



# Lismullen National School

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Principal: Violet Molloy Deputy Principal: Jenny Dempsey



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

Ratified: 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025

## **Criminal Behaviour**

The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years of age.

Coco's Law criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images.

If bullying behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence it may be considered an assault.

If bullying involves discrimination or hate speech targeting a student based on their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, it may be considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989.

If bullying behaviour involves sexual harassment or sexual assault this may also be considered criminal behaviour.

An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour.

## **Bullying behaviour may become a child protection concern**

When bullying becomes a child protection concern it results in significant physical or emotional harm or where it becomes a persistent and severe problem and measures taken to address it are not effective.

When determining whether bullying behaviour is a child protection matter the school should contact Tusla's social work department for advice. The following factors should be considered:

- The impact of the child
- Appropriate action taken by the parents
- Appropriate action taken by the school
- Engagement of child/family with support services such as NEPs

## **How bullying behaviour occurs**

### **Direct - Physical**

- Pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping
- Damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, schoolbooks and other learning material
- Contents of schoolbag or pencil case scattered on the floor
- Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden

### **Direct - verbal**

- Name calling in relation to size of clothing or gender identity, students accent, distinctive voice characteristics, academic ability, race or ethnic origin

### **Direct - written**

- Writing insulting remarks about a student in public places
- Passing around notes about or drawings of a student

## 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	8 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 9 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Training: VM and AG School Closure: staff training Questionnaires sent to staff Focus Group
Students	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2024 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2025	Assembly: devise a student friendly poster (Appendix 4) Focus Group: devise a student friendly policy (Appendix 5)
Parents	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 9 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 28 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Questionnaires sent to parents Policy emailed to parents Discussion at PA Meeting Policy emailed to parents Focus Group
Board of Management	11 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	Meeting

## 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):

### Culture and Environment

#### **A telling Environment**

- Victims should be reassured that if they tell, something will be done about the bullying in a safe manner and all reported incidents will be dealt with.
- Class lessons to be provided to enable pupils “how to tell” (telling protocol)
- Bystanders can be the key to resolving bullying and if anyone witnesses bullying behaviour, they should always tell a teacher. This is not telling tales but a means of protecting others.
- Get a parent(s)/guardian(s) or friend to tell on your behalf.
- Use a worry box in class.

## **Relationships and Partnerships**

- Student council
- School clubs
- Parents Association
- Support parents with language barriers: Aladdin
- Provide workshops for staff, parents and pupils
- Promoting acts of kindness
- Giving the senior classes responsibility to run a cake sale and playground monitors.
- Teachers and 6<sup>th</sup> class pupils play rounders during Active Week.
- Parents are invited to sports day.
- Grandparents are invited to Grandparents day for 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes.

## **Preventing cyberbullying behaviour**

Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Implementing the current SPHE curriculum (1999)
- Communicating the Acceptable Use Policy (Internet Contract)
- Hosting Online safety events for parents
- Hosting Internet Safe Day
- Encouraging parents not to purchase smartphones until Confirmation
- A smartphone ban in the school
- Organise a visit from the local Garda Community service to discuss online safety

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

Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Implementing the current SPHE curriculum (1999)
- Maintaining an inclusive environment such as displaying relevant posters
- Conducting workshops for pupils, staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behavior
- Encouraging pupils to speak up who witness homophobic behavior

## **Preventing racist bullying behaviour**

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Implementing the current SPHE curriculum (1999)
- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students see themselves in their school environment
- Conducting workshops for pupils, parents and staff to raise awareness of racism
- Encourage bystanders to report when they witness racist behavior
- Providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of the students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with parents
- Inviting speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds.
- Ensuring the class libraries have reading material and textbooks that represent students from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

**Incidents**

- Any incidents in the playground should be recorded on an incident report form.
- The Principal should always be made aware of incidents.
- Teachers on duty at break times should report any incidents to the class teacher immediately.
- When we are aware of potential flashpoints with children in relation to potential bullying or unacceptable behaviour, the number of teachers on duty will be increased at break times with the specific aim of identifying any transgressions and monitoring behaviour
- Similarly if parents/teachers indicate a worry or concern about a particular child on the yard, all teachers are notified so that the worry / concern can be addressed or managed satisfactorily.
- Class teachers or the teacher on yard call parents to report serious incidents.

**Wet Days**

- On wet days, children remain seated in their classrooms during break times.

**School trips**

- A minimum of 2 staff members travel to events such as sporting competitions, trips to places of historical interest, tours, and swimming lessons.

**All bus journeys**

- Special attention paid to and children reminded about; road safety, seat belts, behaviour on the bus.
- Teacher to dismount first and instruct children on where to line up.
- The Principal contacts the bus company and bus inspector if there are instances of bullying on the school bus arriving to school in the mornings or at home time.

**Visiting Teachers / Sports Coaches / Guests**

- All visiting teachers, coaches or guests should be approved by the Principal prior to the visit.
- Class teachers must be present and in charge at all times when a guest is present in their class.

**Work experience / Teaching placement students**

- The students will work under the direction of the class teacher, and for Teaching Practice will agree timetables of lessons before the placement begins.
- The class teacher will be present and in ultimate charge.
- Garda vetting for 16 years of age and over.

**School activities**

- Children should be supervised adequately for all school activities such as gardening and P.E.

### **Requests to take no action**

Parents may make the school aware of bullying behaviour and request that the school takes no action. Parents should put this request in writing. Schools may decide to address the bullying behavior in certain circumstances.

Pupils may ask a member of staff to look out for them rather than to take action. It is important the member of staff shows empathy to the pupil, deals with the matter sensitively and works out a plan to address the matter and how best to inform their parents. It is important that the pupil feels safe.

### **Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased**

The teacher must engage with the pupil and parents no later than 20 days from the day the bullying behaviour was first reported to review the situation.

If it has ceased then ongoing supervision and monitoring will occur.

If the bullying behavior has not ceased the teacher should review the strategies used and arrange to meet with the pupils and parents again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased. The school should consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. Sanctions are only a matter between the relevant pupil and their parents.

### **Recording bullying behavior**

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded documenting the form and type (Appendix 1). 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*.

### **Complaints process**

If a parent is not happy with how bullying behavior has been addressed by the school in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the parental complaints procedure. A complaint can be made to the Ombudsman for Children if they feel the school's actions have a negative effect on the pupil ([ococomplaint@oco.ie](mailto:ococomplaint@oco.ie)).

### **Supports**

The following supports are in place for schools:

- NEPs
- Oide
- Webwise
- National Parents Council
- DCU Anti Bullying Centre
- Tusla

**Review date:**

Signed Kevin Heary Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed Valle Muller Principal

Date 20/03/2025

Details of actions to be taken: Parent's perspective	Details of actions to be taken: Pupil's perspective

Date bullying behaviour was reported to class teacher
Date bullying behaviour was reported to Principal
Date bullying report was recorded on the Student Support file (where applicable)
Review date before the 20 days
Monitoring after the 20 days
Date bullying ceased

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Class Teacher)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal \_\_\_\_\_



### Appendix 3 Review of the 'Bí Cineálta' Policy

1. When did the Board formally adopt its 'Bí Cineálta' policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the 'Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools'?

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / 20\_\_\_\_\_

2. Where in the school is the student-friendly 'Bí Cineálta' policy displayed?

3. What date did the Board publish the 'Bí Cineálta' policy and the student-friendly policy on the school website? \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / 20\_\_\_\_\_

4. How has the student-friendly policy been communicated to students?

5. How has the 'Bí Cineálta' policy and student-friendly policy been communicated to parents?

6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's 'Bí Cineálta' policy and the 'Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post- Primary Schools'?

7. Does the 'Bí Cineálta' policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour?

8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the Principal at every ordinary Board meeting over the last calendar year?

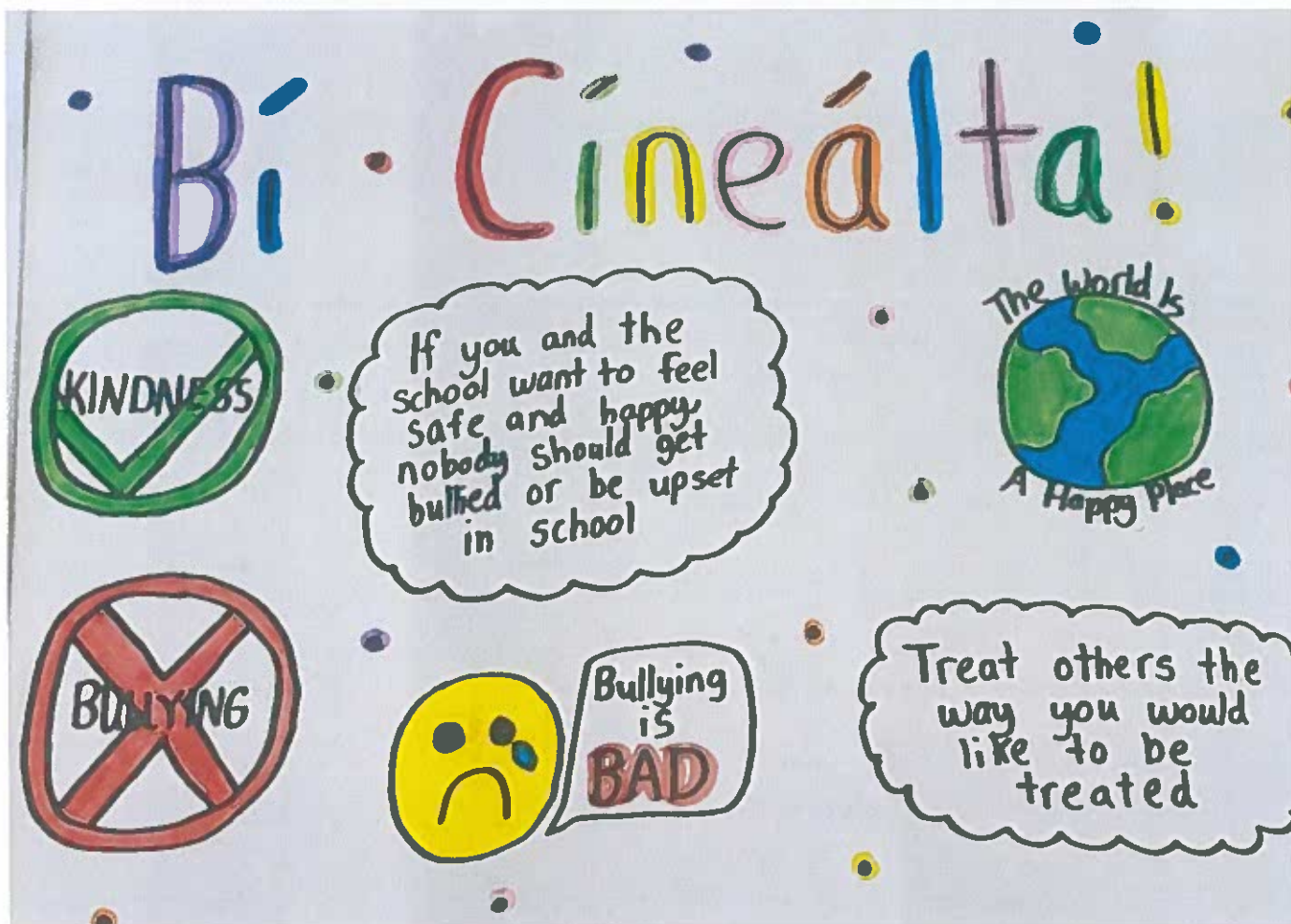
9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour?

10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's *Bí Cineálta* Policy?

11. Have the prevention strategies in the *Bí Cineálta* policy been implemented?

12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour?

Appendix 4 Student Friendly Poster (Junior Infants to 2<sup>nd</sup> classes)



## Appendix 5: Student Friendly Policy

*We want our school to be a place where everyone can feel safe and happy.*

*Every pupil as a right to be who they are.*

<p><b>What is bullying?</b></p> <p>Verbal: Name calling, teasing spreading rumours</p> <p>Emotional: Leaving you out, hurting your feelings, making threats</p> <p>Physical: Punching, kicking, hitting, pushing and spitting</p> <p>Cyber: Saying unkind things online, sharing images without asking</p> <p>Prejudice: Calling you names because of your skin, or religion, and any other differences</p>	 <h3>Is it Bullying?</h3> <p>When someone says or does something unintentionally hurtful and they do it once.</p> <p><b>That's RUDE</b></p>  <p>When someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they do it once.</p> <p><b>That's MEAN</b></p> <p>When someone says or does something intentionally hurtful and they keep doing it even when you tell them to stop or show them that you're upset.</p> <p><b>That's BULLYING</b></p>
<p><b>If you are being bullied:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell them to stop</li> <li>• Tell a grown up</li> <li>• Take a screenshot of the evidence</li> </ul>	 <p>say "no"</p>  <p>get away</p>  <p>tell someone</p>
<p><b>If you see someone being bullied:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell the bully to stop</li> <li>• Tell a grown up</li> <li>• Be an upstander not a bystander</li> <li>• Treat them the way you'd like to be treated</li> </ul>	 <p><b>DON'T BE A BYSTANDER</b></p> <p><b>BE AN UPSTANDER</b></p> <p>Make a difference... today.</p> <p>HELP!</p>