

School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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The Board of Management of [Terence MacSwiney Community College/Gaelcholáiste Mhic Shuibhne](#) 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.

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	March 2025	Survey Staff Meeting
Students	March 2025	Survey Focus Group
Parents	March 2025	Survey Focus Group
Date policy was approved: 15.5.25		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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

Culture and Environment

- Full implementation of the SPHE, RSE, and CSPE programmes and curricula to ensure that school culture supports a safe social and personal environment.
Training for staff (CPD) in delivering these programmes
- Continuous promotion and modelling of respectful interactions from all staff
- Effective monitoring and supervision of school
- Visual representations of Anti Bullying philosophy throughout the school
- Facilitation of Restorative Practice
- Regular meetings of Plus Club
- Stand Up Awareness Week
- Belong To Accreditation
- Wide range of extracurricular opportunities for students
- Friendship Week scheduled in school calendar
- Anti- Bullying Awareness weeks throughout the year
- Reward schemes for Random Acts of Kindness
- Anti Bullying message to be included in student journals
- Daily school assemblies to promote community

Curriculum (Teaching & Learning)

- Pastoral Care classes timetabled for Year Heads to connect with year groups.
- Integration of Anti- Bullying messages into various curricula
- Autism Awareness workshops
- Anti-Bullying workshops throughout the year
- Opportunities within lessons for students to develop social and emotional skills and awareness
- Inclusive and diverse range of texts and material used by teachers
- Opportunities provided for group work and collaboration within class
- Weekly AEN meetings
- Weekly SNA meetings

Planning and Policy

- Training for staff (CPD) in delivering anti-bullying programmes.
- Training for teachers (CPD) of SPHE/CSPE
- Student Support Team meet weekly
- Transitions Programmes delivered for students to support transitions into post-primary and Senior Cycle.
- Yellow Flag Programme
- School of Sanctuary Programme
- Amber Flag Initiative
- Numerous anti-bullying weeks scheduled into the school calendar
- Jigsaw's One Good School
- Implementation of Mobile Phone Policy
- Implementation of IT Acceptable Use Policy

Partnerships and Relationships

- Consistent communication between school management, teachers, students and parents/guardians
- Programme of Check and Connect established
- Consistent engagement of Student Voice
- HSCL Teacher consistently liaise with parents
- Guest speakers may be invited to the school to address issue of bullying
- Collaboration with community organisations for additional support e.g. SCP, Foroige, etc.
- Clear reporting mechanisms for all concerned regarding potential bullying behaviour

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

In the Morning:

- Students are welcomed into school at the main entrance
- Students are addressed during school assembly
- Seomraí Bhaile are supervised for students arriving early in taxis

In Class:

- A designated teacher is timetabled to supervise classes for every period during the school day.
- If students are being withdrawn from class, the teacher withdrawing the student should communicate this to the teacher timetabled to have the student at that time.
- Teachers record attendance using VSWare
- Teachers monitor students in class and report any concerns accordingly

During Lunch Breaks:

- Supervision roster is implemented during designated lunch breaks.
- Roster is emailed to all staff and put on noticeboard of staffroom
- Students do not socialize in classrooms during lunch breaks
- Key areas throughout the building are supervised
- Designated staff also walk the corridors to ensure safety

Visitors:

- All visitors must sign in at the main office
- Visitors must wear visitor badge provided by main office if entry is permitted

General Supervision and Monitoring:

- All staff continuously monitor the school premises and students throughout the day

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Subject teachers, Year Heads, Junior and Senior Cycle Coordinators, Deputy Principal and Principal will collaborate to address bullying behaviour.

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:

Determining if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred:

When bullying behaviour is reported, alleged or suspected, staff will notify the relevant Year Head(s) and Coordinator(s) (Senior Cycle and/or Junior Cycle).

Year Head(s) and Coordinator(s) will work with staff to investigate the matter to establish if bullying behaviour has occurred.

Year Head(s) and Coordinator(s) will notify Principal and Deputy Principal that an investigation is taking place.

Year Head(s) and Coordinator(s) can request support of Principal and/or Deputy Principal if necessary.

When investigating potential bullying behaviour, each student involved will be given an opportunity to outline their version of events individually.

It may also be helpful to ask students involved to write down their account of the incident. Support may be given to students if necessary to assist them in this.

Year Head(s) and Coordinator(s) will notify Principal and Deputy Principal of the outcome of their investigation.

Approaches to Addressing Bullying Behaviour:

All incidents of Bullying Behaviour should be recorded using Appendix A.

This record should be kept in student files.

Parents/Guardians will be notified once it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred.

Possible approaches to address bullying behaviour are as follows:

- Restorative Practice facilitated by teachers appropriately trained
- Mediation
- Behaviour For Learning Intervention
- Counselling
- Focused monitoring of students by staff
- Mentoring Programme
- Check & Connect
- Anger Management training
- Social Skills programme
- Implementation of Code of Behaviour

This list is not exhaustive.

In some instances, a student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than “look out” for them.

Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing.

Determining if Bullying Behaviour has Ceased:

The school will engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.

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.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the school will 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 will utilise the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

The school may use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

- Students will be raised at Student Support Team
- Restorative Practice facilitated by teachers appropriately trained
- Mediation
- Behaviour For Learning Intervention
- Counselling
- HSCL Visits
- Focused monitoring of students by staff
- Mentoring Programme
- Check & Connect
- Anger Management training
- Year Heads will provide support
- Social Skills programme
- Outside agencies may be engaged with to support

This list is not exhaustive.

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.

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)

Appendix 1: Bullying Incident Report Form

1. Name of student allegedly being bullied: _____

2. Year Group: _____

3. Name(s) and class(es) of students allegedly engaged in bullying behaviour:

4. Location of Incident(s):

5. Date of Incident(s):

6. Type of bullying behaviour (tick as relevant):

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Physical | <input type="radio"/> |
| Verbal | <input type="radio"/> |
| Extortion | <input type="radio"/> |
| Written | <input type="radio"/> |
| Exculsion/Isolation | <input type="radio"/> |
| Relational | <input type="radio"/> |
| Cyberbullying | <input type="radio"/> |

7. Brief description of bullying behaviour:

8. Date of engagement with parents and students re bullying behaviour:

9. Views of students and parents regarding actions to be taken:

10. Details of action taken:

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____