



Bí Cineálta Policy

CASTLEBAR PRIMARY SCHOOL
ROLL NO. 20562H

Appendix A

School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Castlebar Primary 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.

We confirm that we will take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated.

Catholic schools have a distinctive understanding of the human person, recognising that every person is created in God's image and likeness and has inherent dignity as a child of God. This is the basis for ensuring that each person in our school is treated with respect and care, in accordance with the Catholic Schedule.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to respecting the dignity of every individual. No human person is to be devalued, and all have an indispensable part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

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	02/05/2025	Half Day Closure Resources provided on school padlet Feedback on policy input from all groups
Students	School Year 2024 / 2025	Curricular Lessons Wellbeing surveys
Parents	June 2025	Parents' Association
Board of Management	18/6/2025	BoM meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	September 2025	Policy shared / feedback invited
Date policy was approved: 18/06/25		
Date policy was last reviewed: N/A		

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):

In developing preventative strategies which this school will use to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour, we come from the context of our Catholic ethos where inclusivity permeates the school in a real way.

This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference, by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at board of management and staff meetings.

The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence.

In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies.

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

1. Culture and Environment

- Promote a **positive, inclusive school culture** where bullying is not tolerated.
- Foster a **telling environment** supported by the *Stay Safe* programme and the concept of a **trusted adult**.
- Provide **safe physical spaces** with adequate supervision in classrooms, corridors, yards and during unstructured time.
- Use **visual displays** (artwork, signage, charters, kindness noticeboards, buddy benches) to reinforce values of equality, diversity, inclusion, and respect.
- Celebrate **diversity and belonging** through cultural days, school events, and arts/sports activities.
- Support student-led initiatives (e.g. Student Council, kindness charters).
- Encourage **peer support systems** (buddy benches, mentoring, buddy systems for children integrating from AS Class).
- Leadership plays a central role: the **Principal and staff set the tone**, with all staff valued and supported to address bullying.
- Provide **staff training** (restorative practice, recognising/responding to bullying, supporting inclusion, autism awareness, Playworks for senior children).
- Ensure **parents are active partners**, encouraging empathy and respect at home.

2. Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- Teach **SPHE, RSE and Stay Safe** consistently at all levels, integrating lessons across subjects.
- Promote teaching that is **collaborative, respectful, and inclusive**, celebrating diversity in culture, religion, and identity.
- Use **programmes** such as *Fun Friends*, *Friends for Life*, and *Zippy's Friends* to build resilience and empathy.
- Address **online safety and cyberbullying** through lessons and integration in the Code of Behaviour/AUP.
- Encourage **group work and small group activities** to promote connection, belonging, and empathy.
- Use **extra-curricular activities** (arts, sports, cultural events, clubs) to support inclusion, teamwork, and self-worth.
- Explicitly teach **problem-solving skills, conflict resolution, assertiveness and respectful communication**.
- Provide curriculum opportunities to **acknowledge and celebrate diversity** (learning about different countries, cultures, customs, celebrations).
- Reinforce staff modelling of **respectful behaviour** in all interactions.

3. Relationships and Partnerships

- Build **strong interpersonal connections** between staff, students, and parents.
- Encourage **open communication** and problem-solving approaches.
- Promote and celebrate **acts of kindness, friendship and inclusion**.

- Establish **peer mentoring/support systems**.
- Engage students in **reflecting on their own behaviour** and the causes/impact of bullying (SPHE/awareness lessons).
- Support the **active participation of students and parents** in school life, after-school clubs, surveys, and relevant policy formation.
- Conduct **workshops, seminars, assemblies and awareness initiatives** for students, staff, and parents.
- Support parent involvement, especially those facing **language or cultural barriers**.
- Encourage collaboration through **student council, committees (Green Schools, Active Schools, Wellbeing, Creative Schools), Parents' Association and Pupil Support Team**.

4. Policy and Planning

- Place **wellbeing of the whole school community** at the heart of all policies and planning.
- Ensure the **Bí Cineálta policy** and student-friendly version are clear, shared, and regularly reviewed.

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):

- Other linked policies:
 - Code of Behaviour
 - Acceptable Use Policy
 - Child Safeguarding Statement
 - Supervision Policy
 - RSE, SPHE, and Wellbeing Policies
 - SEN/Inclusion and Special Education Teaching Policies
 - Attendance and Risk Assessment Policies
 - Critical Incident Policy
 - Healthy Eating, P.E. Policies etc
- Maintain **consistent supervision and monitoring** procedures across all areas of school activity.
- Develop and implement **clear procedures** for noting, investigating, and dealing with incidents.
- Engage in **teacher professional learning (TPL)** on inclusion, diversity, bullying prevention, and restorative practice, sharing examples of best practice.
- Encourage **student participation** in developing and implementing policies to increase awareness and ownership.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- All teaching staff

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):

1. Steps to Identify and Investigate Bullying

- Consider **what happened, where, when, and why** and whether behaviour is repeated or involves an imbalance of power.
- Recognise that not all hurtful behaviour is bullying; some may be inappropriate behaviour addressed through the **Code of Behaviour**.
- If a group is involved:
 - Speak to each student individually first.
 - Then meet the group together to hear all perspectives.
 - Ask each student to give an account (spoken or written).
- Use reports from students, staff, and parents (including anonymous reporting systems such as worry boxes/digital forms).
- Staff should be particularly vigilant with students considered at risk of being bullied or bullying others.
- Ensure consistency in how incidents are investigated, using the **Bí Cineálta Flow Chart** and school procedures.
- Record all incidents, noting type of behaviour, when and where it occurred, date of initial engagement, student/parent views, actions taken, review dates and external supports engaged if relevant.

2. Approaches to Address Bullying Behaviour

- Develop and maintain a clear and consistent **Bí Cineálta** implemented by all staff.
- Promote a **culture of respect and inclusion** across the school community, with awareness raising for pupils, parents, and staff.
- Ensure staff respond with **empathy, sensitivity and respect for privacy**, always considering the age and ability of those involved.
- Foster **positive self-esteem** and resilience through SPHE, RSE, Wellbeing and other

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curricular/extra-curricular programmes.

- Provide adequate **supervision and monitoring** across classrooms, corridors, yards, school tours and extracurricular activities, including IT use.
- Encourage a **culture of telling** and reinforce the role of bystanders as upstanders.
- Explicitly address **online behaviour and cyber safety**, including awareness events for parents.
- Where appropriate, consult the Student Support Team and external agencies (e.g. NEPS, Oide, Webwise, Túsla, NPC, NCSE etc).
- Review cases within a clear timeframe (e.g. within 20 school days) to ensure the behaviour has ceased.

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):

3. Supports for Students

For those who experience bullying:

- Provide a safe and confidential reporting space.
- Listen carefully, reassure, and take timely action.
- Support wellbeing through coping strategies, resilience building, check-ins with trusted staff, and referrals to external services if needed.
- Ensure access to safe physical/quiet spaces and peer support structures.

For those who witness bullying:

- Encourage reporting in a safe, supportive environment.
- Teach the importance of being an upstander and safe ways to intervene or seek help.
- Provide space to discuss their feelings and build empathy.

For those who display bullying behaviour:

- Address the behaviour fairly and consistently, helping students understand the impact of their actions.
- Use restorative practice and provide opportunities for reflection, responsibility and making amends.
- Offer support (e.g. behaviour contracts, social skills training, anger management, mentoring).
- Involve parents/guardians in finding solutions and support structures.

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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)

Bí Cineálta



At Castlebar Primary School we want everyone to feel safe and happy.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is when someone keeps being mean to someone on purpose over and over again. It is **HURTFUL**, **REPEATED** and **INTENTIONAL**!

Bullying can be:

- Saying mean things.
- Calling people names.
- Leaving someone out of a game.
- Hitting, pushing or kicking.
- Spreading mean rumours.
- Being hurtful online (cyberbullying).



Our Rules for Being Kind



To make sure everyone feels safe and happy, we all promise to:

1. BE A FRIEND : Play fairly, share and include everyone.
2. USE KIND WORDS; Use your words to talk about your problem calmly.
3. BE A HELPER: If you see someone being bullied, be an "Upstander."
 - Tell them to STOP.
 - WALK AWAY with the person being bullied.
 - TELL a trusted adult.
4. TELL A GROWN UP: If you are being bullied or if you see someone being bullied, IT'S OK TO TELL.. Tell a teacher, a parent or any other adult you trust. They will help you.



KINDNESS is our SUPERPOWER. Be a BUDDY not a BULLY.



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