

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour



Policy Area	Schools
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Document Drafted by	Coláiste Phobal Ros Cré
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The Board of Management of Coláiste Phobal, Ros Cré has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bi 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.

Mission Statement

Our mission statement is committed to:

- Recognising the worth of the whole
- Educating students in a caring environment
- Promoting our cultural heritage
- Preparing our students for a meaningful and spiritual life
- Contributing to the life of the whole 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.
- 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.

Scope

This policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour encompasses the day-to-day procedures and activities in Coláiste Phobal. Its' remit is always when the pupil is:

- At school, representing the school or wearing the school uniform.
- Travelling to and from school.
- Associated with the school.
- Where the conduct of a pupil affects the welfare of a member/members of the school community or brings the school into disrepute.

Bullying behaviour which occurs outside the school:

Schools are not expected to deal with any bullying behaviour which occurs outside of school when students are not under the care of the school, however if this bullying behaviour continues into the school environment schools are required to address the bullying behaviour.

Examples of Bullying Behaviour: (This is not an exhaustive list)

General:

- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Name calling
- Slagging
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person.
- Graffiti
- Extortion
- Intimidation
- Gestures
- Invasion of personal space
- Exclusion
- A combination of any of the types listed.

Cyber:

- Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation
- Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual
- Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name
- Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight.
- **Trickery:** Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online.
- Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images.
- Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group.
- Cyberstalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person

considerable fear for his/her safety.

- · Silent telephone/mobile phone calls.
- Abusive text messages.
- Abusive email.
- Abusive communication on social networks.
- Abusive website comments/blogs/pictures.
- False accusations.
- Abusive posts on any form of technology.
- Posting comments on social media which cause distress and or hurt to the school community.

Homophobic And Transgender:

- Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation
- Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation
- Name calling e.g. gay, queer lesbian
- Physical intimidation or attacks
- Threats

Racial:

- Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or Traveller background.
- Exclusion on the basis of any of the above.

Relational:

This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:

- Malicious gossip
- Isolation and exclusion
- Ignoring
- Excluding from the group
- Taking someone's friends away
- Bitching
- Spreading rumours
- Breaking confidence
- · Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear
- The "look"

Sexual:

- Unwelcome and sexual comments or touching
- Harassment

Additional Educational Needs:

- Name calling
- Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs
- Taking advantage of some pupil's vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying.
- Taking advantage of some pupil's vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social

- situations and social cues.
- Mimicking a person's disability.
- Setting others up for ridicule.

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	25/03/2025	Half day school closure. Staff Questionnaire
Students		Student Focus Group Student Questionnaire Student friendly policy
Parents	7/05/2025 13/05/2025	Agenda item at Parents Association meeting Circulated to parents by VsMail. Parents questionnaire circulated
Board of Management	01/04/2025	Agenda item Board meeting.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	26/05/2025	Canteen Staff meeting
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

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):

Bullying Prevention aligned with key areas of Wellbeing promotion

Culture and Environment

- **Primary Transition Programme:** Programs run in conjunction with School Completion Programme team to ease the transition from primary to secondary school, reducing anxiety and potential bullying.
- Positive Behaviour Strategy Team:

- Designated Student Areas: Separate toilets and social areas for different year groups
- **School Induction**: Comprehensive induction programs for new students to help them acclimate and feel secure.
- Pastoral Care: Strong pastoral care systems to support students emotionally and socially.
- **Termly assembly meetings**: Regular assemblies to reinforce school values and address issues like bullying.
- Lunchtime clubs/ Special Interest Clubs: Providing safe spaces and activities during lunch breaks to foster positive interactions, e.g. Global Café, Chess Club, School Choir, Trad group.
- **Mindfulness**: Programs to teach mindfulness and stress management, helping students cope with and prevent bullying.
- Autism classrooms opened at lunchtimes for reverse inclusion/drop-in: Creating inclusive environments where students can interact positively.
- Staff monitoring lunch/break times: Increased supervision before classes commence, during morning break and lunchtime times to prevent bullying.
- Merit systems, Rewards, Praise for positive behaviour: Encouraging positive behaviour through recognition and rewards.
- Seating plans encouraged: Strategic seating arrangements to prevent bullying.
- Class behaviour plans: Plans to manage classroom behaviour and prevent bullying.
- Care Sheets: Student questionnaire given out at regular intervals

Relationships and Partnerships

- Student Support Team: Dedicated team to provide support and intervention for students experiencing difficulties.
- **Year Head/Tutor:** Dedicated teachers to each class and year group to monitor and access students' development.
- **Student Educational Passports**: Ensuring smooth transition from Primary to Post-Primary and continuity in student support.
- **Teacher observations**: Regular monitoring and observation by teachers to identify and address any bullying behaviour early.
- **Student referral forms**: Mechanisms for students to report bullying or other concerns confidentially.
- **Guidance Counselling:** Access to guidance counsellors for students needing emotional support.
- Parental engagement: Involving parents in the school community to support anti-bullying
 measures and to encourage contact if they suspect their son/daughter is being subjected to
 bullying behaviour.

• Student Participation:

- Cairde group: Peer support groups offering support to 1st-year students and helping integrate them into the school community.
- **Student Council:** Encouraging students to express their concerns and participate in decision-making processes.
- Class Captains: Class representatives, selected by their peers.
- Prefects: Senior student ambassadors, modelling positive behaviour to all students.
- Reporting: Empower victims and observers to report bullying and create a culture whereby this becomes the norm.
- Individual guidance counselling: One-on-one counselling to support students who may be victims or perpetrators of bullying.
- Check-in Check-out system (CICO): Regular check-ins to monitor student well-being and address any issues promptly.
- Parent/guardian communication: Keeping parents informed and involved in addressing bullying.
- Home visits HSCL: Home visits by Home School Community Liaison officers to support families and address bullying issues.
- Collaboration with outside agencies: Working with external professionals to support students and address bullying.

Policy and Planning

- Anti-bullying policy: Implementation of a comprehensive anti-bullying policy to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all students.
- Student Support Plans (SSPs) or Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs): Tailored plans to address specific needs and behaviours, including those related to bullying.
- Code of Positive Behaviour: School-wide positive behaviour support systems to promote respectful interactions.
- Internet Acceptable Usage Policy: Promotes the responsible use of internet and digital technologies
- School Supervision Policy and Procedures: Outlines the procedures and duties of school personnel when on supervision.
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment: Completed in accordance with the requirements of all relevant legislation and updated Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (2023).
- Wellbeing Policy: Supporting and promoting a culture of wellbeing.
- Provision Mapping: Identified interventions and practices, which maximise student participation and engagement and remove barriers to learning.

- Restorative Practices: Staff members trained in the use of restorative practices.

 Restorative practice is embedded in our school and is a positive approach to discipline and conflict resolution that focuses on repairing harm, restoring relationships, and building a positive school community.
- Student behaviour contracts: Agreements with students to adhere to positive behaviour standards.
- Functional Behaviour Analysis: Analysing behaviour to understand and address bullying.

Curriculum

- **SPHE Curriculum**: Social, Personal, and Health Education curriculum that includes lessons on empathy, respect, and anti-bullying.
- **Well-being programme**: Programmes designed to promote overall student well-being, fostering a positive school culture. Be-spoke programmes in first and second year.
- Awareness Raising Campaigns: Kindness Week, Diversity week.

Supervision and Monitoring

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

Competent supervision is important to the safe daily running of the school. Inadequate supervision can contribute to greater opportunities for peer abuse, bullying, victimisation and unsafe behaviours by students:

- School Supervision Policy provides supervision procedures during unstructured times of the school day e.g. before and after school, breaks and lunchtime.
- All staff are vigilant in their roles, observing and monitoring student interactions and relationships.
- Students and parents regularly surveyed
- Student Support Team dedicated team of support teachers who meet weekly and meet with students where concerns may have been brought to their attention.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

• Year head for each year group, assisted by deputy principal(s) and principal.

Approach

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the students involved, rather than to apportion blame.

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured
- seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- consider the age and ability of those involved
- listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- take action in a timely manner
- inform parents of those involved

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Identifying if Bullying Behaviour has occurred

To determine whether the reported behaviour is bullying behaviour the following questions must be considered

- 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 is **yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour, and the behaviour should be addressed using the following procedures.

If the answer to any of these questions is **no**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.

One-off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

The school will follow these steps to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, address the behaviour, and review progress (refer to Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- If a teacher has concerns about a student being bullied, either through personal observation or a report from a third party, they should promptly refer the matter to the Year Head, Deputy Principal, or Principal.
- Year Heads can seek assistance and support from the Principal, Deputy Principal, or student support team at any time when investigating or addressing bullying behaviour.

Given the Principal and Deputy Principal's access to personal information about students, it is advisable for Year Heads to consult with them before taking any action.

- The school reserves the right to investigate bullying allegations and take disciplinary action, if necessary, even if the bullying occurs outside of school but affects a student's work or well-being in school.
- In accordance with Section 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools, the school may seek assistance from agencies such as NEPS, the HSE, and the Gardaí if needed. If bullying behaviour is potentially abusive (as per Section 2 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures), the school will consult with the HSE's Children and Family Services for advice or to make a formal child protection report to the HSE or the Gardaí, following the DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools (revised 2023).

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider what, where, when and why?

- if a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at 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.
- it may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

Where bullying behaviour has occurred

- parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour.
- it is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.
- a record should be kept of the engagement with all involved. (Appendix A)
- the record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

- the school personnel dealing with the bullying behaviour must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement.
- important factors to consider as part of this engagement 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.

- The review between school personnel students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased should be recorded and the views of students and their parents in relation to this documented
- the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.
- any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted
- ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
- if the bullying behaviour has not ceased the school personnel should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- if it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to
 display the behaviour, then the school consideration should be given to using the strategies
 to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Positive
 Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant
 student, their parents and the school.
- if a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures.
- if a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they 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.

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.

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

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:

- 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.

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:

Chairmarson Board of Management

Signed:

Principal.

Date: 28/5/25

Date: 28 5 25

Alleged Bullying Incident Record.

Date:	Date parents informed:		
Name of Student being bullied	:Class:		
Name and class(es) of student(s) engaging in bullying behaviour:			
Names and class(es) of bystan	ders/witnesses:		
Who reported the bullying beha	er Student Parent Teacher Other		
Details of Reporter:			
Form and Type of Bullying Beha	viour:		
Form of Bullying Behaviour	Туре		
Physical, Verbal, Written			
Online			
Homophobic/Transgender			
Racial			
Indirect Bullying Behaviour (Exclusion, Relational) Sexual			
Extortion			
Additional Educational Needs			
Other			
Details of alleged bullying beha	viour from student being bullied. (Please note time and place):		

Bullied Students view of actions to be taken:

Response of Student engaged in the bullying behaviour:		
Alleged bully's view on actions to be taken:		

Bystanders/Witness Responses:		
Bystanders/Witness views on actions to be taken:		

Parental Meeting Minutes.	Date:
-	
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Actions:	
Please note date of all actions undertaken.	
rtease note date of all actions undertaken.	
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Engagement with external services/supports: Please note date, agency name and advice received.		
Review:		
Please refer to page 12 of policy body.		
		

Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management meeting of / / .

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:

Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting.		
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing.		
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school year		
Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported sin must include a verbal report which should include the following		
 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 behaviou	r	

impact on a student

• if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse

- 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:	Date:	
Chairperson Board of Management.		
Signed:	Date:	
Principal.		

Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual (calendar) review of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and its implementation in consultation with the school community. As part of the review, this document must be completed.

1.	When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary		
	Schools? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school//20		
2.	Where in the school is the student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?		
3.	What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student-friendly the school website?//20_	y policy on	
4.	How has the student-friendly policy been communicated to students?		
5.	How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student-friendly policy been communicated	to parents	
6.	Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post- Primary Schools?	Yes No	
7.	Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour?	Yes No	
8.	Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Undate presented		

	by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year?	Yes No
9.	Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour?	Yes No
10.	Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy?	Yes No
11.	Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?	Yes No
12.	Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour?	Yes No
13.	How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as pareview of the Bí Cineálta Policy?	art of the
14.	Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:	that have
15.	Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be add and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?	dressed

16. Does the student-friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

17.	Does the school refer parents to the co have a complaint about how the school behaviour?		☐Yes ☐No
18.	. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?		☐Yes ☐No
19.	Has the Office of the Ombudsman for C completed an investigation into how th incident of bullying behaviour?	YesNo	
Signe	ed: Chairperson Board of Management.	Date:	
Sign	ed: Principal.	Date:	

Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

	, Ros Cré confirms that the Board of Management's by to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its of Management meeting of
	e with the requirements of the Department of nt and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and
Signed: Chairperson Board of Management.	Date:
Signed:Principal.	Date:
Date of next review:	