



# Kilmurry National School's Bí Cineálta Policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

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

The Board of Management of **Kilmurry 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 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 *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. Power imbalance refers to having less power due to physical or psychological factors, isolation, or perceived higher social status etc. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

## **Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:**

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is not bullying 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 additional educational needs may have social communication differences 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.

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.

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.

### **Online/social media:**

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.

### **Where bullying can occur:**

Bullying behaviour can happen anywhere, online or offline and at any time, but there are certain places and times where bullying behaviour can be more likely to occur. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list: inside school; the school yard; in the classroom; at activities during school hours (e.g. matches, etc.)

**Outside School:** 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, the school is required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, the school will deal with it in accordance with the Bí Cineálta policy.



## 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	6 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Questionnaire and staff meeting
Students	January 2025 May 2025	Student council Focus Group
Parents	January 2025 April 2025	Questionnaire Meeting with parents
Board of Management	June 2025	Draft policy circulated Discussion at BOM meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	June 2025	Discussion about vigilance and reporting. Policy to be shared with school transport staff
Date policy was approved: 16.08.2025		
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):

Kilmurry NS school is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all pupils and staff. Prevention strategies will include:

### A positive school culture:

- Create a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and a consistent approach is taken to addressing bullying behaviour. Our school motto is – *'We are kind, we are respectful, and we try our best'*.
- Promote kindness and inclusion among our student body by embedding a positive environment.
- Embed the concept of a trusted adult- e.g. teacher, ANA (Additional Needs Assistants).
- Wellbeing Promotion - through monthly whole school Wellbeing Wednesday activities.
- Friendship Week (Annual) /and Internet Safety Lessons at the start of every term.
- Assemblies, with reminders about the core values of kindness, inclusion and respect.
- Active supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours, use of communication technology, and extra-curricular activities.
- All staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.



- A consistent, school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community. This is reflected in the everyday communication amongst the school community.
- Encourage a culture of reporting incidents, with particular emphasis on the role/importance of upstanders, and who to tell and how.
- Parent(s) / Guardian(s) are encouraged to approach the school at the earliest stage, if they suspect that their child is being bullied, following this line of communication: class teacher, then principal.
- Children are affirmed with praise and encouraged to recognise and appreciate good qualities in one another.

### **Curriculum teaching and learning:**

- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities.
- School-wide awareness-raising on various aspects of bullying. This may include organised talks by outside facilitators for staff, pupils, and parents/guardians.
- Promote internet safety throughout the school year and during Internet Safety lessons at the start of each term. Embed our AUP-Acceptable Use Policy within classroom teaching. Host regular conversations with students about respectful and kind relationships online.
- Use of circle time, and/or relevant stories to help build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
- The anti-bullying module of the SPHE programme: i.e. Stay Safe, Walk Tall, and Webwise lessons.
- Children are involved in activities where teamwork, tolerance, interdependence and responsibility are nurtured which may include games, art, competitions, projects, drama, and circle time etc.
- Consideration regarding any programme implementation, is given to the pupils with additional needs.
- Every effort will be made to ensure our break times are a safe environment, this will be done through staff supervision.

### **Policy and planning:**

- The school's Bí Cineálta anti-bullying policy, in conjunction with the school's Code of Behaviour, is shared with parents/ guardians on the school website, and notification of their review is shared via Aladdin.
- Involvement of pupils and parents through Student Council and Parents Association.
- Lessons in anti-bullying as part of SPHE delivery: Webwise, Walk Tall, SPHE, Stay Safe, focusing on positive behaviour are all part of curricular content covered in classes.
- Provide teaching and promote learning which are collaborative and respectful, fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Maintaining strong staff supervision in classrooms, playgrounds, and online platforms used for learning, with clear reporting mechanisms for any inappropriate behaviour.
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating, and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.

### **Relationships and partnerships:**

- The school's Code of Behaviour details the approaches taken by the school to foster respect, kindness and appropriate behaviours, encouraging the children to behave in a respectful, safe and friendly manner



- Charter for Anti-bullying by the Student Council is displayed in the school and yards.
- Involve the Student Council in contributing to developing a school environment where bullying is neither accepted nor tolerated.
- Support interpersonal connections through a range of formal and informal structures such as the Board of Management, Parents' Association, Wellbeing Wednesday Buddies, the Student Council, and the Green School Committee etc.
- Model respectful behaviour towards colleagues, students, and visitors in our school environment.
- Age and stage appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the student body in looking at their own behaviour – promoting acts of kindness and friendship, being an active help to others and looking at the causes of and impact of bullying during SPHE lessons/ school assemblies.
- Take the opportunity to celebrate at whole school assemblies school achievements & build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy amongst the school community.
- Tools like the Zones of Regulation or mindfulness may be used to support pupils to regulate their emotions.

### **Preventing Cyber Bullying:**

- The school in collaboration with the Parents Association has a voluntary agreement which covers the use of smart devices, social media access, and age-appropriate gaming (as per PEGI rating). Parents and children can opt into this agreement from juniors until entry to sixth class.
- Implement anti-cyber bullying aspects of the SPHE policy, which teaches pupils about online behaviour and digital citizenship (HTML heroes, webwise/my selfie).
- Having regular conversations in class and at assembly about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
- Communicating the school acceptable usage policy.
- Referring to appropriate online behaviour as standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour.
- Reinforce awareness of appropriate online behaviour through the school Internet Safety Day.
- Parents should be aware that the digital age of consent is 16 years, and that some online behaviour may be illegal. Raise awareness amongst students of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online, as set out in the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act, 2021, (Coco's Law).

### **Preventing racist/homophobic/transgender/sexiest bullying:**

- Foster an inclusive environment, through SPHE lessons and a respectful and inclusive school culture.
- Encourage peer mentoring and empathy building lessons and activities.
- Challenge gender stereotypes.
- Opportunities to book speakers for staff/parents'/ pupils to raise awareness of bullying.
- Encouraging and reminding pupils that we are a telling school, and to be upstanders for all types of bullying behaviour.
- Provide support to pupils and for whom English is an additional language, and/are from a different ethnic background, and to help communicate with their parents / guardians.
- Ensure that library reading material and textbooks represent lived experiences of pupils from different cultures, backgrounds, family make-up etc.
- Focus on gender equality by ensuring all pupils have opportunities to engage in activities irrespective of their sex.
- Staff members model respectful behaviour and treat pupils equally irrespective of their sex.
- Celebrate diversity at school and acknowledge the contributions of all pupils.
- Encourage parents to reinforce these values at home



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):

- **Buddy system and other student support activities:** that can help to support students and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- **Whole school awareness:** The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures including posters, competitions, and group assemblies etc.
- **Classroom supervision:** All staff maintain active supervision of pupils throughout the school day, fostering a safe and respectful learning environment.
- **Playground and common area monitoring:** Staff members are strategically positioned during break times to observe interactions, intervene early, and support positive peer relationships.
- **Online Safety:** The school promotes safe and responsible technology use through internet filtering, regular lessons on digital citizenship (one per term), and clear policies on appropriate online behaviour (AUP policy).
- **Supervision during transitions:** Staff are present during arrival, dismissal, and movement between activities to ensure pupil safety and positive interactions.
- **Reporting systems:** Pupils are encouraged to report concerns to a trusted adult.
- **Staff collaboration and communication:** Regular staff meetings include discussions on pupil well-being, patterns of behaviour, and early interventions for any concerns.
- **Parental communication and involvement:** The school maintains open communication with parents regarding behavioural expectations, online safety, and any issues that arise.
- **Review and evaluation of policies:** Supervision and monitoring procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective and responsive to the needs of the school community.

## Section C: Addressing bullying behaviour

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

### **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 (once the school has confirmed that their child is involved).

**Requests to take no action:** Parents may also make the school 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 a parent's request, the school may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is more appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

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)



## 1. Identifying and investigating bullying behaviour

### 1. Receive the report immediately

When a pupil, bystander, or parent report bullying, listen attentively, with sensitivity and without delay. Respond empathically and maintain confidentiality.

### 2. Relay internally without delay

Promptly ensure that the deputy principal and/or principal are made aware of the report.

### 3. Protect and support the affected student and the alleged perpetrator

Ensure the student(s) feel safe, heard, and supported. Preserve their privacy and tailor your language to their age and emotional capacity.

### 4. Determine if it is bullying

Assess if the behaviour meets the Bí Cineálta criteria: Is it:

- Deliberate, targeted behaviour
- Harm caused or intended
- Repeated occurrence or a single incident likely to spread

If **all** apply, treat it as bullying; if not, address it under the Code of Behaviour.

### 5. Investigate with sensitivity

- Interview the affected student(s) individually.
- Then meet the alleged perpetrator(s), also individually.
- For group incidents, hold a joint meeting afterward.
- Offer opportunities for written accounts.
- Involve support staff as needed.

### 6. Inform parents early

Contact parents or guardians of both the pupil experiencing bullying and the alleged perpetrator. Explain procedures, listen to their concerns, and outline planned interventions.

## 2. Addressing and responding to bullying behaviour

### 1. Record the incident

Log all details on the school's official form (Appendix B) and save this on Aladdin:

- Date, time, location, and nature of incident
- Student and parent perspectives
- Investigative steps taken
- Outcome and interventions
- Any involvement of external agencies (NEPS, Tusla, Gardaí)

### 2. Implement appropriate interventions

Use the agreed support strategies, which may include:

- Restorative approaches
- Support from the Student Support Team
- The affected pupil will receive support to rebuild confidence and well-being
- The pupil who is engaging in the bullying behaviour will be supported by the school to recognise the negative impact of the behaviour for all parties. If necessary, the pupil will be supported through self-esteem building, and/or social skill development etc. A trusted adult may offer ongoing support/ regular check-ins to the pupil where deemed necessary.
- Parents of all involved pupils will be informed and engaged in supporting the resolution of the issue.
- Age-appropriate sanctions (aligned with the school's Code of Behaviour, only the pupil and their parents will be aware of the sanction)
- External referrals if necessary (e.g. NEPS, HSE, Gardaí).

### **3. Reviewing and monitoring progress**

#### **1. Ongoing supervision by staff:**

School staff will continue to monitor interactions and social dynamics to prevent recurrence.

#### **2. Follow up within 20 school days**

The Class teacher must meet with the involved pupils and parents no later than 20 school days after the initial report. Review progress, adjust interventions if needed, and set further timelines if bullying persists.

#### **4. Determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased:**

- If bullying has ceased the school will still continue to monitor all involved.
- If bullying has not ceased, the school will review its strategies, seek external support if appropriate and review again with an agreed timeframe.
- If a pupil breaks their undertaking not to engage in bullying behaviour, then that behaviour is no longer considered a 'mistake'.
  - Parent(s)/ guardian(s) are contacted and informed. They are asked to countersign a formal undertaking with their child.
  - Parent(s)/ guardian(s) and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
  - Recording Template Section B and C are completed.

A sanction is imposed for breaking the undertaking. Breach of this additional promise by further bullying behaviour is regarded as a grave matter and a sanction may be imposed by the school Board of Management. The school's Code of Behaviour will be referred to and adhered to if needed.

### **5. Bullying behavior updates:**

#### **Report to the Board of Management**

At each ordinary meeting, the principal must provide an anonymous update, including:

- Total new incidents
- Ongoing cases
- Trends, patterns, and strategies used
- Any serious incidents or student withdrawals due to bullying
- Whether policy needs urgent review.

Through these steps, the school ensures that bullying behaviour is identified, addressed effectively, and that all pupils feel safe, supported, and respected.

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: *Horar Murphy* Date: 17-06-2025  
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: *Timh Collier* Date: 17-06-2025  
(Principal)









**Kilmurry National School**  
**Bí Cineálta Record of Bullying Behaviour Form:**

General information:	
Date of record	
Name of relevant teacher	
Name of reporting person if applicable	
Where is the bullying behaviour taking place	
Names of pupils involved:	
Pupil(s) <b>experiencing</b> the bullying behaviour	
Pupil(s) <b>engaging</b> in the bullying behaviour	
Pupil(s) <b>witnessing</b> the bullying behaviour	
Bullying behaviour:	
Type of bullying being experienced: (please tick or add in where necessary)	
Physical Appearance Bullying	
Exceptionally Able Bullying	
Gender Identity Bullying	
Homophobic/Transphobic (LGBTQ+)	
Bullying	
Disablist Bullying	
Racist Bullying	
Poverty Bullying	
Religious Identity Bullying	
Sexist Bullying	
Sexual Harassment	
Other please explain	
Brief description of the bullying behaviour and its impact:	
Parent contact record:	
Parent of pupil <b>experiencing</b> bullying behaviour	Date/Time contacted:
Parent of pupil <b>engaging</b> in the bullying behaviour	Date/Time contacted:
Parent of pupil <b>witnessing</b> the bullying behaviour	Date/Time contacted:
Supports for each person:	
(include pupil and parent voices, classroom activities/lessons & if necessary external services/supports engagement)	
Support for the pupil(s) <b>experiencing</b> the bullying behaviour:	



Support for the pupil(s) <b>engaging</b> in the bullying behaviour:
Support for the pupil(s) <b>witnessing</b> the bullying behaviour:
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Review:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Engagement with pupils and parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased. This has to be completed within 20 school days of the initial intervention</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Further Actions:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(change of supports, continuation of supports, date for next review)</p>

These types of bullying are specifically outlined in Section 2.7 of the **Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools**. (this list is not exhaustive)

1. **Disablist Bullying** – Targeting a student due to a perceived or actual disability or additional need.
2. **Exceptionally Able Bullying** – Targeting a student because of high academic ability or outstanding talents.
3. **Gender Identity Bullying** – Targeting a student based on their perceived or actual gender identity.
4. **Homophobic/Transphobic (LGBTQ+) Bullying** – Targeting a student based on their perceived or actual LGBTQ+ identity.
5. **Physical Appearance Bullying** – Mocking or criticising a student based on their physical appearance.
6. **Racist Bullying** – Targeting a student due to their race or ethnic origin, including membership of the Traveller or Roma community.
7. **Poverty Bullying** – Humiliating a student because of a lack of resources.
8. **Religious Identity Bullying** – Targeting a student based on their religion or religious identity.
9. **Sexist Bullying** – Targeting a student based on their sex, reinforcing stereotypes.
10. **Sexual Harassment** – Any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.