

*Ratified by BOM  
June 2025*

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



## **Scoil Náisiúnta Droichead an Chláir**



The Board of Management of Clarecastle 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 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 targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm.
- The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature and can have lasting effects on the the child experiencing the behaviour.
- Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.
- It is behaviour which is deliberate in nature and is unwanted. It is not accidental or reckless behaviour.

The harm can be :

- Physical ( eg: personal injury, damage to or loss of property)
- Social: ( eg: withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion)
- Emotional: (eg: low self esteem, depression, anxiety)

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a 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.

Bullying behavior classified under Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 in the Code of Behaviour will be subject to corresponding disciplinary actions, including suspension or expulsion for severe cases based on the severity and frequency of the behaviour.

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

- o 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 be addressed under the school 's code of behaviour.
- o 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 cannot control.
- o Disagreement between students is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

### **Types of Bullying:**

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include directing bullying at someone focused on the following: disability, exceptional ability, gender identity, LGBTQ+ , physical appearance, racism, poverty status, religious identity, sexism and sexual harassment. This is not an exhaustive list.

#### Bullying can be, **Direct:**

- Physical: pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. Physical assault. Destruction of personal property.
- Verbal: continual name calling which insults, humiliates the student – this may refer to physical appearance, size, clothes, gender, accent, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.
- Written: Writing insulting remarks in public places, passing notes or drawings about the student.
- Extortion: where something is obtained through force or threats

#### Bullying can be, **Indirect:**

- Exclusion: where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.

- Relational: Where a student's attempts to form friendships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined, threats, non-verbal gesturing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours, silent treatment and manipulation of friend groups etc can all form relational bullying for a student.

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<sup>13</sup> 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"<sup>14</sup>

**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

### **Online bullying behaviour:**

Cyber bullying is carried out via text, direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, e-mail, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This can include:

- Sending or sharing of insulting and offensive or intimidating messages or images via online means as mentioned above.

- Posting information which is personal, private or sensitive without consent.
- Making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students.
- Exclude/disrupt access to a student on purpose on online chat groups/access to accounts/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 non consensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence. Online bullying involving serious violations (e.g., sextortion, non-consensual sharing of intimate images) may result in Code of Behaviour Level 3 sanctions, including suspension or expulsion.

### **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	May 2025	Staff Meeting – staff provided with the opportunity to discuss the new Bí Cinealta procedures. Staff given time to discuss and relay feedback.
	Staff half day closure Bí Cineálta training day Fri 30 <sup>th</sup> May	Sharing of draft policy with staff to discuss / consult and make any amendments following their review.

Students	May 2025	<p>In April : Student Council were given a questionnaire to seek their input in developing an Anti-Bullying policy in Child Friendly Format – their wording, examples and suggestions were all taken into account when drafting this Policy.</p> <p>In June: This policy was distributed to all households via Aladdin and children were given the homework of reading through their policy with parents.</p>
Parents	<p>May 2025</p> <p>June 2025</p>	<p>May: Feedback sought from parents and children in formation of the Bí Cineálta Policy and Child Friendly Policy via Aladdin.</p> <p>Attention drawn to our policy and Child Friendly policy and its location on our school website/available in hard copy from the school office.</p>
Board of Management	June 2025	Review and discussion of policy – leading to consultation and ratification
Date policy was approved: 19/06/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 19/06/2025		

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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.

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.

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 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.

### **Relationships and Partnerships**

All members of the school community will foster a cordial atmosphere based on respect for all individuals, thus creating a caring, safe and positive school environment. Kindness, respect and tolerance towards each individual are expected of all members of the school community. These core principles are strongly advocated and actively promoted.

In our school teachers seek to build up a relationship of trust and confidence with their pupils with a view to preventing cases of bullying behaviour. Teachers are careful to act as good role-models and will not misuse their authority. Moreover, they aim to be firm, clear and consistent in their disciplinary measures. Techniques based on positive motivation and recognition have been found to be most effective in promoting desired behaviour. The school recognises the right and obligation of parents to share in the task of equipping pupils with a range of life-skills.

The school takes particular care of "at risk" pupils and uses its monitoring system to provide early intervention when/if necessary and responds to the needs, fears or anxieties of individual members in a sensitive manner.

The school recognises the need to co-operate with and keep parents informed of procedures so as to maintain the positive relationships that exist within the school community.

Teachers will discuss the school's **Bí Cineálta** policy with the pupils at an age appropriate level. Teachers will emphasise that **bullying behaviour is unacceptable, will not be tolerated and is wrong**. Teachers will be vigilant and will respond sensitively and caringly

to pupils who disclose incidents of bullying. All alleged incidents of bullying will be investigated by the relevant teacher.

The school disapproves of vulgar, offensive, sectarian language or other aggressive behaviour by any members of the school community. The school community recognises the right of staff members to a safe working environment and that of pupils to a safe and secure environment where learning can take place. Any infringement on the aforementioned rights of staff and pupils will be taken most seriously and appropriate action, as deemed necessary by the Board of Management, will be taken in the event of these rights being infringed upon by any member of the school community.

The school recognises the role of other community agencies in preventing and dealing with bullying. In some cases it may be deemed appropriate to involve the Gardai (Junior Liaison Officer), the H.S.E./Social Services and or counselling services.

The School has a clear commitment to promoting equity in general and gender equity in particular in all aspects of its functioning.

### **Culture and Environment:**

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

In order to minimise opportunities for bullying, comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures are in place.

Pupils are encouraged to be active during breaks. Weather permitting pupils will play outside. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to school as near to school starting time as possible and to collect them promptly when school finishes.

The playground is supervised during morning and lunch breaks.

Pupils are escorted from the yard to the classroom and they are supervised in corridors by their Class Teachers.

On wet days pupils are supervised in their classrooms by the teacher scheduled for duty.

A safe, caring and positive learning environment will be provided in each learning setting.

A sense of belonging and involvement is encouraged

Rules and routines will be clearly outlined

Social skills will be developed.

These skills may be listed as:

Understanding ones own feelings and self-concept

How to communicate effectively and appropriately

How to work cooperatively in groups

How to manage and resolve conflict

How to solve problems and make decisions

How to understand one's own values and those of others

How to take effective and appropriate social action.

These skills are taught in a number of way, including -

Modelling of appropriate behaviour

Incidentally during lessons e.g. reinforcing good social skills, identifying inappropriate behaviour

Through structured class guidelines e.g. collaboratively developed class rules

As self-esteem is the single most influential factor in determining behaviour, teachers aim to provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of worth. Children's self esteem is developed through celebrating individual differences, achievements, acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and manners and providing opportunities for success through the curriculum and other activities. Pupils will be rewarded for effort and improvement and expectations of their performance will be positive.

Teachers help pupils to develop empathy by discussing feelings and trying to put themselves in the place of others. Relationships with pupils are based on mutual respect and trust so that the pupils will have confidence in the school staff.

The school community and culture supports a **"telling environment"**. Clarecastle N.S. aims to foster a safe environment for pupils where reporting of bullying behaviour is encouraged.

#### **Curriculum (Teaching and Learning):**

The formal curriculum of the school will also be used to educate all pupils against bullying behaviour. Anti-bullying issues may be raised through the school's religion programme Alive-O. The Social, Personal and Health Education Programme, the Stay Safe programme and the Walk Tall programme will provide opportunities for children to explore issues around keeping themselves and others safe. In Drama pupils have opportunities to learn coping strategies and through role play they may practice using eye contact, positive body language and phrases e.g. "Go away and leave me alone". English extracts may be used as stimulus for discussion. In **S.E.S.E.** the interdependence of people can be discussed. In **Physical Education** co-operation and respect for others is promoted through team sports and non competitive participation in sporting activities. Sporting activities provide excellent opportunities for promoting the importance of conforming and playing fairly and by the rules.

In the area of **Visual Arts** pupils can be allowed to explore feelings through colour, illustrate different situations etc.

At the teacher's discretion a "Worry Box" may be placed in the classroom. The pupils will understand that if they wish they may write a note detailing concerns they may have. This note must be signed.

The **S.A.L.T Programme** may be utilised with pupils as deemed appropriate by the class teacher and support teacher.

**Pupils :**

Pupils are expected to be tolerant and to have mutual respect for each other. Pupils should report incidents of bullying to their parents and teachers.

**Staff :**

The Board of Management ensures that members of school staff have sufficient familiarity with the school's anti bullying policy to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy when required. Supports for staff will be appropriate to the individual's role and

will enable staff to recognise bullying, implement effective strategies for preventing bullying and where appropriate, intervene effectively in bullying cases.

The Board of Management will also make appropriate arrangements to ensure that temporary and substitute staff has sufficient awareness of the school's code of behaviour and its anti-bullying policy. (School policies are available to view on the Student Management System –“Aladdin”)

Parents:

Parents are expected to:

Encourage positive behaviour and discourage negative behaviour both at home and at school.

Encourage children to solve difficulties without resorting to aggression.

Encourage children to share, to be kind, to be caring, and to be understanding towards others.

Monitor the use of social media/IT to ensure appropriate use by pupils.

Watch out for signs and symptoms that your child is being bullied or is bullying others.

Discuss the school's anti-bullying policy with children.

Support the school in its efforts to prevent and treat bullying.

Ensure that children adhere to school policy/code of behaviour.

Engage in an appropriate manner with school staff.

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour

- Staff at all times endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Digital Media Policy includes learning about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship. AUP also developed for technology in our school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff and recorded on Aladdin using the template for this.
- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community –making a new Child Friendly Bí Cineálta policy which was distributed to parents and pupils with wording suitable for children in our school.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision

will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.

- Involvement of pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Kindness/ anti-bullying week, and other activities that can help to pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g. Direct approach to teacher or closest adult staff member if on yard. Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Refer to appropriate online behaviour when using devices and in SPHE lessons.
- Promote online safety events or material for parents
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school [www.tacklebullying.ie](http://www.tacklebullying.ie), [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie),  
Clarecastle N.S. School Internet and Technology Use Agreement  
<https://www.clarecastleschool.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/CCNS-Internet-Technology-Use-Agreement.pdf>
- Shared folder of resources for teaching of bullying including lessons from above websites – shared Google drive for all teachers to access.
- Challenge gender- stereotypes
- Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated and students “see themselves” in the school environment.
- Ensuring the library has material with reflects our diverse school population from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of sex.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex.
- Making clear that our school has a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment of any kind with enforceable policy - See Code of Behaviour

### **Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

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

**In Clarecastle National School where there are instances of pupil to pupil bullying the “relevant teacher” will normally be the class teacher of the pupil/parent reporting the bullying behaviour.**

Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

The class/relevant teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form on Aladdin.

The relevant teacher will follow up after 20 days to investigate if bullying has ceased.

All staff to be vigilant to bullying behaviour.

The DLP (Principal)/DDL (Deputy Principal) will be informed of all incidents of bullying behaviour via Aladdin message.

The DLP (Principal)/DDL (Deputy Principal) will be informed of the conclusions of all 20 day follow up monitoring via Aladdin message.

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

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.

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the relevant teacher will consider the following questions:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
3. Is the behaviour repeated?

If the answer to each of the questions above is Yes, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

1. In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement/refer to *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;
2. All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly;
3. The School, through the 'Relevant Teacher' reserves the right to ask any pupil to write an account of what happened, as part of an investigation. This will be a standard procedure and does not necessarily imply that a pupil is guilty of misbehaviour.
4. Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of alleged bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;
5. Parents 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 as quickly as possible;
6. Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;
7. Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;
8. All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
9. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what?, where?, when?, who? and why?. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;
10. If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;
11. Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after interview by the teacher;
12. In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted by the relevant teacher at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the *Bí Cineálta* policy). The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their pupils;
13. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's *Bí Cineálta* policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;
14. It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school;
15. Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect.

### Sanctions:

- Where a pupil has been found to be engaged in bullying behaviour, any of the following sanctions may be imposed;
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may be contacted by the 'Relevant Teacher' and informed of the nature and extent of the bullying behaviour with a view to agreeing a strategy whereby a promise to end the bullying behaviour would be honoured;
- Sanctions as specified in the Code of Behaviour may be imposed.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) may be invited to a meeting with the 'Relevant Teacher' and the Principal and the pupil may be suspended from school.
- The case may be referred to the Board of Management and the pupil may be expelled from the school.

### **Follow up and recording**

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.

In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:

- Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
- Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
- Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and
- Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principal;

Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures;

Where meetings are necessary to discuss issues that may arise a teacher or a parent may choose to have another adult accompany them to any meeting being held.

In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

### **Recording of bullying behaviour**

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded.

The relevant teacher must use the recording template at **Appendix 1** to record the bullying behaviour and the result of the follow up procedures.

When the recording template is used it will be maintained on Aladdin and the DLP (Principal) and or DDLP (Deputy Principal) informed via Aladdin message.

### **Established intervention strategies**

- Teacher interviews with all pupils
- Negotiating agreements between pupils and following these up by monitoring progress. This can be on an informal basis or implemented through a more structured mediation process
- Working with parent(s)/guardian(s) to support school interventions
- Circle Time
- Restorative interviews
- Restorative conferencing
- Implementing sociogram questionnaires (Questions on social interactions of pupils)
- Peer mediation where suitable training has been given

### **Periodic summary reports to the Board of Management**

Every Board Meeting the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:

- the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at **Appendix 2**) since the previous report to the Board and
- confirmation that all cases referred to at 1 above have been or are being, dealt with in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will record the above but in doing so will not include any identifying details of the pupils involved.

### **Bullying as part of a continuum of behaviour**

The Board of Management of Clarecastle National School realises that bullying behaviour can be part of a continuum of behaviour rather than a stand-alone issue and in some cases behaviour may escalate beyond that which can be described as bullying to serious physical or sexual assault or harassment. To ensure that any such cases are dealt with appropriately, the

school's anti-bullying policy should be read in conjunction with the schools Code of Behaviour which provides for referral to be made to relevant external agencies and authorities where appropriate. In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a pupil, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service (NEPS) will be sought.

### **Referral of serious cases to the HSE**

1. In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011* (Children First) and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* provide that in situations where “the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the school must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan”.
2. Serious instances of bullying behaviour should, in accordance with the Children First and *the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations

- Support will be provided for anyone who is bullied by offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about their experience with their class teacher or other teacher, along with continuing support when they feel they may need it.
- A victim will be assured that the school community will help them and put monitoring procedures in place to safeguard them.
- The school will inform parents/guardians of what has happened and of the measures being taken to help them, encouraging them to report further incidents if they occur.
- Help and support will be sought for the perpetrator. This will include speaking with them to discover why they became involved, informing their parents/guardians and continuing to work with them in order to modify their behaviour. The school code of behaviour applies to bullying. The perpetrator will be helped to see things from the victim's point of view. Perpetrators may be excluded from the playground at lunch break for a specific period or subject to special monitoring procedures and if bullying continues they may be suspended in accordance with procedure.
- Any pupil who is involved in retaliation against a pupil who reports bullying will be subject to the school code of discipline. Incidents of bullying will be used as opportunities for reinforcing the anti-bullying policy of the school.
- Follow-up meetings may be arranged to assess progress and/or restore relationships.

### **Responding to the Victim**

- Reassure the victim that this situation is not their fault
- Praise their courage for having reported it
- Listen to their story

### **Responding to Peers**

- Pupils who observe bullying are encouraged to talk to someone about it
- Factors such as peer pressure are discussed
- An atmosphere of a culture of silence is discouraged
- Empathising with another person's hurt and standing up for what is right are qualities to be promoted in pupils

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: Pat Bergin  
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 19/06/2025

Signed: MJ Malon  
Principal

Date: 19/06/2025

## Appendix 1

### Record of Bullying Behaviour

#### 1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

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#### 3. Source of bullying concern/report -tick relevant box(es)

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil(s)	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

#### 4. Location of incidents -tick relevant box(es)

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other	

#### 5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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#### 6. Type of Bullying Behaviour - tick relevant box(es)

Physical aggression	Online-bullying	
Damage to property	Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion	Malicious gossip	
Name calling	Verbal	
Written	Relational	
Extortion	Sexist	

Physical difference		Sexual harassment	
Other			

**7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Religious	Other (specify)

**8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

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**9. Details of actions taken**

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**10. Views of student regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.**

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**11. View of parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.**

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Relevant Teacher 1)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

**Record of follow up after 20 Days.**

**12. Has bullying behaviour ceased**

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Views of student regarding whether the bullying behaviour has ceased**

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**14. Views of student regarding whether the bullying behaviour has ceased**

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**15. Engagement with external agencies if relevant**

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Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Relevant Teacher 1)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date follow up submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2

### Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management

Bullying Behaviour Update for board of management meeting of DD/MM/YYYY

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous board of management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

<b>Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting.</b>	
<b>Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing.</b>	
<b>Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school year</b>	

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which should include the following information where relevant:

- > the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc
- > the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- > any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- > if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- > if a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- > if any additional support is needed from the board of management
- > if the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

**This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

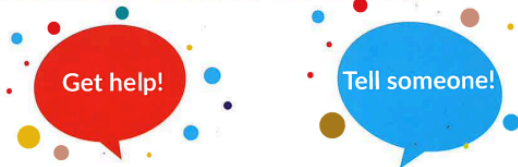
## Appendix 3

### Bí Cineálta Student Friendly Version

# Bí Cineálta!

We want everyone at our school to feel safe and happy.

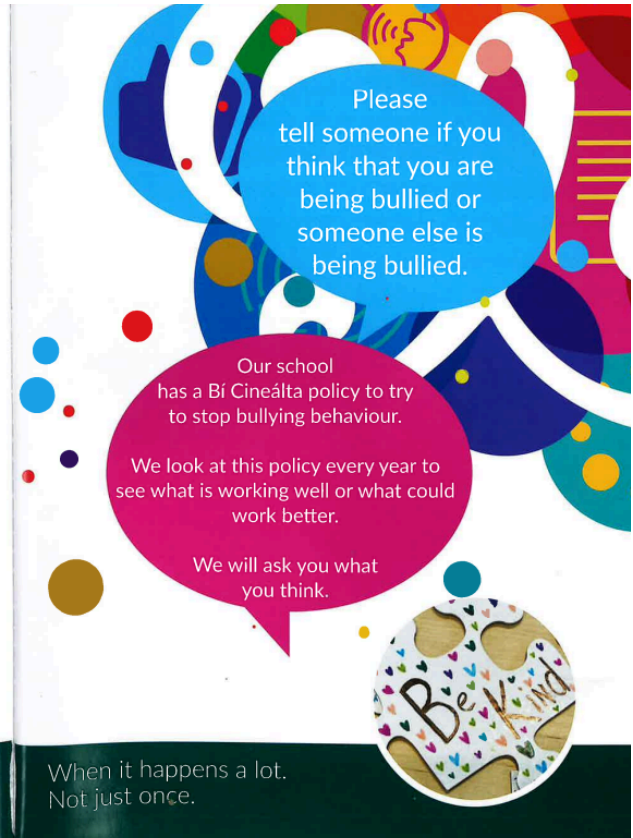
If you think that you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied, you need to tell a teacher or another adult that you trust. They will know what to do to help.



If a student tells a staff member that they think they are being bullied, we will:

- > talk with the student
- > ask the student what they want to happen
- > work out a plan together
- > talk to their parents
- > talk to the other student(s) involved
- > talk with the other student's parents

Bullying behaviour is when someone keeps being mean or hurtful to others on purpose over and over again.



When it happens a lot.  
Not just once.