

Lisheen N.S

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address

Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Lisheen 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 Traveler 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 – in link below

<https://oide.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Bi-Cinealta.pdf>

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.

\*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 can’t control.

# 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 | 02/04/25 | Meeting at half day closure  Staff questionnaire |
| Students | 31/03/25 | Meeting with student council  Pupil questionnaire  Whole school – assembly |
| Parents | 26/03/25 | Email  Parent online questionnaire |
| Board of Management | 10/06/25 | Meeting |
| Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers | 16/06/25 | Email of proposed policy with feedback recommended |
| Date policy was approved: | | |
| Date policy was last reviewed: | | |

# 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): |
| **Culture and Environment; We strive to :**  • Create a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and a  consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.  • Involve parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying  behaviour is not tolerated.  • Support the idea that our school is a telling environment.  • Promote the concept of a trusted adult – stay safe linkage – who to tell.  • Create safe spaces in our school building and yards – visibility  • Incorporate artwork and signs to promote our school values – affirmation station, murals  Create a motto that promotes kindness and respect towards others  • Create a positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;  Strategies;   * A Telling Environment – Student council, Bus monitors, assembly, approachable staff. * Affirmation Stations * Timetables equipment and activities at break times * Friendship (Bí Cineálta) Week. * Opportunities for paired work/ buddy systems throughout school * Staff are briefed on the uniform approach we must take to record all reports of bullying – this is distributed to staff and a copy is displayed on the Staff Room notice board for ease of access also. * Child Friendly Anti- Bullying Policy was formed with pupil and parent input and is distributed to parents, children and staff to discuss. This policy outlines various ways to tell. * Adequate staff supervision * Acts of Kindness (Advent) * Wellbeing – Golden book awards * Inclusive signage * Zen Zone and movement zones   **Curriculum; We strive to :**  • Provide teaching and promote learning which is collaborative and respectful,  fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.  • Display a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.   * Explicitly teach and highlight the negative impact that ‘exclusion’ can have and how it can be classed as a type of bullying   Strategies;   * Acknowledgment of our diverse school population – celebrating diversity and   culture in our school through art, displays, photographs, international events.   * Model respectful behaviour towards colleagues, pupils and visitors in our school   Environment   * Promote kindness and respect during Assembly time.   Strategies;   * Walk Tall * RSE Programme * Stay Safe * S.P.H.E. * Acceptable Use Policy. * Safer internet Day * School Improvement plan – wellbeing * Child protection training * Zippys Friends programme * Friends For Life programme * Code of discipline * School ethos and mission statement * Zones of regulation programme   **Relationships and Partnerships; We strive to**  • Conduct workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise  awareness of the impact of bullying.  • Encourage peer mentoring and peer support  • Support active participation of students in school life and active participation of  parents in school life also.  • Engage students in actively contributing to the formation of a Child  Friendly Anti Bullying Policy to make them active participants in promotion of and  discussion of useful ways to identify and reduce bullying behavior, and highlight  procedure and how to deal with it if it does occur.  Strategies such as;   * Community events for inclusion organized by P.A * Support events in community – G.A.A., community council, parish council, local Gardaí * P/T meetings * Student council * School Buddy walks * Walking bus/cycling bus   **Policy and planning; We strive to;**  • To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with  school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.  • To promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and  discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.  • To ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through  which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.  • To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents  of bullying behaviour.  • To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying  behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.  • To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and  promoting anti bullying behaviour.    Strategies such as;  Staff training – CPD  S.P.H.E. Policy  R.S.E. policy  Enrolment policy.  Stay safe programme.  Staff Croke park meetings – planning ahead for activities, or new entrants to school – preventable approach,  The Acceptable Use Policy  Supervision policy,  Special Education Policy  Code of Behaviour  Effective leadership is a key component with Principal, Deputy Principal, APII  DLP, DDLP, and management focused on supporting the  implementation of this policy.  ***Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour***   * Explicitly teach the issues of cyberbullying and the importance of using technology safely e.g. fuse, Webwise * Monitor student use of technology in the classroom and on school grounds through the use of software to block access to certain sights e.g. social media platforms * Work with parents and students to educate them about the dangers of cyberbullying by facilitating outside speakers e.g. Gardaí or N.P.C   ***Preventing Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying Behaviour***   * Create a safe and inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. * Educate students about the importance of respecting all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. * Staff to upskill/ actively look for new programmes/ resources to aid this teaching.   ***Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour***   * Teach students about the history and impact of racism e.g. in S.E.S.E lessons * Promote diversity and inclusion in the classroom. * Provide support to students who have been targeted by racist bullying. * Ensure that library reading material represents appropriate lived experiences of   students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.   * Celebrate different cultures during the year, being aware of other countries celebrations/ important dates in their culture.   ***Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour***   * Teach students about the importance of gender equality e.g. Gender Equality Matters * Celebrate diversity at school and acknowledge the contribution of all pupils * Model gender equality behavior when handing out ‘jobs’ in the classrooms. |

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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): |
| ***Supervision***   * Staff supervision: All staff members should be trained to recognise and respond to   bullying behaviour. They should be present and visible in common areas and  yard during break times.   * Student supervision: Class teachers should supervise students during class time and   break times. They should be aware of what is happening in their classrooms and on  the playground.   * Visitor supervision: Visitors to the school should be supervised at all times. They   should not be left alone with students.   * Supervision policy to be reviewed regularly.   ***Monitoring***   * Incident reporting: The class teacher investigates all instances of reported or   suspected bullying behaviour with a view to establishing the facts and records on an  incident report form – consider what, where, when and why?   * Incident investigation: All reports of bully should be investigated promptly and thoroughly. Investigations can include group meetings, individual meetings, and requesting written accounts of the matter. This can include witnesses to the behavior. * It is important to remember that both the pupil who is experiencing the bullying behaviour and the pupil who is displaying the bullying behaviour both need support. * Where a student from our school is experiencing bullying behaviour from a source outside our school, although the school can not investigate the circumstance, it is important to support the student by monitoring the situation and offering advice to pupil/parent. |

**Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

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

Class Teacher and In School Management team.

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): |
| The whole school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The following approach and steps are based on the information contained in Chapter 6 of the BÌ Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.  Approach:  The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the students involved, rather than to apportion blame.  When addressing bullying behaviour, the teachers with responsibility will:   * ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured * seek to ensure the privacy of those involved * conduct all conversations with sensitivity * consider the age and ability of the students 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.   Stage 1 - Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred;  Bullying is defined 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.  Where bullying behaviour is suspected, parents/guardians report it to the class teacher.  To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour.  We will consider the following questions:  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?  If the answer to each of the questions above is Yes, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour, and the behaviour should be addressed using the BÌ Cinealta Procedures.  \*Note: One-off incidents may be considered bullying behaviour in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour If the answer to any of these questions is No, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.  Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school’s Code of Behaviour.   * When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred (Stage 1), teachers should consider what, where, when and why? as follows: (Note that these steps are required – as outlined in the Procedures): * Where one student is reported to be involved, the student should be engaged with individually at first. * Thereafter, this student and the student who is reported to be experiencing the bullying behaviour should be met together. * If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first. * Thereafter, all students involved and the student who is reported to be experiencing the bullying behaviour should be met as a group. * 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 * Each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting.   It may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s).   * Parents will be supported by the school, if needed, with recommendations for useful resources/guides to help them support their children,   Stage 2: Where bullying behaviour has occurred;   * Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred the parents of the students involved must 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. * It is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation. * All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the form and type of behaviour if known, 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.The record should be shared with the Principal.   Stage 3: Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred   * The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement. Important factors to consider as part of this engagement 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. * The teacher 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 the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded. * Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted. * Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased. * If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased. * If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then consideration should be given to 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. * If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the BÌ Cinealta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools they should be referred to the school’s complaints procedures (available on   our website).   * 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): |
| We take all instances of bullying behaviour on a case-by-case basis, but we may use the following approaches generally:   * All students involved will be checked-in with regularly and behaviour will be monitored carefully. * The teacher will check-in with parents too and will look for their ongoing support to monitor their child at home and to communicate with the school if needed. * We will use resources, as appropriate – including those developed by NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service), Oide (support service for schools) and from programmes/sites such as Webwise and FUSE. * Teachers will be encouraged to attend training in Restorative Practices. |

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, App, 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)