

# Cloonakilla NS Bí Cineálta Policy

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

The Board of Management of Cloonakilla NS 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 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	2/5/25	In-service followed by staff meeting
Students	6/5/25 8/5/25 9/5/25	Questionnaire with focus group( Student Council & Wellbeing Committee) Formulation of Student Friendly version of Bi Cinealta Policy
Parents	7/5/25	Questionnaire (1Parents Association)
Board of Management	16/6/25	Webinar & meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	2/5/25	Meeting with all school staff
Date policy was approved: 16/6/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed:18/9/2023		

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

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

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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.

The following strategies will be used:

- Positive school culture
- Class Charter (September)
- Anti-Bullying Awareness Month: September
- Promotion of healthy relationships across the school community
- Effective leadership that leads by example
- Adequate supervision especially at breaktimes
- Education programmes
- Specific anti-bullying guidelines that are child friendly
- Supports/ CPD for staff
- Implementation of SPHE Curriculum
- Implementation of Stay Safe Programme
- Code of Behaviour
- Acceptable User Policy
- Creating a “telling” atmosphere
- Celebration of diversity and multi-culturalism
- Use of outside speakers/agencies
- Awareness of gender equality
- Hosting debates
- Explicit teaching of “how to tell”
- Internet Safety day

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

- Buddy Programme
- Student Council anti-bullying monitoring
- Supervision rota during breaktimes:
- Morning & Evening Supervision
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Voluntary Mobile Phone Agreement
- School Tours Policy
- Sensory Room Policy
- School signage & posters
- Safe physical spaces: reduce blind spots
- Recording procedures
- Peer collaboration/mentoring

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

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

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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):

## **Step 1: Determine if bullying behaviour has occurred**

### **The following questions should be asked:**

- Is the behavior targeted at a specific student/students?
- Is the behavior intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
- Is the behavior repeated?

If the answer to the above questions is YES then bullying behavior has occurred.

Teachers should also consider WHAT, WHERE, WHEN & WHY.

## **Step 2: Addressing the bullying behavior**

- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually first
- Students are met as a group
- At the group meeting each student should be asked for their account of what happened
- Following the meeting students are supported appropriately
- If it is age appropriate students may be asked to write down their account of what happened
- Parents of all students involved must be contacted and consulted on the actions to be taken in order to address the bullying behavior
- A record of all engagement must be retained and filed by the teacher

## **Step 3: Review of progress**

- Teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents no more than 20 days after the initial engagement. 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. This review should be documented by the teacher.
- 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.
- 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.

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):

**Recording of 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*.

Please see Appendix A for recording of bullying behavior.

Please see 6.5 of Bi Cinealta Procedures

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Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

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: Tommy Carmichael Date: 12.6.2025  
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: Mary O'Rourke Date: 12.6.2025  
(Principal)

