Donagh N.S

Bí Cineálta Policy

to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

# Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Donagh N.S 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.

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|  | Date consulted | Method of consultation |
| School Staﬀ | 31/1/25 | Survey & focus group |
| Students | 22/1/25 | Survey- closed and open questions |
| Parents | 31/1/25 | Survey- closed and open questions |
| Board of Management | February 2025 | Talk and discussion at B.O.M meeting. |
| Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers, after school staff | February 2025 | Short survey |
| Date policy was approved: March, 2025 | | |
| Date policy was last reviewed: This policy replaces the Anti- Bullying Policy , last reviewed in Nov 2023. | | |

# Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

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| 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): |
| 1. **Culture and Environment**   A telling environment is supported.  Ensuring pupils know who to tell in school  Safe physical space for pupils inside and outside (e.g. no unsupervised access to areas within the school)  Display boards / library shelves that reflect many different cultures  Visible supervision at breaks   1. **Curriculum**   Group/paired/mixed ability groups to promote connection & belonging  SPHE and RSE curriculum  R.E curriculum which promotes inclusion   1. **Policy and Planning**   AUP policy  Code of Behaviour  SEN policy  Professional development for staff  Child Safeguarding & Risk Assessment   1. **Relationships and Partnerships**   SPHE Programme: Weaving Well Being  See DEIS plan – links with the home and wider school community  Amber Flag Activities   1. **Preventing Cyber Bullying**   SPHE curriculum  Code of Behaviour  AUP policy  Safer Internet Day  Hotmail Heroes  All Aboard for Digitown  FUSE antibullying lessons  Webwise lessons  Be Kind online- Garda programme  Smart Phone Agreement   1. **Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour**   SPHE curriculum  INTO Same Love, Different Family poster/lesson   1. **Preventing racist bullying behaviour**   SPHE Curriculum  Show Racism the Red Card Day  Wide range of picture books/novels/posters representing people from different backgrounds  Primary Language Sampler Module   1. **Preventing sexist bullying behaviour**   SPHE Curriculum  Treating all students equally, regardless of their gender   1. **Preventing sexual harassment**   Stay Safe  Challenge gender stereotypes |

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| 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): |
| * Child Safeguarding & Risk Assessment * AUP policy * Code of Behaviour * Bí Cineálta policy |

**Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

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

the class teachers & the 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

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| 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): |
| *Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not a bullying behaviour. This will be dealt with through the Code of Behaviour.*  *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, if the bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. If the bullying behaviour continues in school, it will be dealt with under the guidance of this policy.*  *(see p.43 , Guidelines) Both the victim and the bully need support.*  *If a student reporting bullying behaviour requests that no action be taken, it is important that the teacher shows empathy to the student and deals with the matter sensitively. Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school takes no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school and be facilitated to do so, if they require supports (e.g language barrier.) However, whilst acknowledging the parent’s request, the school may decide that based on the circumstances , it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.*   1. When identifying bullying behaviour the teacher should consider the following:   What, where, when and why? See. Appendix C. Teachers will have a copy of this document in their files to refer to immediately, to ensure correct steps are taken. Record taking should be begin immediately, using the template for investigating and recording bullying behaviour.   1. If a group of student s is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group. 2. At the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other’s views. It may also be appropriate to ask the students to write down their account of the incident.   Where bullying behaviour has occurred:   1. Parents will be informed of what has occurred and what necessary steps will be taken. (Supports, educational programmes, supervision.) 2. The victim (s) will be offered support- this can vary, depending on the nature of the bullying. It is important that the student(s) experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured. Their views as to what steps should be taken to address the behaviour should be listened to. 3. The bully will also be offered support. This may be through talk and discussion with an adult in the school setting (e.g class teacher, SET.) The Code of Behaviour may employed at this stage if the principal and class teacher feel that it is necessary.   Records must be kept from Step 1. The record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents. The record should also include the views of the students and their parents to address the bullying behaviour.   1. FOLLOW UP:   The teacher must meet with the students and speak with the parents again no more than 20 days after the initial engagement. The school should consider the effectiveness of the strategies employed to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved. The school should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of the students and their parents in relation to the strategies employed.   1. Date and record the cessation of the bullying (if applicable) 2. Date and record any external supports/services that may have been required e.g. NEPS 3. Consider if ongoing supports and supervision are still necessary   **If the bullying behaviour has not ceased:**   1. The teacher should review the strategies in place with students and parents. Agree on a further timeframe for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased. 2. If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, the school will implement its Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a private matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school. 3. If a parent is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with this policy and the Bí Cineálta procedures, they should be referred to the school’s complaints procedures. 4. If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they 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. |

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| 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): |
| Providing an adult to talk to  Additional supervision, where necessary  Additional educational lessons and programmes as listed in Section B  Additional supports are available to address bullying behaviour:  NEPS  Oide  Webwise  DCU Antibullying Centre  Tusla |

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)