

**SCOIL CHARTHAIGH NAOFA**

**BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

The Board of Management of Scoil Charthaigh Naofa 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 any ethnic community.

**Definition**

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.

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|  | **Date Consulted** | **Method of Consultation** |
| **School Staff** | **14th March 2025,**  **25th March 2025**  **&**  **10th April 2025** | **-Questionnaire sent to all staff on Aladdin seeking feedback on Anti-Bullying in our school -Sharing of draft policy with staff to discuss /**  **consult and make any amendments** |
| **Students** | **14th March 2025** | **Questionnaire distributed to all students (Child Friendly) seeking feedback on Anti-Bullying in our school** |
| **Parents** | **14th March 2025** | **Questionnaire sent to all parents on Aladdin seeking feedback on Anti-Bullying in our school** |
| **Board of Management** |  | **BOM Meeting** |
| **Wider school community**  **as appropriate, for**  **example, bus drivers** |  | **Publish on Website** |
| **Date policy was approved:** |  |  |
| **Date policy was last reviewed:** |  |  |

**SECTION B: PREVENTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

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| **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):** |
| **Culture and Environment:**  ● Positive and inclusive school culture  ● Positive relationships  ● Effective leadership  ● Positive culture and environment  ● A telling environment  ● A trusted adult  ● Safe physical access  ● Supervision  ● concern box/ worry monster in classrooms  ● opportunities to participate in class and whole school activities to raise self - esteem  **Curriculum:**  **●** Teaching and learning in SPHE  ● RSE Curriculum  ● Student participation  ● SPHE Methodologies  ● Promoting inclusion and diversity  ● Extra - curricular activities to develop positive self - worth  ● Group work/ Collaboration  ● Role - play, acting out scenarios  ● Circle time  ● Morning meetings  **Policy and Planning:**  **●** Bí Cineálta policy  ● Student friendly Bí Cineálta policy  ● Code of Behaviour  ● Child Safeguarding Statement  ● Acceptable Use policy/Digital Media Policy  ● Supervision  ● RSE Policy  ● SEN policy  ● SSE Wellbeing in education  ● Appropriate TPL ( Teacher Professional Learning)   * Relationships and partnerships   ● Strong interpersonal connections  ● Bullying awareness initiatives  ● Student and parent participation  ● TPL ( Teacher Professional Learning)  ● Critical thinking Skills  ● Promoting peer support  ● Supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience  **Preventing cyber bullying behaviour:** (Note - the digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their date. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. Children between 13 and 16 must have parental permission to sign up to social media services. Most social media platforms have a minimum age requirement and for the majority of these, it is 13 years old. Therefore children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account.)  **●** promoting digital citizenship  ● implementing SPHE curriculum  ● open conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online  ● referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code  of Behaviour  ● Promoting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children’s activities online  ● holding internet safety day/ Community Garda Webwise Talk  **Preventing homophobic/ transphobic bullying behaviour**  ● maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as displaying relevant posters  ● encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities  ● challenging gender-stereotypes  **Preventing racist bullying behaviour**  **●** fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students “see themselves” in their school environment  ● encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities  ● encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour  ● providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including  Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents  ● ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived  experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural  backgrounds  **Preventing sexist bullying behaviour:**  **●** ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally  irrespective of their sex  ● ensuring all student have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective  of their sex  ● celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contribution of all students  ● encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home  **Preventing sexual harassment:**  **●** promoting positive role models within the school community  ● challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment |

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| **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):** |
| **Preventing Cyber Bullying, Homophobic/Transphobic bullying, Racist bullying, Preventing sexual harassment.**  **In addition to above mentioned strategies, the school has the following in place to prevent and address bullying:**   * 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 * 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 below and using the Bullying Incident Recording Form in Appendix A * School wide awareness raising on all aspects of bullying, supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities * Involvement of pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Kindness/ friendship/anti-bullying week, and other activities that can help to pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support * Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell * 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 e.g. www.tacklebullying.ie, www.antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse, www.webwise.ie * Shared folder of resources for teaching of bullying including lessons from above websites – shared Google drive for all teachers to access * Challenge gender- stereotypes – equal participation of all. Equal recognition * Raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour and encourage students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour * Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated and students “see themselves” in the school environment * Ensuring class libraries have material that 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:**

* The class 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 Bullying Incident Record Form
* All incidents are to be reported to the DLP and the DDLP
* The class teacher will follow up after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased
* All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour
* The Principal will inform the Board of Management of any incidences of bullying at each BOM meeting
* The DLP and the DDLP are available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist class teachers in addressing bullying concerns

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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): |
| **Identify if bullying behaviour has occurred:**  ● Two staff members can be present when engaging with children individually initially  without parents’ notification and presence  ● Two staff members can be present when engaging with a group of children to investigate  what has happened. Teacher’s discretion can be used with this approach about when best to  use it  ● A group meeting will provide the opportunity for the children to give 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  also be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident  The following three questions should be considered to determine if bullying has occurred.  **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 should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta procedures.  If the answer to **any** of these questions is **No**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour and should be addressed using the school’s Code of Discipline.  **Note: 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.**  **Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school’s Code of**  **Positive Behaviour. 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)   **Requests no action taken:**  A student who reports bullying behaviour may ask a member of staff not to do anything and just  “look out” for them due to not wanting to be identified as having told someone about the bullying  behaviour. They might 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 behaviour. It must be made clear to the pupil that other parties may need to  be informed for their welfare.  Parents may also make the school aware of bullying behaviour and specifically request that no  action is to be taken by the school. Parents should put this in writing to the school. However,  schools may decide that based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying  behaviour through the Bí Cineálta procedures and/or the Code of Behaviour where appropriate.  **Determining if the bullying behaviour has ceased:**  The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved **no more than 20 school days** **after the initial discussion** to review progress. Factors to consider in the review include:  ● the nature of the bullying  ● the effectiveness of strategies use to address the bullying behaviour  ● the relationship between the students involved  Ongoing supervision of both the child experiencing bullying behaviour and the child displaying  bullying behavior may be required as well as continued support. 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 **no more than 20 school days** **after the previous meeting** 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 school.  **Recording bullying behaviour:**  All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded. The following details should be included  on the record:  ● form ( see section 2.5 of Bí Cineálta procedures)  ● type ( see section 2.7 of Bí Cineálta procedures)  ● where and when ( if known)  ● the date of initial engagement with the students and their parents  ● the views of the students and their parents\* regarding the action to be taken to address the  bullying behaviour (\*only in relation to their own child)  ● when review takes place, it should be noted if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the  views of the students and parents in relation to this.  ● note the date of reviews and engagements  ● note the date that the bullying behaviour has ceased  ● any engagement with external services/ supports should also be noted  ● Upon agreement that the bullying behaviour has been successfully addressed a copy of this form will be placed in the files of children involved, with the names of children who are not the children of the parent/guardian signatories having been redacted. The original form will be held on file by the Principal  **Complaint process:**  If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in  accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school complaints procedure. In  the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied following the complaints procedure, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.  **Supports:**  NEPS  Oide  Webwise  National Parents Council  DCU Anti bullying centre  Tusla |

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| **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):** |
| **Where bullying behaviour has occurred:**  *A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under*  *the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in*  *school, then schools are required to support the students involved.*  Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, then school can deal with it in accordance with  Bí Cineálta policy.  It is important for staff to be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour.  Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support. Engage with the student who is experiencing bullying without  delay. School staff should identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying  behaviour to better manage relational difficulties.  It is important that a student’s agency is not decreased further by adults deciding what will happen next without listening to the student and involving them in deciding on the actions that will be taken.  **The following principles must be adhered to when addressing bullying behaviour:**  ● ensure the child experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to 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 view 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  Parents of both parties 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 as outlined in the  school’s Bí Cineálta policy. In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their  parents being informed, the school should develop an appropriate plan to support the student and  for how their parents will be informed. |

**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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of board of management)

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

(Principal)

**APPENDIX A: BULLYING INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

**Record-Keeping** All bullying behaviour will be recorded on the ‘Bullying Incident Report Form’ (Appendix 1). 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.

Upon agreement that the bullying behaviour has been successfully addressed a copy of this form will be placed in the files of children involved, with the names of children who are not the children of the parent/guardian signatories having been redacted. The original form will be held on file by the Principal.

**Bullying Incident Report Form**

1. Name of student being bullied: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Base class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Name(s) and class(es) of students allegedly engaged in bullying behaviour:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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4. Source of bullying concern/report (tick as relevant):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student Concerned |  |
| Other Student (s) |  |
| Parent |  |
| Teacher |  |
| Other |  |

5. Location of incident(s) (tick as relevant)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School yard |  | Classroom |  |
| Bus |  | Toilets |  |
| Out-of-school |  | Changing rooms |  |
| Corridor |  | Other |  |

6. Name of person(s) who reported the alleged bullying concern:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. Type of bullying behaviour (tick as relevant):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Physical |  | Gender-Identity Bullying |  |
| Verbal |  | Extortion |  |
| Damage to personal property |  | Written Bullying |  |
| Exclusion/Isolation |  | Relational Bullying |  |
| Cyber-Bullying |  | Other |  |
| Intimidation |  |  |  |

8. Brief description of bullying behaviour:

9. Impact of bullying behaviour:

10. Details of action to be taken:

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

(Class Teacher) (Parent/Guardian)

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

Submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***TO OCCUR NO MORE THAN 20 WORKING DAYS AFTER DATE ABOVE***

Review/Outcome of Actions Taken:

Details of further actions to be taken:

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

(Class Teacher) (Parent/Guardian)

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

Submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*THIS PAGE MAY BE REPRODUCED UNTIL AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED THAT THE BULLYING BEHAVIOUR HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESSED.*

**APPENDIX B: STUDENT FRIENDLY BÍ CÍNEÁLTA POLICY**

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