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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 Clonroche 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 Staff	21st September	Meeting in school.
Students	21st September	Discussion around the child friendly policy on the noticeboard in the school at assembly.
Parents	22nd September	New policy shared via Aladdin with parents.
Board of Management	22nd September (Review)	Email and BOM meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	23rd September	Uploaded to school website
Date policy was approved: 7th October 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 21st September 2026		

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): Prevention Strategies: • A school-wide approach to the ongoing fostering of a safe, warm, caring atmosphere in the school and respect for all members of the school community. Addressed in assembly in the hall twice weekly. • School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of Bí Cineálta, to include pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community. • Bí Cineálta is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) are given a copy as part of the Code of Behaviour of the school (every year). • An annual audit of professional development needs with a view to assessing staff requirements, ensuring that all staff members develop an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention. • Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision also applies to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.

- The implementation of regular (e.g. per year/per term/per month/per week) whole school awareness measures e.g. a dedicated notice board to be displayed publicly in the school and classrooms on the promotion of Bí Cineálta and bullying prevention; annual Friendship Week and parent(s)/guardian(s) seminars; regular school or year group assemblies by principal, deputy principal, etc.
- Involvement of the students in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Buddy system, mentoring, Lunchtime Pals, Do your talking while you're walking, Walk on Wednesday, Breakfast club, Homework club and other student support activities that can help to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Encourage a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'.
- This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell, e.g.:
 - The concept of "a trusted adult" is effective to encourage students to report if they or another student is experiencing bullying behaviour.
 - Direct approach to tell the teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class. The trusted adult should, without delay, inform the member of staff who has responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Anti-bully or Bubble Box in student bathrooms.
 - Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Student Well-being survey twice yearly.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place (refer to Bí Cineálta displayed in school).
- 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.
- Student Focus Groups
 - Design and display anti-bullying posters.
 - Older children set the example for younger children.
 - Students should have no tolerance for bullying.
 - Tell the teacher.
 - Ensure a positive attitude regarding "telling".
 - Make reporting easier for senior students e.g. "fixed reporting box" suitably placed.
 - Don't leave children out.
- Safe space both within and outside the classroom e.g. "Buddy Bench" (depending on the needs of the class)

Preventing cyberbullying

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship
- Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online

Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour

- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters.
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- Challenging gender stereotypes
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour
- Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following:

- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students “see themselves” in their school environment
- Having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
- Providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
- Providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents
- Ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived
- Experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds

Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following:

- Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex
- Celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students
- Organising awareness campaigns, workshops and presentations on gender equality and respect
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home to sexual harassment.

Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include the following:

- Promoting positive role models within the school community
- Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

Implementation of curricula

- The full implementation of the SPHE curriculum and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience
- Encouraging peer support such as mentoring
- Promoting acts of kindness
- Teaching problem solving
- Hosting debates
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, The Walk Tall Programme, Friends for Life, Zippy's friends.
- School wide delivery of lessons on diversity, equality and interculturalism.
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes where possible.
- Look at the causes and impacts of bullying, including those dealing with navigating friendships, identity based bullying, racist bullying, homophobic/transphobic bullying, sexism and sexual harassment
- The school implements the advice in "Sexual Orientation advice for schools" (RSE Primary, see booklet).

Consideration is given to 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 e.g. some children may require a suitable rhyme or slogan which would be short and easy to remember. Special Education teachers are available to assist in this area.

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):

- Protected Disclosure Policy
- Bí Cinealta Policy
- Student Friendly Bí Cinealta Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Child Safe-guarding Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- RSE Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Arrival & Dismissal Of Pupils
- SEN Inclusion Policy
- Teacher Professional Learning Policy
- Wellbeing in Education Policy
- Yard Supervision Policy
- Uniform Policy
- School Tours and Excursions Policy
- Party Invitations/Christmas Cards Policy
- Yard Supervision Policy

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

- The teacher gathers information by considering the what, where, when, and why of the reported incident.
- If multiple students are involved, each is interviewed individually first before conducting a group meeting.
- During the group meeting, each student provides their account to clarify the situation and ensure mutual understanding.
- Students may also be asked to write down their version of events for documentation.
- The school's definition of bullying, and the following guiding questions, will be used to assess whether 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?
- Some incidents may involve inappropriate but non-bullying behaviour, which will be addressed using the school's Code of Behaviour.

Addressing Confirmed Bullying Behaviour

- School staff act according to the Bí Cineálta policy and student-friendly policy.
- If the bullying occurs outside of school but affects the student within the school environment, appropriate support is provided.
- If the bullying involves a student from another school, the school will support the affected student and engage with their parents to explore solutions.
- The response is fair and consistent, ensuring both the student experiencing bullying and the student displaying the behaviour receive support.
- The affected student is engaged with immediately to reassure them and determine their preferred approach to resolving the issue.
- Parents of all involved students are informed at an early stage, unless a student has concerns about this, in which case a support plan will be developed.
- Privacy and sensitivity are maintained in all discussions, considering the students' age and ability.
- Action is taken promptly, and students are actively involved in decisions about resolving the situation (Appendix 2).
- Approaches such as restorative practice or mediation may be used only if staff have received training and students consent.

Handling Requests to Take No Action

- A student may request that no action be taken beyond staff monitoring the situation.
- The staff member acknowledges the student's feelings and works with them to determine appropriate next steps.
- Parents may also request no action, but schools may decide to intervene based on the circumstances.

Reviewing Progress and Ensuring Behaviour Has Ceased

- The teacher conducts a follow-up review within 20 school days of the initial intervention.
- The review considers:
 - ❖ The nature and impact of the bullying behaviour.

- ❖ The effectiveness of strategies used.
- ❖ Changes in relationships between students involved.

- Even if bullying has ceased, ongoing support may be needed for both students.
- If the bullying persists, strategies are reviewed with students and parents, and additional actions are planned within an agreed timeframe.
- If the student displaying bullying behaviour continues their actions, the school may apply disciplinary measures under the Code of Behaviour.

Recording and Documentation

- All incidents are recorded, including:
 - ❖ The form and type of bullying behaviour.
 - ❖ The date, time, and location of incidents.
 - ❖ Initial engagement details with students and parents.
 - ❖ Student and parent perspectives on actions taken are documented.
 - ❖ A review meeting is recorded, including whether the bullying has stopped.
- If applicable, records are stored in the Student Support File and used to inform future support strategies.
- Even if bullying has ceased, ongoing support may be needed for both students.
- Records are kept in compliance with the school's data protection policies.

Complaint Process

- If a parent is dissatisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been handled, they may use the school's Parental Complaints Procedure.
- If unresolved, they may escalate the complaint to the Ombudsman for Children (ococomplaint@oco.ie).

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):

- 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.
 - Pastoral care system-nurture groups, brain calm, breakfast club etc.
 - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
 - Referral to the school's Code of Behaviour.
 - Group work such as circle time
 - Continued monitoring of particular situations.
 - Continued contact with parents.
 - Continued contact with the Board of Management.

- If pupils require counselling or further support the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies to organise the same. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour.
- Pupils will understand that there are no innocent bystanders and that all incidents of bullying behaviour must be reported to a teacher.

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: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Date: 21/9/26 _____

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: 21/9/26 _____

Appendix 1 - Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and their class group:	
2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in the bullying behaviour:	
3. Source of the bullying concern/report - Tick the relevant boxes	
Parent ▾	How was it communicated?
4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))	
Outside school - home ▾	
5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern	
6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))	
Other - Specify ▾	
7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:	
Other ▾	
8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact	
9. Details of actions taken	
10. Agreed review date:	
Signed: (Relevant Teacher)	
Date _____	
Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal: _____	

Appendix 2: Clonroche N.S - Pupil Promise

Name of pupil engaging in bullying behaviour:
Name of pupil being bullied:
Details of bullying behaviour - What happened?
How has the bullying behaviour above affected the pupil being bullied?
Pupil Promise:
I _____ will not _____
I understand that if I continue with these behaviours, I will face further sanctions in school and at home.
These sanctions will be decided by the school in conjunction with parents and Code of Behaviour along with the Anti Bullying Policy.
Signed: _____
Parent 1: _____ Parent 2: _____
Principal/ Deputy Principal: _____