

Bí Cineálta Policy 2025



Dunboyne Senior Primary School

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Dunboyne Senior Primary School

Bí Cinealta policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Dunboyne Senior Primary 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 steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent all 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 everybody 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 everybody has a part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools as targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Each school is required to develop and implement a Bí Cineálta policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Section A: Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	13/3/2025	Staff meeting and consultation on draft policy.
Students	pril 2025	Input from Student council and creation f student friendly version of Bí Cinealta policy.
Parents	pril 2025	Bí Cinealta policy distributed to parents council for input
Board of Management	une 2025	Review and Ratification of new Bí Cinealta policy
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

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.

he education and prevention strategies:

We come from the context of our Catholic ethos, where inclusivity permeates our school in a real way. In developing the preventative strategies which this school will use to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour including strategies specifically aimed at cyber bullying and identity-based bullying will be as follows:

Creation of a culture of "telling"

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.

Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the role of bystanders and the importance of upstanders. 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 at an appropriate time, for example after class, Hand note up with homework, make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school, Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf

Worry box/ niggles box in classroom and in school reception

Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place

Teachers should repeatedly reinforce the message that if anyone is the victim of bullying behaviour, they should not retaliate in any way, but they should tell an adult. Victims should be reassured that if they tell, something will be done about the bullying in a safe manner and all reported incidents will be dealt with

Class lessons to be provided to enable pupils "how to tell" (telling protocol)

Upstanders can be the key to resolving bullying and if anyone witnesses bullying behaviour, they should always tell a teacher. This is not telling tales but a means of protecting victims.

Raising the awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour by -

Engaging in formal teaching within the class setting through SPHE programmes

Affirming good behaviour in our school

Visual reminders for pupils, e.g. anti-bullying posters and leaflets on bullying displayed around the school

Monitoring new pupils to ensure they are settling in

Inviting guest speakers to talk to children

Ensuring all pupils are included in activities

Ensuring that the anti-bullying policy has been adequately communicated to all pupils in the school.

Paying attention to key moments such as transitioning from primary school to post primary

Co-operation and group enterprise will be promoted through team sports, the choir, the school garden and other whole school initiatives

Awareness of bullying is addressed in the classroom as part of the Stay Safe Programme, at school assemblies, through the school policy on pastoral care and on other informal occasions when the opportunity arises

Encouraging pupils to report any incident of bullying

Complaints of bullying to be reported quickly, firmly and fairly and are recorded

The Principal is informed of any instance of bullying

Teachers may choose a selection of the following strategies

Formal programmes of work are a vital element in raising children's self-esteem and equipping children to cope with bullying behaviour e.g. Grow in Love, Webwise (cyberbullying) Stay Safe, Walk Tall, Friends for Life, Weaving Wellbeing.

Positive reinforcement of good behaviour by teachers in classrooms (Class dojo, class reward system, students of the week, golden time, spot prizes, stars, stickers etc.)

Modelling of respectful behaviour and language by teachers and staff.

Rewarding incidents of good and improved behaviour and showing acts of kindness at class level and whole-school

Thought for the week on intercom to affirm positive behaviour

Encouraging students to look out for each other and to be responsible for their own behaviour.

All teachers are required to be vigilant on yard duty- record all incidents - monitor repeat offenders

Immediate affirmation of children who report incidents of bullying which they have witnessed

Educating pupils on appropriate on-line behaviour, how to stay safe while on-line and also developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber-bullying.

Dealing with the issue of identity based bullying and in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying

Regular class surveys that allow pupils to report bullying behaviour confidentially.

To prepare a quiet area for circle time and other programmes

Each class to have a set of class rules which complement the school's Code of Behaviour.

Buddy system, peer mentoring, worry box

Ensure supervision at all times when pupils can access the Internet

All teachers to do a lesson on internet safety

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):

Supervision and monitoring of pupils

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

The full implementation of the SPHE and CSPE curricula and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.

Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.

School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Cool School Lessons, Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme,

Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at primary level. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardai, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying

The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

Links to other policies

Code of Behaviour

Child Safeguarding policy

Acceptable Use policy

The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern to 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 further 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.

Prevention of harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified under discrimination legislation.

The school cannot be responsible for disagreements between pupils that happen outside the school grounds but will make reasonable efforts to cooperate with parents in assisting them to resolve the issues.

Education and prevention strategies

School-wide approach

A school-wide approach to the fostering of respect for all members of the school community.

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 both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a

positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.

Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.

Professional development with specific focus on the training of the relevant teachers
School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parents/guardians and the wider school community.

Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular 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.

Development and promotion of an Anti-Bullying code for the school-to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.

The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed with pupils and all parents/guardians are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school.

The implementation of regular termly whole school awareness measures; regular school assemblies by principal, regular anti-bullying surveys and regular lessons on anti-bullying in SPHE.

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.:

- o Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
- o Hand note up with homework.
- o Make a phone call to the school or to trusted teacher in the school.
- o Anti-bully or Niggle box (Located in 3rd class corridor)
- o Get a parent/guardian or friend to tell on your behalf.
- o Administer a confidential questionnaire once a term to all pupils.
- o Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.

Identify clear protocols to encourage parents/guardians to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The protocol should be developed in consultation with parents.

The development of an Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored, as is the pupils' use of mobile phones.

The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. GLEN www.glen.ie, BeLonGTo www.belongto.org

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- Class teacher
- Teacher to whom the pupil reports bullying
- Principal

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

If sanctions are required, they must be in accordance with the school's Code of Behaviour. The following are sanctions identified in the school's Code of Behaviour:

Sanctions

The purpose of a sanction is to bring about a change in behaviour by:

- helping pupils to learn that their behaviour is unacceptable;
- helping them to recognise the effect of their actions and behaviour on others
- helping pupils (in ways appropriate to their age and development) to understand that they have choices about their own behaviour and that all choices have consequences;
- helping them to learn to take responsibility for their behaviour. A sanction may also:
- reinforce the boundaries set out in the Code of Behaviour;
- signal to other pupils and to staff that their wellbeing is being protected.

In instances of more serious breaches of school standards, sanctions may be needed to:

- prevent serious disruption of teaching and learning;
- keep the pupil, other pupils or adults safe.

The following steps will be taken when a child behaves inappropriately. The list is by no means exhaustive. Teachers may put in place alternative measures bearing in mind the circumstances involved. The aim of any sanction is to prevent the behaviour occurring again and if necessary to help the pupil devise strategies for this.

- Reasoning with pupil;
- Verbal reprimand including advice on how to improve;
- Prescribing extra work;
- Consequence Sheet — signed by parents/guardians;
- Supervised detention during break;
- Referral to Principal;
- Communication with parents/guardians by class teacher;
- Temporary separation from peers within class and/or temporary removal to another class; ' Principal communicating with parents/guardians;
- Loss of privileges;
- Exclusion (Suspension or Expulsion) from school (in accordance with Rule 130 of the Rules for National Schools as amended by circular and the Education Welfare Act 2000) Usually sanctions will relate as closely as possible to the 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):

In order to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, it is important to ask the following questions:

- 2) Is the behaviour targeted at a specific individual or group?
- 3) Is the behaviour intentional? I.e. was it deliberately intended to cause a negative impact on the other person?
- 4) Is the behaviour repeated? Has it occurred more than once? Keep in mind that single online postings may constitute bullying as they can be viewed by multiple parties at once.

Our procedures for investigating and dealing with bullying behaviour in our school

The procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

(i) The primary aim for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame);

(ii) In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;

(iii) 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;

(iv) Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), bus escorts, caretakers, cleaners must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher;

(v) Parents and pupils are required to cooperate 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;

(vi) It is very important that all involved (including each set of pupils and parents) understand the above approach from the outset;

(vii) Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents;

(viii) Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;

ix) 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;

(x) 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;

(xi) 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;

(xii) 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;

(xiii) It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s);

(xiv) 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 at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the school 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;

(w) 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 anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied;

(xvi) 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;

(xvii) 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;

(xviii) In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher in the recording template at Appendix 3 (See Section 6.8.10 (iii))

(xix) 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;

(xx) 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;

(xxi) 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.

Our procedures for investigating and dealing with cyber - bullying behaviour in our school

1. The school has adopted all aspects of the Bí Cinealta programme including anti cyber-bullying procedures.
2. The Anti-Bullying Coordinator will act as a Cyber-Safety Officer to oversee the practices and procedures outlined in this policy and monitor their effectiveness
3. . Staff will receive training in identifying signs of cyber- bullying in order to keep up to date with the technologies that children commonly use
4. Pupils will be informed about cyber bullying in the course of their education at school
5. Gardaí will be asked to visit the school once a year to talk about cyber bullying
6. Serious cyber bullying issues encouraging suicidal thoughts will be reported to Tusla
7. Teachers/facilitator will dedicate a standalone lesson to deal with the issue of cyber bullying annually
8. Parents will on an annual basis be invited to a talk on bullying to include cyber ulying
9. Pupils and staff are expected to comply with the school's policy on the use of computers in the School. (Acceptable use of the Internet Policy)
10. Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying. (Appendix 2(a) and Appendix 3).
11. Parents and pupils are advised via this policy that it is illegal for a child under 13 to register with and use Facebook.
12. Teachers will investigate record and report all incidents of cyber- bullying
13. Dunboyne Senior Primary School endeavours to block access to inappropriate websites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems.
Furthermore, no pupil is allowed to work on the internet in the computer room, or any other location within the school which may from time to time be used for such work, without a member of staff present

Who is responsible for doing what?

The relevant persons for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

the class teacher the Principal (where deemed necessary)

Any teacher from the staff may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it. If teachers suspect a bullying incident may have taken place (even if the children are not in their class), they should take action as relevant teachers in accordance with the AntiBullying policy.

Anti-Bullying Co-ordinators:

J.J. Brennan (School Principal)

Linda Manning (Deputy Principal)

Persons responsible for implementing this policy

All teaching Staff, with the support of SNAs will investigate and record incidents of bullying behaviour. All members of the wider school community should be vigilant of bullying behaviour and report it immediately.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- Restorative practice i.e. procedures for investigating bullying incidents and restoring pupil relationships.

- Opportunities to participate in class and whole school activities designed to raise their self-esteem.

- Opportunities to develop their friendship and social skills.

- Curricular and extra-curricular activities to develop positive self —worth.

- Developing pupils' awareness of identity — based bullying and in particular transphobic bullying for example the 'Growing Up' strand unit in S.P.H.E.

- Victims are reassured that they are not to blame

Children who engage in bullying behaviour: If pupils require counselling or further support the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise the same. This may be for the pupil affected by the bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

Section D: Oversight

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on our website and in hard copy on request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed:  Date: 24/6/25
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed:  Date: 24/6/2025 5
al) (Principal)