



Coláiste Cholmcille

Bí Céinalta Policy

2025-2026

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Ratified by the Board of Management on

Signed: _____
Chairperson of the Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Drawn up: May 2025

Latest Review: Feb – May 2025

BOM Consultation: June 19th 2025

Review Due: Sept 2026

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Overview

The Board of Management of Coláiste Cholmcille 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.

These procedures relate to measures to prevent and address bullying behaviour that occurs between students. Allegations of bullying behaviour by students towards school staff will be addressed through the school's Code of Positive Behaviour. Allegations of bullying behaviour by school staff towards students will be addressed by the principal through disciplinary procedures for staff.

This policy applies to:

- All students while on the school premises during school hours
- All students while on any school-organised activity, trip, tour etc.
- Any behaviour that adversely affects the school reputation or the education of any student in the school

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](#):

Bullying is 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.

A detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures, section 2.1 p. 17

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 Positive Behaviour [see policy

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

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

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	May 2025	Online Questionnaire
Students	May 2025	Online Questionnaire
Parents ¹	May 2025	Online Questionnaire
Board of Management		
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	May 2025	Online Questionnaire
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

¹ The term parent(s) is used as defined in the Education Act 1998, which includes a foster parent, a guardian appointed under relevant guardianship of children legislation, or other person acting in loco parentis who has a child in his or her care subject to any statutory power or order of a court

transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures)

In developing strategies and measures to prevent bullying behaviour, and in line with national Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice, we have considered the following four key areas that are essential for a holistic, whole school approach to wellbeing promotion:

1. Culture and Environment
2. Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)
3. Policy and Planning
4. Relationships and Partnerships

The Rationale

Culture and Environment

The vision for Coláiste Cholmcille: Coláiste Cholmcille is a community which respects the individual's rights and self-worth and aims to provide a happy and safe environment in which the individual may achieve her/his spiritual, academic and personal potential to develop all positive aspects of the individual and the community.

Our Characteristic Spirit document states:

“The school is a caring and welcoming one, endeavouring to promote a culture of good relationships where people thrive and grow”.

The school makes extensive use of Restorative Justice Practices which are very appropriate in any conflict situation and where bullying is suspected.

We are committed to maintaining a school environment where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected, and supported. This culture of positive relationships, consideration and respectful interactions is encouraged and positively modelled by adults in school.

It is also in conjunction with the three core values of the school. Respect, Fairness and Personal Growth.

Specific Strategies:

- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students “see themselves” in their school environment, by having the cultural diversity of the

school visible and on display, including but not limited to Autism Acceptance week; LGBTQAI plus Week.

- A shared understanding by everyone in the school community of what bullying is and its impact on everyone.
- Enabling and encouraging a “Telling Environment”, encouraging bystanders to report when they witness bullying behaviour. Through specific anti-bullying programmes, e.g. Stay Safe, antibullying week, Smart Moves Induction programme, posters on display in school, Bí Cineálta notice boards in both buildings.
- Supporting students from ethnic minorities and/or from minorities for whom English is an additional language. This includes encouraging communication with their parents and providing support to school staff to respond to these needs: generating a library which includes books to suit multiple needs. This will include picture books, Gaeilge, Ukrainian and Polish books, books with people of diverse backgrounds.
- Trying to ensure that all students are aware of the adults in school to whom they can talk e.g. name 5 adults you can tell, also developing the concept of there being at least “One Good Adult” for all students.
- Enabling effective, visible supervision and monitoring of students, thereby creating safe physical spaces throughout the school
- A culture of reporting bullying is fostered in the school through assemblies, visits by management to classes, SPHE lessons and the Wellbeing Programme. Emphasis is placed on standing up for others, encouraging self-confidence, recognising both good and toxic relationships and being forthcoming with information to help the school authorities in identifying and solving issues of bullying.
- Ensuring expectations and values messages are clearly conveyed on corridors and in rooms through posters and artworks which are jointly created and developed with students
- Setting and communicating our standards and expectation in relation to behaviour (consult further our Code of Positive Behaviour)
- Encouraging and modelling open communication between all stakeholders in the school, e.g. BOM agenda, staff meeting agenda, etc.
- Preventing and addressing bullying behaviour e.g. notifying parents, explicit teaching of appropriate lessons to all classes (e.g. SPHE, Digital Wellbeing lessons, RSE, etc.). See also Curriculum section below.
- Promoting kindness, empathy, understanding, respect and inclusion, as well as celebrating diversity, (e.g. Kindness Week each year)

- Employing restorative practices and techniques as a means to enable resolution and repair damaged relationships (e.g. Restorative Practice CPD for staff, having Restorative Practice questions as a digital resource for all staff).
- Disseminating appropriate information to parents to educate and inform them, including classes and webinars that are useful to help them support their children e.g. via the school app and Facebook.
- Taking a very proactive, whole-school, consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.
- This year, we are launching the Helping Hands ABP (Anti-Bullying Programme). This programme is designed to monitor classroom relationships; it helps to uncover hidden bullying and supports the creation of a positive social environment. The programme uses a sociometric approach. It assists in forming inclusive, cooperative learning teams by identifying students who collaborate well and those who may be isolated, targeted, or at risk.
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow-up of bullying behaviour
- Annual evaluation of the effectiveness of the Cineáltas Procedures as part of Bí Cineálta review, i.e. every year.

Curriculum: Teaching and Learning

We recognise the importance of having a whole school approach to promoting positive behaviour as well as preventing bullying behaviour, via the explicit teaching of skills of appropriate programmes/lessons and evidence-based interventions which are primarily implemented within the framework of the SPHE curriculum.

These include:

- Explicitly teaching about the School Rules (see also Code of Positive Behaviour) at the beginning of each new school year.
- The introduction of our new Mobile Phone Policy in September 2024 prohibits the use of mobile phones in school during school hours. Please see our Mobile Phone policy for further information.
- Year group Assemblies and meetings on 4 mornings with class tutors are used to promote positive reinforcement and emphasise the school's ethos of care and compassion.
- All students are consistently reminded of the Code of Positive Behaviour in Coláiste Cholmcille which is discussed with them specifically during Induction week at the

start of the new academic year. This is part of the Code of Behaviour which is agreed to and signed by all students and parents prior to enrolment in Coláiste Cholmcille.

- The school is a very active participant in the annual Safer Internet Day.
- The Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme also supports the "Bí Cineálta" by promoting healthy and respectful relationships, by addressing diversity and inclusion (thereby discouraging bullying that is based on prejudice or discrimination), and by helping students develop the communication skills they need to express themselves assertively and to resolve conflicts peacefully.
- A culture of reporting bullying is fostered in the school through assemblies, visits by management to classes, SPHE lessons and the Wellbeing Programme. Emphasis is placed on standing up for others, encouraging self-confidence, recognising both good and toxic relationships and being forthcoming with information to help the school authorities in identifying and solving issues of bullying.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes including coping skills and strategies.
- Embedding our core values of Respect, Fairness and Personal Growth in our classrooms and curriculum.

In the senior classes certain subjects, such as RSE, History, debating, English, Social Education, Careers, LCVP lend themselves to the deeper exploration of themes such as human rights, equality and racism

Furthermore, across all subjects we promote an approach to teaching and learning that fosters inclusion and respect for diversity and is collaborative and respectful. Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which helps build a sense of connection, belonging, and empathy among students. The Helping Hands ABP (antibullying programme) being introduced this year encourages respectful, cooperative group work, identifies and supports students if needed before bullying escalates and helps to build a positive class culture where learning thrives.

Policy and Planning

- Centrality of Wellbeing: The wellbeing of the school community is at the heart of all our school policies and plans, as well as our school's ethos, vision and mission statement (see ccbs.ie). In particular, there are a range of other policies and procedures such as our school's Internet Acceptable Use Policy, Special Education Needs (SEN) policy, Code of Positive Behaviour and Mobile Phone Policy, Child Safeguarding

Statement, Acceptable Use Policy, Attendance Policy, Online Learning Policy, Dignity at Work Policy that collectively support and inform the implementation of our Bí Cineálta policy. This policy has been developed, reviewed and will continue to be reviewed in the context of considering all other school policies relevant to wellbeing (including those mentioned above) as well as in the context of considering all other school policies relevant to health and safety.

- Supervision and Monitoring: Currently our Supervision Policy outlines the structures and measures that the school has in place to ensure that there is always adequate supervision and monitoring of students, which in turn prevents and addresses bullying behaviour.
- Policy Development: The school has begun to actively support the participation of students in the development and implementation of school policies and plans to increase awareness and ensure effective implementation. This includes consulting with the members of the Student Council, as well as focus groups.
- School Self Evaluation: This policy was created in February 2018 with a large context of the Schools Self-Evaluation process focusing on Wellbeing,
- Continuing professional learning: A half-day closure enabled the training of the whole staff on the Bí Cineálta Guidelines in April 2025. Individual staff members have also attended further training. Staff are, and will continue to be encouraged and/or facilitated to attend appropriate courses when available, and will be made aware of such courses (e.g. at staff meetings, via our school email). Staff are also encouraged to share their experiences and examples of best practices. In the future, we hope to invite relevant speakers to staff days and carry out a workshop/talk to the staff also.
- Yearly Planning: Each Year, we will dedicate a specific month in the school calendar to the theme of Wellbeing, incorporating a variety of events throughout the whole school (and wider community where applicable), focusing on promoting wellbeing across many areas. This month will also include a focus on responsible use of the internet and digital devices in the lead up to Safer Internet Day. It also typically includes a Kindness Week, promoting acts of kindness, whereby students nominate their peers for acts of kindness, and a card is placed on a Kindness tree to mark this. Moving forward, it is planned to specifically use this month to refocus annually on Bí Cineálta and during the month to conduct the annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy.
- Planning future developments: We will continue to consider new programmes, developments, and publications that are relevant to this policy.

Relationships and Partnerships

The development of positive relationships built on mutual respect is key to this policy. The school recognises that the promotion of, and the modelling of, positive behaviour begins first with the parents/guardians. Therefore, it is essential that positive and supportive relationships are established between the staff and the parents/guardians of the children at our school through mutual understanding, trust, and cooperation. In promoting this objective, the school supports the active participation of parents in school life, including:

- Informing parents/guardians about this policy and keeping them up to date on all new developments and practices (e.g. via school website/ App). The Parent's Association and all parents/guardians will also be reminded annually (at least) about the existence of this policy.
- Asking parents to agree to supporting the school in its efforts to encourage healthy and responsible use of digital technologies among the children, e.g. banning devices from children's bedrooms at night; ensuring that their children are being supervised when online; allowing their children to only access age appropriate games, apps and content; committing to support the school's Mobile phone policy
- Promoting and sharing with the parents/guardians on an ongoing basis through the school website/school App/ Home school liaison, pertinent information, including available classes, supports and webinars of which they could avail, in order to educate, inform and raise awareness of how they can support us and their children to keep everyone safe and well. We regularly promote or host events for parents focusing on children's online safety and highlight the parent's responsibility for overseeing their children's activities online.
- Informing parents/guardians about the code of Positive Behaviour so that the parents/guardians can support the key messages being given to children at school. Teachers are encouraged to regularly update parents/guardians on the content of the SPHE lessons being taught, including Induction Programme, RSE, SPHE, Digital Wellbeing, etc.
- Facilitating parents/guardians and children to be involved in reviewing school policy and making modifications to it as necessary
- Encouraging parents to reinforce the Bí Cinealtas values of respect, understanding and kindness at home

The school strongly encourages and advises parents/guardians to:

- Notify the class teacher/school as soon as possible regarding any circumstances, issues or concerns that may impact their child's behaviour.

- Promote positive behaviours, support the development of self-regulation techniques, etc.

Other relationships and partnerships: As well as with parents/guardians, Coláiste Cholmcille is committed to promoting positive behaviours and relationships among the whole school and wider community i.e. staff, children, families, community groups, other schools, etc. We also strive to explore opportunities to support the active participation of the students in school life and to enable the student voice e.g. 1st Year's wellbeing survey, liaising with the student council.

As part of the implementation of these prevention strategies, we also engage with members of the wider school community who are in regular contact with students, such as the school bus drivers, local sporting clubs and organisations and local businesses that are close to the school. These members of the wider school community have been encouraged to report any bullying behaviour to the school as appropriate.

We will continue to endeavour to explore ways in which these relationships and partnerships can be utilised to promote positive behaviour and general wellbeing.

Outside agencies: In line with the guidelines in Department of Education and Skills Circular 0042/2018, the school has, and will continue to, engage with outside agencies and external supports, to promote positive behaviour, to prevent bullying behaviour, the development of positive relationships, e.g. NCSE, NEPs, etc.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

While every staff member has a responsibility to implement the school's Bí Cineálta policy, to be vigilant to bullying behaviour and to report suspected incidents of bullying, in Coláiste Cholmcille, it has been agreed that the school will work in partnership with the patron, Board of management, staff, students and the parents to develop and implement the Bí Cineálta policy for addressing bullying behaviour; this includes investigating reports of bullying behaviour and completing the Bullying Behaviour Report Form (see Form).

All reports of suspected incidents of bullying behaviour should initially be reported to the year head **for each Year** who will then inform the principal. The member(s) of the Special Education team/ Chaplain/ Student Support team are also available to advise, support and assist the year head as required.

Students and/or parents should report bullying behaviour to any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable, but their main point of contact will be the year head of the student(s), and they should be contacted first. All staff, students or parents may

- Make a direct approach at an appropriate time

- Hand up a signed note e.g. with homework
- Email the appropriate year head
- Make a phone call to the school
- Ask a parent/guardian or friend to talk on student's behalf

Incidents of bullying behaviour, no matter how trivial, which are drawn to the attention of a staff member, will be dealt with in the following manner.

The staff member will;

- Listen, take notes, reassure the student, ensure the student's safety as far as possible
- All reported instances will be passed on to the Year head for investigation.

Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNA's, caretakers, cleaners, sports coaches, those taking extracurricular activities and those driving school buses will be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to a teacher, year head, deputy principal, principal.

The Year head and/or the principal will engage again with the students involved, and their parents, no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement. This review will determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this.

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties 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
- act in a timely manner
- inform parents of those involved

The next section outlines the steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches that will be taken to address bullying behaviour and how progress will be reviewed.

Step 1: Identifying if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

As mentioned previously, 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.

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour you should consider the following questions:

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

If the answer to each of the questions above is **Yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures. See also Appendix A: Forms of Bullying Behaviour and Appendix B: Types of Bullying Behaviour

If the answer to any of these questions is **No**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. See also Appendix C: Behaviour that is not Bullying

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 repeated behaviour. See also Appendix A: Forms of Bullying Behaviour

When an incident of alleged bullying behaviour is reported, the teacher should complete a Bullying Behaviour Report Form. If it is determined that the behaviour is bullying behaviour, then the next steps should be followed, and the remainder of the Bullying Behaviour Report Form should be completed. If it is determined that the behaviour is not bullying behaviour, the behaviour should be addressed under the Code of Behaviour, as appropriate

Step 2: Addressing the bullying 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):

Note: The following steps are adapted from the Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour, p.60 of [Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools](#).

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

- Contact the parents of the students involved 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
- Listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- Keep a record of the engagement with all involved (see also further section on Record-Keeping). This record should document:
 - the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Appendix A and B of this policy and/or Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bi Cineálta procedures)
 - where and when it took place
 - the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents
 - the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour

Step 3: Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

- 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
- Document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this.
- Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even when bullying has ceased.
- If the bullying behaviour has ceased, record/note also on this review
 - the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased

- any engagement with external services/supports
- ongoing supervision and support² may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, 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 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

Programme of Supports for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

Students who have been bullied will be:

- Offered appropriate support/counselling.
- Provided with opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise self-esteem, develop their social skills and build resilience
- Year head will monitor how the student is coping and ensure there is no further by meeting them at intervals.

Students who have been involved in bullying behaviour will be:

- Provided with support/counselling to help them to learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the right of others and
- Provided appropriate opportunities to build their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth.

Supports

² These supports are in addition to the prevention strategies and approaches outlined earlier in Section A, and may include small group support sessions for building self-esteem and developing social skills, the use of restorative practices to re-build and maintain relationships, and /or referral to outside agencies (if appropriate) e.g. NEPS.

The school may seek the support of any of the following when working with students affected by bullying

- Counselling service
- Use of restorative practices to re-build and maintain relationships
- Co-operation with parents
- Referral to outside agencies (if necessary) in co-operation with parents
- National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
- Oide
- Webwise
- National Parents Council
- Tusla

Record-Keeping

As outlined above, all bullying behaviour will be recorded on the Bullying Behaviour Report Form. 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.

These records will be retained in accordance with the school's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations. The records will be stored securely in the principal's office, along with any supporting documentation. No copies should be made of this record and/or any supporting documentation.

Where a Student Support File exists for a student, the log of actions should be updated to include a brief reference to the fact that the student was involved in an incident of bullying behaviour. This may assist the school's student support team in providing a consistent and holistic response to support the wellbeing of the students involved. If deemed relevant, members of the support team may request to view the record of the incident.

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](#).

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:

- information relating to trends and patterns identified
- strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- 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 ccbs.ie and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on ccbs.ie 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.

Appendix A: Forms of Bullying Behaviour

Taken from [Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools](#), Section 2.5 How bullying behaviour occurs (p.21)

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Direct bullying behaviour

Physical bullying behaviour: Physical bullying behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While students can often engage in “mess fights”, they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.

Personal property can be a focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phones, other devices, schoolbooks and other learning material or interference with a student’s locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen, or hidden.

Verbal bullying behaviour: Continual name-calling directed at a student which hurts, insults or humiliates the student should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often name-calling refers to physical appearance; for example, size or clothes worn or gender identity. It can also refer to a student’s accent, distinctive voice characteristics, academic ability, race, or ethnic origin.

Written bullying behaviour: Written bullying behaviour includes writing insulting remarks about a student in public places, passing around notes about or drawings of a student.

Extortion: Bullying behaviour can involve extortion. Extortion is where something is obtained through force or threats.

Indirect bullying behaviour

Exclusion: Exclusion bullying behaviour occurs where a student is deliberately and

repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.

Relational: Relational bullying behaviour occurs when a student's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. Common forms include control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"; a group of students ganging up against one student; nonverbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a student; giving a student the "silent treatment"; and the deliberate manipulation of friendship groups to make someone unpopular.

Online bullying behaviour

Online bullying behaviour (cyberbullying) is carried out using information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This form of bullying behaviour can include:

- sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
- posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent
- making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students
- excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game

Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student, it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.

Appendix B: Types of Bullying Behaviour

Taken from [Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools](#), Section 2.7 Types of bullying behaviour (p.24)

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include the following which is not an exhaustive list:

- **Disablist bullying behaviour:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of a perceived or actual disability or additional need
- **Exceptionally able bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their high academic ability or outstanding talents
- **Gender identity bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual gender identity
- **Homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual membership of the LGBTQ+ community
- **Physical appearance bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their physical appearance. Students who “look different” can be mocked or criticised about the shape, size or appearance of their body
- **Racist bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their race or ethnic origin which includes membership of the Traveller or Roma community. Racism is defined in the National Action Plan Against Racism¹³ as “a form of domination which manifests through those power dynamics present in structural and institutional arrangements, practices, policies and cultural norms, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin”¹⁴
- **Poverty bullying:** behaviour that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources
- **Religious identity bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity
- **Sexist bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex
- **Sexual harassment:** any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of the student.

Appendix C: Behaviour that is not Bullying

Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful, but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour

- A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes repeated behaviour.
- Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups.
- Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control.
- Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying.

The behaviours listed above, while they can be distressing, are not defined as bullying. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided within the school's Code of Positive Behaviour and its Policy on Behaviours of Concern.

Bullying Behaviour Report Template

1. Name of Pupil Being Bullied and Class Group

Name: _____

Class: _____

2. Name(s) and Class(es) of Pupil(s) Engaged in Bullying Behaviour

3. Source of Bullying Concern/Report (tick relevant box(es))

- ☐ Pupil Concerned
- ☐ Other Pupil
- ☐ Parent
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

4. Location of Incidents (tick relevant box(es))

- ☐ Playground
- ☐ Classroom
- ☐ Corridor
- ☐ Toilets
- ☐ School Bus
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

5. Name of Person(s) Who Reported the Bullying Concern

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

- ☐ Physical Aggression
- ☐ Cyber-bullying
- ☐ Damage to Property
- ☐ Intimidation
- ☐ Isolation/Exclusion
- ☐ Malicious Gossip
- ☐ Name Calling
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

7. Identity-Based Bullying (if applicable, tick relevant category)

- ☐ Homophobic
- ☐ Disability/SEN-related
- ☐ Racist
- ☐ Membership of Traveller Community
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

8. Brief Description of Bullying Behaviour and Its Impact

9. Details of Actions Taken

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date: _____

Date Submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: _____

10. Date of Engagement with Parents/Guardians

Date: _____

Summary of Engagement: