



# Scoil Mhuire

## **Scoil Mhuire Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Shankill 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 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.**

### Bullying:

It is a targeted behaviour.

It is a repeated behaviour

There is an imbalance of power

### Prevention:

Education and empathy generation are the foundations for knowledge, respect and inclusion.

### Support

Tangible and targeted supports to provide a framework for school communities to work

### Community

Inclusive school communities that are connected build positive relationships and partnerships.

### Oversight

Visible leadership inspires positive environments for children and the school community

## 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 17/02/2025</li><li>• 19/02/2025</li><li>• 12/05/2025</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Survey</li><li>• Half Day Inservice</li><li>• Staff Meeting Discussion</li></ul>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Survey</li><li>• Child Friendly Policy</li></ul>
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 07/05/2025</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Survey</li></ul>
Board of Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
Wider school community as appropriate.		
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

### 1. Culture and Environment:

#### We strive to :

- Create a positive school culture where all students feel welcome, safe, respected and valued.
- Create a positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
- Establish clear expectations for behaviour and enforce them consistently.
- Use Circle Practice in the classroom to build a positive culture and environment.
- Encourage open communication between students, staff, and parents.
- 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 – creation of a school charter promoting rights – equality, inclusion and respect.
- Encourage a sense of belonging with ownership over their own space through art and creativity.

#### Ways in which we work to achieve these goals are as follows:

- Staff are briefed on the uniform approach we must take to handle 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.
- Teach the children that we are a telling school
- Anti Bullying/RP/Friendship weeks. Activities such as Assemblies, Thoughts of the week, RP Twinkles, BeeHives, Random acts of Kindness, homework, Poster making, slogan making, etc
- Friendship Keepers – students in higher classes support younger classes on the yard to help with games and positive interactions. Minders at lunchtime also.
- Displays, problem solving circle visible in the yard, lanyards with questions
- Child Friendly Anti- Bullying Policy formed with pupil and parent input and distributed to parents, children and staff to discuss. This policy outlines various ways to tell.
- Parents receive information regarding useful information on Anti Bullying.
- Stay safe and SPHE lessons focusing on positive behaviour form part of curricular content in all classes.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
- Class and School Charter development as well as notice board to promote kindness and build responsibility amongst pupils.



## 2. Curriculum ( Teaching and Learning)

### 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.

### Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- Teach SPHE and RSE content which fosters student's well-being and self confidence as well as promoting personal responsibility for their own behaviours and actions.
- Model respectful behaviour towards colleagues, pupils and visitors in our school environment.
- To implement the RP Student curriculum programme - values - friendship keepers
- To focus on relationship pedagogy - small groups/one word whizzes/standing concentric circles/academic circles...
- RP on the agenda of every staff meeting.
- Curricular and Extracurricular activities can help to develop a sense of self worth, working together, inclusion and respect.
- Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.
- Acknowledgment of our diverse school population – celebrating diversity and culture in our school through art, displays, photographs, international events.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.
- An annual anti-bullying/friendship day/week.
- The Stay Safe will be fully implemented at appropriate times and levels in the school.
- Code of conduct for the classroom and playground drawn up with the children in September

### **3. Policy and planning**

**The aim of Scoil Mhuire's Bí Cineálta policy is to:**

- Develop a clear and consistent anti-bullying policy that is enforced by all staff members.
- 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 promote inclusiveness and diversity
- 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.
- The school's approach to tackling and preventing bullying will take particular account of the needs of pupils with disabilities or with SEN, will join up with other relevant school policies and supports and will endeavor to ensure that all the services that provide for such pupils work together.
- Approaches to decreasing the likelihood of bullying for pupils with SEN include improving inclusion, focusing on developing social skills, paying attention to cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.
- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.
- The Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision policy, Special Education Policy and Code of Behaviour as well as the Agree to Agree policy all support the implementation of the Bí Cineálta policy.
- Effective leadership is a key component with Principal, Deputy Principal and all middle management focused on supporting the implementation of this policy.

### **4. Relationships and Partnerships**

- Encourage open communication between students, staff and parents and emphasise the importance of positive relationships.
- Promotion of empathy, understanding and respect.
- RP for children, staff, parents and the B.O.M.
- Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as our parents' association, our HSCL, our various and multiple student committees and groups.
- Age and stage appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the student body in looking at their own behaviour – promoting acts of kindness and friendship, measures that build empathy, respect and resilience, being an active help to others and looking at the causes of and impact of bullying during SPHE lessons.

- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
- Encouraging peer mentoring and peer support
- Supporting active participation of students in school life and active participation of parents in school life also.
- Engaging parents and 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 behaviour and highlight procedure and how to deal with it if it does occur.
- Clear protocols are in place to encourage parents/guardians to approach the school they suspect that their child is being bullied.

### Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour

- Explicitly teach the issues of cyberbullying and the importance of using technology safely e.g. fuse
- Monitor student use of technology in the classroom
- Develop a social media policy for students. Work with parents and students to educate them about the dangers of cyberbullying by facilitating outside speakers e.g. Webwise, Digiwise.

### 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.
- Encourage peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities e.g. [All Together Now - Belong To - LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland](#)

### Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

- Teach students about the history and impact of racism e.g. Show Racism the Red Card. 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.

### Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour

- Teach students about the importance of gender equality e.g. Gender Equality Matters
- Celebrate diversity at school and acknowledge the contributions of all students.



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

- Staff at all times endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Digital Media Policy includes learning about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship.  
AUP also developed for technology in our school.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff and recorded on Aladdin using the template for this.
- School wide awareness raising on all aspects of bullying, supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities.
- Involvement of pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Kindness/ anti-bullying week, and other activities that can help to pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Refer to appropriate online behaviour when using devices and in SPHE lessons.
- Promote online safety events or material for parents
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school e.g. [www.tacklebullying.ie](http://www.tacklebullying.ie) , [www.antibullyingcentre.ie](http://www.antibullyingcentre.ie), Fuse, [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)
- Shared folder of resources for teaching of bullying including lessons from above websites – shared Google drive for all teachers to access.
- Challenge gender- stereotypes – equal participation of all. Equal recognition.
- Raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour and encourage students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.
- Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated and students "see themselves" in the school environment.
- Ensuring the library has material that reflects our diverse school population from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of sex.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex.
- Making clear that our school has a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment of any kind with enforceable policy - See Code of Behaviour.



## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- The class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form on Aladdin
- The Principal/Deputy will follow up after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased.
- All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.
- Principal will inform the Board of Management of incidents of Bullying.
- Anti- Bullying Policy coordinator is available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist class teacher in addressing concern

**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
- Ensure that there is a no blame approach.
- 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 school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:**

- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the 'Relevant Teacher(s)', the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' will use his/her/their professional judgement in relation to them, records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding the same.
- If it is established by the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' that bullying has occurred, the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The 'Relevant Teacher(s)' must record the bullying incident on the school information management system (Aladdin) by adding an Alleged Bullying Behaviour Report to the relevant pupil's file which will be visible on files on all other pupils named. The 'Relevant Teacher' must inform the Principal.

**The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore as far as is practicable, the relationships of the pupils involved (rather than to apportion blame).**

**With this in mind the school's procedures are as follows:**

- In investigating and dealing with bullying the teacher(s) will exercise his/her/their judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved. (Was the behaviour targeted, intended to cause harm and repeated. Once off incidents of inappropriate behaviour should be dealt with in line with the school's code of behaviour)
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the 'Relevant Teacher(s)'. 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 instances of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, caretakers and cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to the Class Teacher.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- On being informed of an alleged incident of bullying, the teacher dealing with the report will first interview the victim(s) and discuss the feelings which the victim(s) experienced because of the bullying behaviour.
- Initial investigations of bullying will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' should seek answers to questions of what, where, who, when and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about the other's statements.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after an interview by the teacher.
- Where the 'Relevant Teacher(s)' has/have determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- The "Relevant Teacher" does not apportion blame but should make an effort to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied. S/he emphasises that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter.
- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the "Relevant



Teacher" will complete a report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. This may be recorded on Aladdin under the Bi Cinealta tab, and uploading a file "Alleged Bullying Behaviour Report".

- If a pupil chooses to continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a once off occurrence. In this event parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted. The school should give parents an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the support for the pupil.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.
- Depending on the seriousness of the bullying some or all Supportive Interventions will be utilised (See School Code of Behaviour)
- Repeated incidents of bullying behaviour will result in the imposition of sanctions. Such sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness of the bullying behaviour. It must be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required that this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents and the school.
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parent must be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their rights to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.
- The School will maintain care for the victim over time. This will be done by speaking to the child a number of weeks after the incident to check on their continuing welfare. The child's parents will also be consulted.
- If a child makes a report of bullying, but asks that nothing is to be done about it, the relevant teacher will support the child appropriately to explore how it will be handled sensitively and how parents may be notified. If a parent does so, they must submit in writing that they require no further action to be taken, but even so, the school may still deem it necessary to be investigated and handled appropriately.

## **The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour**

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.

### **When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:**

- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying 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 the parents of those involved

### **Supporting Bullied pupils:**

- Ending the bullying behaviour,
- Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils,
- Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils,
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes,
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations,
- Making adequate counselling facilities available to pupils who need it in a timely manner (subject to available funding)
- Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

### **Supporting Bullying pupils:**

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet',
- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honorable thing and giving them praise for this,
- Making adequate counseling facilities available to help those who need it earn other ways of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others,
- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school),
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth,
- In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child,
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.



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: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## Bullying Report

### 1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name:	Class:

### 2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

Names:	Classes:

### 3. Source of Bullying concern/report

(Tick relevant boxes)

Pupil concerned	
Other pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	
Other	

### 4. Location of incident(s)

(Tick relevant boxes)

Playground		Toilets	
Classroom		Tour	
Corridor		Other	

### 5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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**6. Type of Bullying Behaviour** (tick relevant box(es))

<b>Physical Aggression</b>		<b>Cyber-bullying</b>	
<b>Damage to Property</b>		<b>Intimidation</b>	
<b>Isolation/Exclusion</b>		<b>Malicious Gossip</b>	
<b>Name Calling</b>		<b>Other (specify)</b>	

**7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

<b>Disability/SEN</b>	<b>Homophobic</b>	<b>Racist</b>	<b>Other</b>

**8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

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**9. Meeting with the children involved**

<b>Date of meeting</b>	
<b>Venue</b>	
<b>Attendees</b>	

**10. Details of actions taken**

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### 11. Action Checklist

Name of relevant teacher	
Date	
Has the Principal/Deputy Principal been informed?	
Who else needs to be informed?	
Has parental contact been made?	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

### Addressing Bullying Behaviour

1. **Determine if bullying behaviour has occurred.**  
Teacher(s) investigate as per school policy.  
Record as per Section 6.5  
If the behaviour is **NOT** bullying, deal with in line with your code of behaviour.  
If the behaviour **IS** bullying, proceed to Step 2.
2. **Record and Address**  
Record as per Bf Cineálta policy and section 6.5 Bf Cineálta.  
Inform parent(s) of parties involved at an early stage.  
Complete agreed actions as per your Bf Cineálta policy, monitor and evaluate.
3. **Review**  
No more than 20 school days after initial engagement, review with student(s) and parent(s)
4. **Determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased**  
If the bullying has ceased, continue to monitor.  
If bullying has not ceased, review strategies, seek external support, if appropriate and review within the agreed timeframe.
5. **Bullying Behaviour Update**  
Principal must include all bullying behaviour in their update to the B.O.M.  
Principal provides verbal update to the board  
Review policy if needed.

Refer to your Bf  
Cineálta Policy.  
Section 6 and  
appendix C Guide

When Bullying behaviour is  
reported. The teacher(s) with  
responsibility should.....

All incidences of  
bullying must be  
included in the  
bullying  
behaviour update.

