

# Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour, 2025:

## **Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**

The Board of Management of Gorey Educate Together NS 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                                                    | 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2025<br>5 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 | Staff Training<br>Staff Meeting |
| Students                                                        | Term 3, 2024-2025                                           | School Council Meetings         |
| Parents                                                         | Term 1, 2025-2026                                           | PTA Committee Meeting           |
| Board of Management                                             | Term 1, 2025-2026                                           | Board Meeting                   |
| Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers | -                                                           | -                               |
| Date policy was approved: September 2025                        |                                                             |                                 |
| Date policy was last reviewed: N/A (Year 1)                     |                                                             |                                 |

## 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):

Maintaining a positive and inclusive school culture and environment - a space where pupils and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.

Maintaining strong relationships and partnerships, (pupils, staff, families.)

Giving importance to the wellbeing of the school community in school policies, practices and planning.

Maintaining safe physical spaces at the school. Managing appropriate & effective supervision of the children.

Fostering 'a telling environment.'

Fostering the concept of 'a trusted adult.' (Staff letting children know that they can talk to them.)

Teaching the Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum.

Teaching the SALT approach to conflict resolution. (Stop, Ask, Listen, Talk.)

Teaching the Play Works approach to conflict resolution. (Ro, Sham, Bo. Rock/paper/scissors.)

Teaching the All Together Now educational awareness programme on homophobic & transphobic bullying to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes.

Each class develops a Class Charter to promote kindness and build responsibility amongst pupils.

In-house anti-bullying presentations are delivered annually to 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> classes by an Assistant Principal.

External providers: anti-bullying workshops and presentations are organised on a biennial basis for the senior classes, e.g. those provided by the DCU Centre for Anti-Bullying or Barnardos. (Subject to funding being available.)

Workshops are also organised for both pupils and parents on a biennial basis on the subject of internet safety., e.g. Barnardos and PTA evening events.

Annual anti-bullying/wellbeing week, (January/February.)

Friendship Day and/or Friendship Week is sometimes marked in the school. The pupils engage in activities such as random acts of kindness, secret friend, poster design etc.

Junior and senior classes have weekly assemblies. At least two assemblies per year focus on anti-bullying and/or themes of friendship, kindness and positive relationships.

Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as buddy time between junior and senior classes, and parent led activities organised by our PTA.

The student council enables pupils to have a voice on issues that are affecting them, including bullying. All pupils can write concerns or queries in a 'class notebook', which is then passed on to the student council.

Playground minders – students in senior classes volunteer to support younger classes on the playground to help with games and positive interactions.

The school has established 'social clubs' on Friday afternoons for pupils who experience social difficulties and/or social isolation. This allows students to establish positive relationships with their peers in a setting where they are engaged in activities of interest to them.

Behaviour issues on school buses are addressed by an Assistant Principal, with responsibility for behaviour management and support.

A Care Team has been established in our school to support pupils with ongoing social and emotional difficulties (including those who may experience bullying and/or friendship issues)

Preventing [online/homophobic & transphobic/racist/sexist & sexual harassment] bullying behaviour, see pages 39-41 of Bí Cineálta.

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):

Morning (before-school) supervision rota.  
Breaktime (playgrounds) supervision rota.  
Afternoon (after-school) supervision rota.

In-School Management (ISM) Plan: An Assistant Principal with special responsibility in regard to bullying behaviour is in place.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is as follows:

Brendan Breen, assistant 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):

Taking steps to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than apportioning blame.)  
Using 'what, where, when and why' questions. See pages 60-62 of Bí Cineálta.  
Engaging with pupils (1) individually and (2) as a group.  
Recording all incidents of bullying behaviour.  
Consulting with parents at an early stage.  
Supporting the child who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the child who is displaying bullying behaviour.  
Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased, (see pages 45, 60-62 of Bí Cineálta.)  
And, if necessary, applying disciplinary sanctions, as per the school's Code of 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):

Ensuring that pupils feel listened to and reassured.  
Ensuring the privacy of those involved.  
Conducting all conversations with sensitivity.  
Listening to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.  
Acting in a timely manner.  
Informing parents of those involved at an early stage

#### Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

## Section D: Oversight

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on our website and in hard copy on request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)