



## **Doorus N.S.**

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

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The Board of Management of Doorus 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 under the Bí Cineálta guidelines 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.

	Date Consulted	Methods of Consultation
School Staff	September/October 2024. March 2025 – Staff meeting questionnaire for staff and students and parents documented,	Staff meeting – All staff provided with opportunity to discuss Bí Cineálta Action Plan. Staff discussion and feedback.
Students	March 20 <sup>th</sup> 2025	Students given a questionnaire to seek their input. All suggestions and language taken into account.
Parents	02 <sup>nd</sup> April, 2025	Google form questionnaire sent out to parents.
Board of Management	June 2025	– Agenda item at meeting review and discussion of policy leading to consultation and ratification.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		Bí Cineálta Policy available to view on school website and made available to all visiting teachers, student teachers and work placement of students.
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

## **Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour**

*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):*

***The following areas were considered by our school when developing measures to prevent bullying behaviour.***

### ***Culture and Environment***

***Scoil Chiaráin will strive to –***

- 1) Foster a positive and inclusive school culture and environment.*
- 2) Create a school environment where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe connected and supported.*
- 3) Ensure that the school leadership team have a consistent, standard approach and policy in addressing bullying behaviour.*
- 4) Involve parents as active partners in their child's education and encourage parents to foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated.*
- 5) Support the idea that our school is a telling environment.*
- 6) Develop within the school the concept of a "trusted adult" who will be there to support and reassure the student that they have done the right thing by reporting the behaviour.*
- 7) Create safe physical spaces in our school and playground which are easier to supervise students.*
- 8) Ensure equal participation recognition and opportunity for every child of different race, culture and gender.*
- 9) Create a positive school culture and atmosphere which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity and encourages pupils to discuss, disclose and report on incidents of bullying in a non-threatening environment.*

***Ways in which we work to achieve this.***

- 1) Each member of the school staff management has a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour. Hard copy available in office and on line.*
- 2) Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils on arrival throughout the day, on yard, at break times and dismissal.*
- 3) A uniform approach on handling all reports of bullying. All staff will be provided with record book and Appendix that is relevant. Available in the office.*

- 4) *Foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting a culture of empathy respect among our school community including staff, parents and children.*
- 5) *Involving students by promoting kindness, care for each other and inclusion through activities like e.g., anti-bullying week – designing child friendly anti-bullying posters.*
- 6) *Involving parents through open communication providing useful information on anti-bullying, parental talks on online cyberbullying, mobile phones and on stay safe SPHE lessons.*
- 7) *Everyday at school by focusing on positive behaviour, in our daily activities esp. in Comp Oideachas, Stay Safe & SPHE*
- 8) *Ensuring that students are encouraged and supported through the concept of a “trusted adult”.*

### **Curriculum & Teaching**

*Scoil Chiaráin strives to promote teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful providing students with the opportunity to foster inclusion diversity and develop a sense of self-worth. Staff will display a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact*

### **Ways in which we work to achieve this –**

- 1) *Incorporate and integrate anti-bullying messages throughout the school curriculum and into extracurricular activities.*
- 2) *Teach student about bullying and its effects, explicitly addressing issue of cyber bullying and identify bullying.*
- 3) *Teach SPHE and RSE contents which fosters students’ well-being and self-confidence as well as promoting personal responsibility for their own behaviour and actions.*
- 4) *Integrate lessons on respect, empathy and diversity into the curriculum. Ensure whole school implementation of the Stay Safe Programme at appropriate levels and times.*
- 5) *Allow time for group work, collaboration working in small groups and with other classes e.g., buddy reading as this helps to build a sense of connection belonging and empathy among students.*
- 6) *Encourages students to take responsibility for their own behaviour e.g., in drawing up e.g., a code of conduct for their classroom, on yard in September, behaviour, reflection sheets, buddy friends on the playground.*
- 7) *Acknowledgement of our diversity among our community – celebrate our diversity and culture through art, displays, photographs of grandparent’s days etc.,*
- 8) *Develop our “Walk & Talk” morning sessions which encourage students to talk and build up the concept of the “trusted adult”.*

## **Policy and Planning**

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

- *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.*

*The Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision policy, Special Education Policy and Code of Behaviour all support the implementation of the Bí Cineálta policy.*

*Effective leadership is a key component with Principal, Deputy Principal, DLP, DDLP and all management and staff focused on supporting the implementation of this policy.*

## **Relationships and Partnerships**

*Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as Parents Association, our walk and talk, sport and extra-curricular activities.*

- *Organising 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.*

**Preventing cyber bullying behaviour:** *(Note – the digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their data. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. Children between 13 and 16 must have parental permission to sign up to social media services. Most social media platforms have a minimum age requirement and for the majority of these, it is 13 years old. Therefore, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account. We strive to prevent cyber bullying by –*

- 1) Staff will endeavour at all times to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- 2) Promoting digital citizenship
- 3) Implementing SPHE curriculum and Stay Safe Programme
- 4) Open conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online
- 5) Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour
- 6) Promoting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online.
- 7) Promote online safety events, websites e.g., [www.tacklebullying.ie](http://www.tacklebullying.ie), [www.antibullyingcentre.ie](http://www.antibullyingcentre.ie), fuse, [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) and material for parents/guardians

### **Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour**

#### **We strive to prevent homophobic/transphobic bullying by:**

- 1) Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as displaying relevant posters.
- 2) Encourage peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- 3) Challenging gender-stereotypes, equal participation for all, equal recognition and participation.
- 4) Ensuring the library and resources includes material which reflects respectful behaviour of all irrespective of sex.
- 5) Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of sex.
- 6) Ensuring that all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex.
- 7) Making clear that our school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment of any kind with enforceable policy.
- 8) Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.
- 9) Raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying.

### **Preventing racist bullying behaviour**

#### **We strive to prevent racist bullying by:**

- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
- Providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, and to encourage communication with their parents
- Ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds

***Preventing sexist bullying behaviour:***

***We strive to prevent sexist bullying by:***

- *Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex*
- *Ensuring all student have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex*
- *Celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contribution of all students*
- *Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home*

***Preventing sexual harassment:***

- *Promoting positive role models within the school community*
- *Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment by teaching the children that Scoil Chiaráin aims to create equal participation, recognition and opportunity for all children.*

The school has the following supervision and monitoring practices in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Children are supervised on arrival in school when doors open at 9 am. by class teachers. Parents are asked not to drop children before this time and are reminded of this during the year as needed.
- A supervision rota is drawn up at the beginning of the year and reviewed as necessary.
- At risk/vulnerable pupils are brought to the attention to staff on duty.
- Teachers on planned leave (EPV etc.) organise with colleagues to cover supervision as appropriate.
- Hot spots in the yard are monitored closely during break times.
- Children are supervised as they leave school in the evening. Children in the junior classes are brought to the door by their teachers and handed over to parents/minders at 2 pm.
- Adequate supervision is arranged on all school outings-competitions, tours, swimming etc.
- Children use of IT is closely monitored in the class and class teachers have responsibility for monitoring children's use of technology at all times.
- Teachers taking children for walks/trips outside the school grounds organise adequate supervision.

## 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 DDLP will follow up with class teacher after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased.
- All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour
- Principal will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.
- Deputy principal, in her role as DDLP

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

- Follow the procedures and guidelines as outlined in the Bí Cineálta procedures
- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured
- Seek to ensure the privacy 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 (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

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:

**The following three questions should be considered to determine if bullying has occurred**

- 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 Bí Cineálta procedures. Chapter 6. Addressing Bullying Behaviour.

- 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. The recording template at Appendix 1 must be used to record all incidences of bullying
- 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 incidences 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 interview by the teacher.
- Where 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 report will be filed in the office under Bí Cineálta tab. These records should be in line with data protection guidelines.
- 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.
- If a pupil chooses to continue the bullying behaviour, this can no longer be considered a 'once off occurrence'.
- 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 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.

- The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for the pupil. Depending on the seriousness of the bullying some supports such as NEPS, Oide, NCSE may be used.
- 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 filed in office and on-line.
- 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 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 (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

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.

#### **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 and 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:**

- 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 is advocated.

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this
- Making adequate counselling facilities available to help those who need it learn 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 behaviour in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child

### **Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools**

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 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: Thomas Mahon

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 9/6/2025

Signed: Martina Farney

(Principal)

Date: 9/6/2025