



School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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The Board of Management of Glanduff National 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.

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 Sta	February & March 2025	Questionnaire
Students	March 2025	Questionnaire & Tally
Parents	February & March 2025	Questionnaire
Board of Management		
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 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

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

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behavior. These interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as student councils, parents' associations and friendship days, etc.

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.

A buddy system will help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer

respect and support.

It is important that the school community supports a 'telling' environment. Students should feel comfortable to talk about concerns regarding bullying behaviour.

The concept of "a trusted adult" can be an effective strategy to encourage students to report if they or another student is experiencing bullying behaviour. Staff could support this strategy by letting students know that they can talk to them.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to approach the school if they suspect that their child is being bullied. The difference between telling about minor, once-off incidents and telling to 'stay safe' should be understood by everyone involved.

School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community.

Curriculum

Teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful should be promoted. Students should have regular opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy among students.

The Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curricula at primary level aim to foster students' wellbeing, self-confidence and sense of belonging and to develop students' sense of personal responsibility for their own behaviour and actions. Students' social and emotional learning (SEL) skills can be improved through the SPHE curriculum.

An anti-bullying theme will form part of the SPHE Curriculum

Teachers will explicitly teach about cyber-bullying, homophobic/transgender bullying, racist bullying, sexist bullying and sexual harassment.

Pupils will be addressed on cyber bullying and safe internet tips (4th to 6th). The BoM feels that the main function of the school with regard to cyber-bullying is to educate the children about same as most cyber-bullying occurs from home.

The Stay Safe Programme will be taught. This programme will seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying.

Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, 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.

Policy and Planning

The wellbeing of the school community should be at the heart of school policies and plans.

Development and promotion of a student friendly Bí Cineálta policy for the school and ensuring it is displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.

The school's Bí Cineálta policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s). The Bí Cineálta policy is published on the school's website.

The school has a Code of Behaviour, Mobile Phone Policy and Acceptable Use Policy in place.

Training has been provided for the principal. Engaging in appropriate teacher professional learning courses can support school staff to prevent and address bullying behaviour. School staff should also share their experiences and examples of best practice. There is a range of training available for school staff which relates to promoting inclusion and diversity in schools.

Relationships and Partnerships

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. These interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as student councils and parents' associations, etc.

The following, could be considered to strengthen relationships and partnerships between members of the school community:

- supporting the active participation of students in school life.
- supporting the active participation of parents in school life, including those who may find it difficult or daunting to engage with the school due to being unfamiliar with the education system or due to language or cultural barriers.
- conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
- supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience.
- encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring.
- promoting acts of kindness.
- teaching problem solving.

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 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.

The creation of safe physical spaces supports psychological safety and is an important measure to prevent bullying behaviour. Spaces that have a clear line of sight make it easier for school staff to supervise students.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

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

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

Identifying if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred and Steps to be Taken Where Bullying Behaviour has Occured

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the relevant teacher 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 behavior and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

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.

If the answer to any of these questions is No, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider what, where, when and why? This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.

- 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 incidents.

A record should be kept of the engagement with all involved.

The 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, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the Bí Cineálta policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.

Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour

It is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than “look out” for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them. Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school or be facilitated to do so where there is literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent’s request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Review: Determining if Bullying Behaviour has Ceased

The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement.

Important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.

The teacher should 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 where bullying behaviour has ceased.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school’s Code of 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.

Recording of Bullying Behavior

All records will be kept in accordance with GDPR compliance in a safe and secure environment.

It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

This record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures), where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.

The record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behavior.

The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.

Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.

The principal will provide a report at Board of Management meetings, setting out the overall number of bullying cases reported since the previous meeting and confirmation that these issues have been dealt with, in accordance with the School's Bí Cineálta Policy.

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:

All in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.

All teachers involved in a pastoral care role

Buddy system

A 'Reform not Blame' approach

Circle Time

Restorative interviews

Restorative conferencing

In cases where a school has serious concerns in relation to managing bullying behaviour the advice of the NEPS will be sought.

Serious instances of bullying should, in accordance with the Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, be referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

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*.

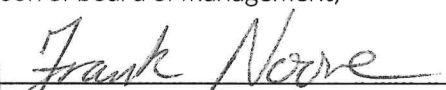
Section D: Oversight

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: 20/05/25
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed:  Date: 20/05/25
(Principal)

