

Gaelscoil Inse Chór



Bí Cineálta

Polasaí Bi Cineálta chun Iompraíocht Bhulaíochta a Chosc agus Dul i nGleic léi
Leagan Béarla

Where there is a discrepancy between the Irish and English texts, the Irish text will take precedent

School Bí Cineálta Policy To Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Inse Chór 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 following detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Core definition of Bullying

Behaviour Bullying is 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. It is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others.

Types of Bullying Behaviour

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include the following which is not an exhaustive list:

- Physical Bullying: Includes acts such as pushing, shoving, hitting, kicking, and damaging property.
- Verbal Bullying: Involves name-calling, insults, threats, and teasing.
- Relational Bullying: Characterised by spreading rumours, social exclusion, and manipulating friendships.
- Cyberbullying: Includes sending hurtful messages, sharing embarrassing photos or videos online, creating fake profiles, and online exclusion.
- Disablist Bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of a perceived or actual disability or additional need
- Exceptionally Able Bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their high academic ability or outstanding talents
- Gender Identity Bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual gender identity

- Homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual membership of the LGBTQ+ community
- Physical Appearance Bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their physical appearance.
- Racist Bullying: behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their race or ethnic origin, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.
- Poverty Bullying: behaviour that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources
- Religious Identity Bullying: behaviour that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity
- Sexist Bullying: behaviour that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex
- Sexually Harmful Behaviour: any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of the student.

Behaviour that is not Bullying Behaviour

Every school must create and enforce a Bí Cineálta policy that outlines how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. The school's Code of Behaviour includes strategies for managing inappropriate behaviour that is not considered bullying. The following points seek to clarify certain behaviours that are not regarded as bullying and may be addressed under the school's Code of Behaviour:

- A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.
- Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying.
- Some students 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 are not deliberate or planned, but in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they cannot control.
- Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Bullying Outside School

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 and/or where it continues in school, the school will deal with it in accordance with the Bí Cineálta policy.



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.

	Dáta an Chomhairliúcháin	Modh comhairliúcháin
Foireann na scoile:	13ú Bealtaine 29ú Bealtaine	Suirbhé Dréacht roinnte leis an bhfoireann le haiseolas a fháil agus leath lá
Scoláirí:	Dátaí éagsúla le linn Mí Aibreán	Ceistneoir agus Ceardlann
Tuismitheoirí:	19/02/2025	Suirbhé (78% a d'fhreagair)
Bord Bainistíochta:	16ú Meitheamh 2025	Dréacht don pholasaí dailte agus pléite (athraithe & aiseolas bailithe) Fiseán feicthe ag an mBord freisin.
Pobal na scoile i gcoitinne: (de réir mar is cuí mar shampla tiománaithe bus)	11ú Meitheamh 2025	Suirbhé
An dáta ar faomhadh an polasaí: 25ú Meitheamh 2025		
An dáta is déanaí a ndearnadh athbhreithniú ar an bpolasaí:		

Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school.

The Board of Management of Gaelscoil Inse Chór recognises the harmful and corrosive impact of bullying. We recognise the relief and support that can be provided through the consistent implementation of a consistent policy. Therefore, it is fully committed to following the key principles of good practice in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. As a school we are deeply committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment. We strongly believe that bullying behaviour is unacceptable and we are committed to preventing and addressing all forms of bullying behaviour to protect the wellbeing, academic performance and social development of all pupils. These aims are consistent with our Mission Statement:

Our mission at Gaelscoil Inse Chór is to foster a kind, understanding, enjoyable and energetic environment where the emphasis is on high quality education provided through the medium of Irish. We want to meet the diverse needs of our students in a safe, happy and relaxed environment that facilitates their potential to achieve.

School Culture

Our aim at Gaelscoil Inse Chór is to promote and foster a culture in which all members of our community feel safe and connected. Our aim is to facilitate an environment in which everyone shows respect and care for everyone. We believe that by promoting and modelling such values, an environment of mutual respect will be fostered.

It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to develop and maintain a school culture that is non-bullying and to adopt a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.

Students are guided to shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintaining a school environment that is positive and supportive for all. As active partners in their children's education, parents are encouraged to help foster an environment in which bullying is unacceptable by promoting a culture of empathy and respect.

- Children will be made aware of all the people within the school community they can talk to if they have concerns.
- We will foster an environment where reporting bullying is encouraged. It is important that our school community supports a "telling environment". We actively work to overcome the barriers that prevent pupils from reporting bullying. This includes addressing fears of retaliation, social stigma, and lack of confidence in adults. We emphasise that reporting is the right thing to do and will be taken seriously.
- We will have regular conversations with children and discuss general concerns and areas for improvement in our strategy.

- The children's version of Bí Cineálta will be displayed throughout the school and will be regularly referenced at assemblies etc.
- Developing Empathy and Respect: We will integrate activities that foster empathy, respect and inclusion into our curriculum and school culture. This includes collaborative learning projects, peer mentoring programmes (reading together, yard helpers etc.).
- Trusted Adult: The concept of a "trusted adult" can be an effective strategy to encourage students to report if they or another student is experiencing bullying behaviour. Staff will support this strategy by letting students know that they can talk to them.
- Bystander/Upstander Responsibility: Students who witness bullying behavior in person or on social media have an important role to play in helping to address the behavior if they report the behavior to a trusted adult.

Ensuring a Physically Safe Environment

As a school, we recognise that creating a physically safe environment supports psychological safety and is an important measure to prevent bullying behaviour. Every effort will be made to ensure that there are no dark corners or hidden areas in the school where pupils could be bullied out of sight of staff.

Curriculum

The Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) curricula, the 'Stay Safe' Programme and other well-being programmes aim to foster students' self-confidence and belonging and to develop students' sense of personal responsibility for their own behaviour and activities. Students' social and emotional learning skills can be enhanced through the SPHE curriculum

The following programmes are used as an integral part of the SPHE curriculum:

- The 'Relationships & Sexuality Education' (RSE) programme
- The 'Stay Safe' programme
- The 'Fí na Folláine' (Weaving Well-being) programme (R2-R6)
- The 'Misneach' (Walk Tall) programme
- Lessons/resources from DCU's 'Anti-Bullying Campaign'
- Lessons, videos & resources from Cyber Safe Kids & Webwise

This is not an exhaustive list. Other programmes & lessons are used as appropriate & as needed.

Policy and Planning

There is a tangible and complementary link between the Bí Cineálta policy and the following policies

- Code of Conduct
- Health & Safety Statement
- Child Protection Policy
- RSE Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Mobile Phone & Electronic Device Policy
- Substance Use Policy

Relationships and Partnerships

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. These interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as Cairde na Scoile, The Student Council, sports teams, and various other groups. The following, which is not an exhaustive list, could be considered to strengthen relationships and partnerships between members of the school community:

- Age-appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the pupil body in looking at their own behaviour – promoting acts of kindness and friendship, being an active help to others and looking at the causes and impacts of bullying behaviour during SPHE lessons.
- Supporting the active participation of pupils in school life and active participation of parents in school life also.
- Encouraging peer support and peer mentoring (Walking together, Reading together, Senior/Junior class buddies, cuntoirí clóis etc.)
- Workshops and seminars for pupils, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
- Engaging parents and pupils in actively contributing to the formation of the 'Bí Cineálta' Anti Bullying Policy to make them active participants in the promotion and discussion of useful ways to identify and reduce bullying behaviour and highlight procedure and how to deal with it if it does occur.

Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of life that can impact even the youngest members of society. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour. Polasaí 'Bí Cineálta' Ghaelscoil Inse Chór proactively addresses these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments. Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches pupils about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship
- Having regular conversations with pupils about developing respectful and kind relationships online
- Developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology.
- Holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour
- Promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online (It is important for their child's safety, that parents are aware of their children's use of technology including smartphones and gaming consoles).

Digital age of Consent: In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. For the purposes of data collection, students between the age of 13 and 16 years old must have parental permission to sign up to social media services where companies use the legal basis of consent to collect process and store users' data. Most social media platforms and services have a minimum age requirement and for most of these services it is 13 years' old. Therefore technically, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account.

Supervision and Monitoring

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible. Although the Board ensures that there is always experienced and adequate school yard, indoor and outdoor supervision, it also acknowledges that it is impossible to supervise and monitor all pupils, all the time. As a school we expect our pupils to adhere to a standard of acceptable and respectful behaviour, whether in the presence of a member of staff, or not.

- Staff encourage students to show respect for each other at all times.

- All aspects of bullying, supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school trips and extra-curricular activities are discussed regularly at school staff meetings.
- Regular discussion/reinforcement with students on matters of behaviour, bullying etc. as part of school assemblies (junior/senior).
- Ensure staff supervision of pupils is effective and consistent and in accordance to school policies and procedures.
- A yard supervision rota is devised at the beginning of each year so that adequate and appropriate supervision is provided for breaktimes.
- Staff are informed of and particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- Staff are informed of incidents & personality clashes that occur within the classroom that may spill out onto the yard, so that the teachers on duty can monitor those pupils during breaktimes and other non-classroom based activities.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff and recorded on specific school templates. Reports on bullying are stored in a specific folder in the principal's office.
- The Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision Policy, Special Education Policy, Code of Behaviour, RSE Policy and the Child Safeguarding Statement all support the monitoring, supervision and implementation of the Bí Cineálta Policy.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The following are the steps & approaches that will be taken to determine whether bullying behaviour was occurring and if so, a description of how that bullying behaviour will be addressed:

The class teachers are responsible for addressing bullying behaviour in the first instance. Support and assistance will then be available from the Principal, Deputy Principal and members of the school leadership team. Our primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour will be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved, instead of seeking to blame.

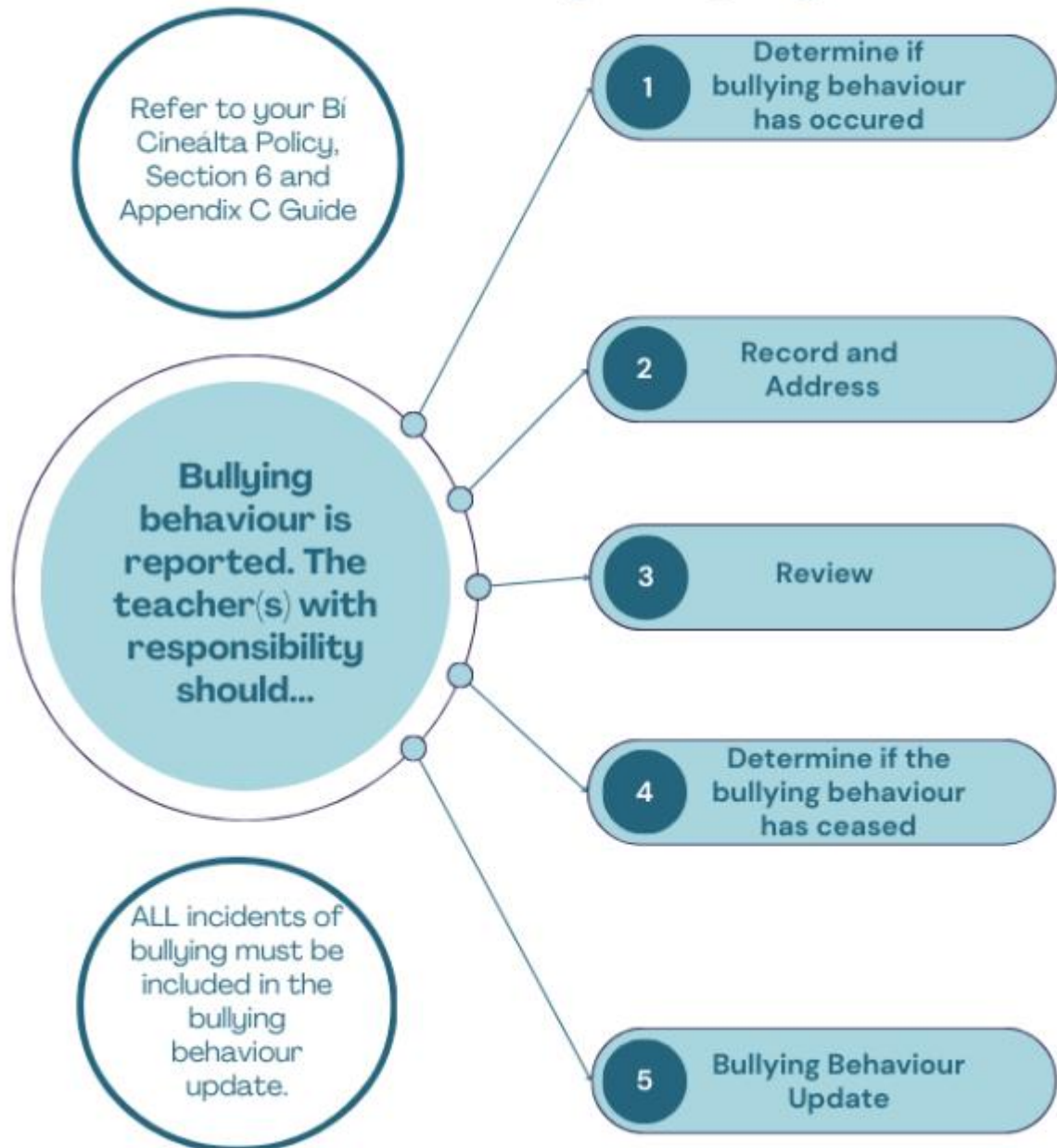
Stop – Réitigh – Bog ar Aghaidh

The teacher/teachers investigates all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour with a view to establishing the facts and managing the behaviour. The teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine if bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher will consider the following: what, where, when and why? The teacher will also consider the key elements

of bullying behaviour. Is the behaviour: Targeted, Intentional, Harmful, Imbalance of power, Repeated?

Bí Cineálta: Addressing Bullying Behaviour



Where Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- ensure that the pupil 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 pupil 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 (both the parents of the pupil who experienced bullying behaviour and the parents of the pupil(s) who engaged in bullying behaviour) and keep them updated on any progress and or developments regarding the situation.

Parents are an integral part of the Gaelscoil Inse Chór community and play an important role, in partnership with our school, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour as outlined in the school's Bí Cineálta policy.

Determining if 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 following the initial intervention. Important factors to consider as part of the review are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved. Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, 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 form (Section 2.5) and type (See Section 2.7) of bullying behaviour, if known, where

and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students and their parents.

The record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour. It should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this. It is important to document the date of each of these engagements and the date that it has been determined that 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. A copy should also be placed with the child's Continuum of Support File.

Complaint process

If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they will be referred to the school's complaints procedure.

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/policy-information/schools-complaint-procedures-additional-information-for-parents-and-students/>

In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and/or parent may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student. The Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie.

Support

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying and those who display bullying behaviour involves a whole school approach. Gaelscoil Inse Chór supports restorative practices that aims to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. However, given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations. We try to ensure that both the victim of bullying behaviour and the person/persons responsible for the offending behaviour will be offered ongoing informal or formal support from within the School. The informal supports offered in the school may be check-ins with class teacher or other relevant member of staff. Formal supports may be in the form of monitoring, internal counselling and/or referral to an external counselling agency, a psychologist, or other agencies, if deemed more appropriate and agreed to by parents and guardians.

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.

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 refer.

Síniú: 

Dáta: 25/06/2025

Cathairleach

Síniú: 

Dáta: 25/06/2025

Príomhoide