



Anglesboro N.S. Bí Cineálta Policy

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Anglesboro N.S. 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 Staff	28/02/25	Whole Staff meeting
Students	9/5/25 & 15/5/25	Pupil Focus group
Parents	1/5/25	Google Forms survey
Board of Management	10/4/25 & _ /6/25	Meeting
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:

Culture and Environment:

- Create a positive school climate where all students feel safe, respected and valued.
- Promote diversity and inclusion in all aspects of school life.
- Encourage open communication between students, staff and parents. Encourage pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Establish clear expectations of behaviour and enforce them consistently.
- Promote respectful relationships across the school community.
- Effective routines/transitions
- Positive messages and signs that promote friendship will be displayed in classrooms and around the school.

Curriculum (Teaching & Learning)

- Teaching and learning in SPHE

- RSE Curriculum
- Weaving Well Being programme
- Promoting inclusion and diversity
- Group work/ Collaboration
- Provide opportunities for students to develop social and emotional skills.
- An annual anti-bullying/friendship day/week.
- The Stay Safe programme will be implemented at appropriate times and levels in the school.
- Rules for the classroom and playground will be drawn up with the children at the beginning of the school year and revisited when necessary
- Buddy Bench in the playground
- Use of the sensory garden & sensory room for sensory/movement breaks.

Policy & Planning

- BÍ Cineálta policy
- Student friendly BÍ Cineálta policy
- Code of behaviour
- Child safeguarding statement
- Acceptable use policy
- Supervision policy
- RSE Policy
- SEN policy
- SSE Wellbeing in education
- Appropriate TPL (Teacher Professional Learning)

Relationships and partnerships

- Encourage open communication between students, staff and parents.
- Build positive relationships with students and families
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies including awareness raising measures that – build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils
- Strong interpersonal connections
- Bullying awareness initiatives
- Student and parent participation
- TPL (Teacher Professional Learning)
- Collaborate with community organisations to provide additional support and resources.
- Promoting peer support
- Supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience
- Guest speakers may be invited to address pupils, staff and parent groups at regular intervals in relation to various types of bullying.

Preventing Cyberbullying 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 data. 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.

- Implementing the 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 an internet safety day
- Monitor student use of technology in the classroom and on school grounds through the use of 'Jamf' safe internet.

Preventing homophobic/ transphobic bullying behaviour

- Create a safe and inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Educate students about the importance of respecting all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Maintain an inclusive physical environment such as displaying relevant posters
- Encourage peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities

Preventing racist bullying behaviour

- Foster a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment
- Encourage peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- Encourage bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
- Provide supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents
- Ensure 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

- Ensure members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex
- Ensure 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
- Encourage parents to reinforce these values of respect at home

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

Children are supervised on arrival in the morning by the school principal.

Teachers follow a supervision Rota which ensures there is always one teacher and one SNA on the yard during break and lunch time.

Class teachers accompany children to the school gate at home time and wait until all the children are collected.

Children are accompanied by at least one staff member on all school trips.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Class Teacher and Principal/Deputy 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

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:

Two staff members investigate all instances of reported or suspected bullying with a view to establishing the facts and managing the behaviour.

In investigating and dealing with bullying, the staff members will exercise their own professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.

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 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 the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Where bullying behaviour has occurred:

School staff should know what to do when bullying behaviour is reported to them or when they witness bullying behaviour.

Non-teaching staff such as special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to a class teacher.

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, 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.

Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support.

Requests to take no action:

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 behaviour. It must be made clear to the pupil that other parties may need to be informed for their welfare.

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. However, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour using the Bí Cineálta procedures and/or 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 as part of the review include:

- the nature of the bullying behaviour
- the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- the relationship between the students involved

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.

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 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.

If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.

Recording bullying behaviour:

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded. The record should document the following:

- form (see section 2.5 of Bí Cineálta procedures)
- type of bullying behaviour (see section 2.7 of Bí Cineálta procedures)
- where and when it took place (if known)
- the date of the initial engagement with the students and their parents
- the views of the students and their parents* regarding the actions 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 each of these reviews and engagements
- note the date the bullying behaviour has ceased
- any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted
- these records should be retained in accordance with the school's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations
- where a Student Support File exists for a student, schools are encouraged to place a copy of the record on the student's support file

Complaints 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

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 behaviour is as follows:

- Managing the bullying behaviour.
- Supporting the pupils who have experienced bullying behaviour, displayed bullying behaviour and witnessed bullying behaviour.
- Promote a positive school culture where pupils feel safe, respected and valued.
- Raise awareness of the appropriate programmes and teacher training e.g. Weaving Wellbeing, Mindful Matters, Stay Safe, etc.
- Helping pupils raise their self esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills e.g. Green Schools, Student Council, Coiste Gaelige, etc.
- Create a respectful and inclusive school environment e.g. signage, celebrating events such as Autism Awareness month, Friendship Week, Internet Safety day, Time to Be Kind programme, Caught Being Kind awards, etc.
- In dealing with challenging behaviour, encourage parents and staff to focus on positive reinforcement.

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: Maura O'Donnell Date: 2/7/25
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: Seán Kearney Date: 2/7/25
(Principal)

