies. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include:

- Promoting positive role models within the school community.
- Using the SPHE curriculum/specification to teach about healthy relationships and how to treat each other with respect and kindness.
- Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment.
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness sexual harassment.

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

- Teachers and SNAs present to supervise at yard times
- Adequate teacher student ratios are in place for breaks
- Supervising personnel are deployed at strategic positions on buses, walks, trips etc. to ensure adequate supervision and monitoring of interactions.
- Students are accompanied by at least two staff members on school trips
- Students are reminded of where to play when out in the yard and what spaces to avoid
- Classes are assigned designated areas on the yard/in the building to ensure age-appropriate interactions and ease of monitoring and observing of behaviour.

- Where patterns of inappropriate behaviour are detected, these are investigated and documented, as relevant

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Tadhg O'Lionaird Principal/ DLP, Clair O'Brien Deputy Principal/ DDLP

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
- > Act 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):

6.1. Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred, the teacher will consider the following: What, where, when, and cause? Where appropriate, teachers and staff will use a Restorative Practice approach. Restorative Practice conversations will be facilitated, where possible, between the parties involved, focusing on:

- What happened?
- The impact of behaviour
- How to make amends
- Develop a plan to repair relationships and prevent recurrence

Where a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged individually first. Thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each student should 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. Where appropriate, students may be asked to write down or draw up their account of the incident.

The definition of bullying sets out clear criteria to identify bullying behaviour. Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but may not be bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.



6.2 Where bullying behaviour has occurred

When bullying behaviour has occurred, school staff will complete the Scoil Aoife CNS [Bí Cineálta Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour](#).

This will be brought to the attention of the principal and/or deputy principal.

The actions taken will be addressed in the template, and a review date (within 20 days) will be set to identify if the bullying has ceased.

If bullying behaviour continues beyond the review timeframes, the school's Code of Behaviour is to be used.

The school will not 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, the school will support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, the school will deal with it in accordance with the 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.

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. It is important that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is engaged with, without delay, so that they feel listened to, supported and reassured. School staff should identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

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

- 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
- Act in a timely manner
- Inform parents of those involved

6.3 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.

6.4 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 the school.

6.5 Recording bullying behaviour

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded on the Scoil Aoife CNS [Bí Cineálta Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour.](#)

The records will be retained in accordance with the school's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations. Where a Student Support Plan exists, the plan should be updated to incorporate response strategies and associated supports.

6.6 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 refer 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. The Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie.

6.7 Supports

Supports are available to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. These include the following:

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/services/national-educational-psychological-service-neps/>

Oide

<https://oide.ie/>

WebWise

<https://www.webwise.ie/>

The National Parents Council (NPC)

<https://www.npc.ie/>

Dublin City University (DCU) Anti Bullying Centre

<https://antibullyingcentre.ie/>

The Anti Bullying Centre offers a range of modules as part of its **FUSE programme** for the entire school community that can be used to help to promote a positive school culture and assist in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours.

Tusla

<https://www.tusla.ie/>

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):

Pupils who have been bullied, witness or engage in bullying behaviour will be supported by the school, within the limits of resources available in the school, through the provision of opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and thereby build resilience and a sense of self-worth whenever this is needed.

The school will support the student by listening, showing empathy, and reassuring the student.

The school will use a range of supports that may include Restorative Practice Approaches, Nurture based activities and Check Ins. Referrals to Tusla where appropriate

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

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)

Bí Cineálta
Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

This template is only to be used when bullying behaviour has been identified, in line with the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

1. Date of initial engagement with pupil(s): _____
and parent(s) _____

2. Initials of pupil who has experienced bullying behaviour and class group:
Initials: _____ Class _____

3. Initials and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour
Initials: _____ Class _____

4. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil Involved	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other (specify):	

5. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Yard	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other (specify):	

6. Initials of person(s) who reported the bullying concern and/or relationship to the pupil(s):

7. Dates of when the bullying behaviour occurred:

8. Form of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box/boxes)

Physical Bullying Behaviour		Online Bullying Behaviour	
Verbal Bullying Behaviour		Relational Bullying Behaviour	
Written Bullying Behaviour		Exclusion Bullying Behaviour	
Extortion		Other (specify):	

9. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box/boxes)

Disablist Bullying Behaviour		Homophobic/Transphobic (LGBTQ+) Bullying Behaviour	
Exceptionally Bullying Behaviour		Physical Appearance Sexual Harassment	
Gender Identity Bullying Behaviour		Racist Bullying Behaviour	
Sexist Bullying Behaviour Sexual Harassment		Religious Identity Bullying Behaviour	
Poverty Bullying Behaviour		Other (specify):	

10. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

11. Views of pupil(s) and parent(s) regarding the actions to be taken

12. Date of Review with pupil(s) and parents (within 20 days)	Date:
13. Has Bullying Behaviour Ceased?	
14. Views of pupil(s) and parents in relation to this	
15. If bullying behaviour has not ceased, set an agreed timeframe to meet again and review strategies	Date:
16. Engagement with external services or supports (if any)	

If bullying behaviour continues beyond the review timeframes, the school's Code of Behaviour is to be used.

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher/Staff Member)

Date: _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____