



# Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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The Board of Management of Castaheany Educate Together 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 follows:

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.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:

If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour, but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying, but, importantly, must be addressed under the school's

code of behaviour.

Some pupils 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 may not be deliberate or planned, but in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they cannot control. 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.

Disagreement between pupils is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

## 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	December 2024 January 2025 May 2025	Leaders' Training Staff Training Feedback sought for draft policy
Students	June 2025 June 2025 June 2025	Bí Cineálta Presentations Pupil Focus group Pupil Version of Bí Cineálta Policy
Parents	June 2025 June 2025	Feedback sought on draft policy Focus group
Board of Management	June 2025 June 2025	Feedback sought on draft policy Focus group
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	N/A	
Date policy was approved: 26/6/25		
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):

### 1. Culture and Environment

The following is a list strategies and activities in our school to promote and foster a positive school-wide culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.

- A welcoming culture for all pupils, staff, families and visitors to our school.
- A welcoming culture and positive transition for all new pupils and families.
- Positive classroom environments.
- The modelling of respectful interactions by school staff, volunteers and visitors.
- School wide wellbeing activities such as daily check -ins, calm corners, circle time.

- Encouraging a 'telling' environment. We encourage pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a safe and understanding environment.
- Creating safe physical environments that are easily monitored by all supervising staff.
- Fostering restorative approaches and activities among our pupils and staff members.
- Fostering the concept of a trusted adult by letting pupils know that they can talk to school staff.
- Fostering a culture of responsibility for reporting bullying among all members of the school community; ancillary staff, volunteers, parents.
- Staff engagement in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in relevant areas such as Restorative Practice, Trauma Informed Practice; ASD, ADHD, Inclusive Education, Gender Equality, LGBTQ+, Anti-racism and Internet Safety.
- Support from the leadership team for staff when dealing with behaviour issues and disclosures of bullying.
- Initiatives to promote a positive school culture and environment such as Friendship Week, Show Racism the Red Flag, Pride Fortnight and Yellow Flag.
- Continued access to clubs and groups in which values such as collaboration, mutual respect and sportsmanship are promoted.
- Student Council and student voice
- Whole school assemblies and shared assemblies
- Parent courses, workshops and initiatives
- Dissemination of information to families about local supports and initiatives.
- Internet Safety talks and initiatives
- Restorative circles to discuss classroom or group issues.

## 2. Curriculum and Planning

- Learn Together Curriculum
- SPHE curriculum.
- RSE curriculum
- Wellbeing and resilience programmes; Weaving Wellbeing, Friends for Life, Yellow Flag

- Revision and discussion of Bí Cinealta policy and school procedures at the beginning of every school year.
- Revision and discussion of other relevant policies at the beginning of every school year.
- Risk assessment and appropriate planning for all activities and trips outside the classroom and school.

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):

- Bí Cineálta Policy and Bí Cineálta Policy – Pupil version
- Code of Good Behaviour
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Supervision Policy
- Anti-racism policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Assistive Technology Policy
- Additional Support Policy

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

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

All class teachers, Special Education teachers and 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):

#### Steps to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred

- If appropriate, the relevant teacher will observe behaviour and communicate to supervising staff to monitor on yard.
- Each pupil involved will be given the opportunity to individually give an account of events.
- The relevant teacher will consider the following: what, where, when and why and consider the information gathered in relation to the definition of bullying as per the Bí Cineálta procedures; targeted, repeated and involving an imbalance of power.
- All pupils involved will then meet as a group to give their account and listen to the views of others. If appropriate, pupils could write down their account.

#### Steps to address the bullying behaviour

- Explain to the child who is engaged in bullying behaviour that their behaviour constitutes bullying and explain how that can affect others.
- Inform parents of all parties involved and parents are reminded at this stage that the primary aim is to stop the bullying and restore relationships rather than apportion blame.
- Facilitate restorative practice activities as appropriate.
- The teacher will adopt a fair and consistent approach to address bullying behaviour.

#### Steps to review progress

- The teacher will engage with the students and parents within 20 days after the initial engagement and keep a record of this engagement.
- The teacher will continue to observe and monitor interactions between the pupils.
- Teachers on yard supervision will be asked to observe and monitor if necessary.
- The teacher will continue to do 'check-in' with all parties.

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):

- Restorative Practice
- Circle time
- Check-ins
- Inclusion in Nurture groups if necessary
- Referral to outside agencies if necessary (SCP, NYP)
- Internet safety lessons
- SPHE lessons
- Friendship initiatives
- Social stories
- Inclusion in social skills groups if appropriate

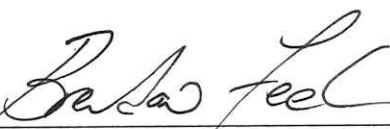
All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern 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: 26/06/25  
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed:  Date: 26/6/25  
(Principal)