

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour



Bray School Project National School

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Introductory Statement

The Board of Management of Bray School Project National School has adopted this policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2024)*.

As a school community, we are committed to ensuring that all students are safe, respected, and valued. We recognise the serious and lasting impact that bullying can have and acknowledge our shared responsibility in creating a school climate where kindness, inclusion, and empathy flourish.

This policy reflects our ethos as an Educate Together school and is consistent with the values of Equality, Justice, Democracy, and Respect as embedded in our Learn Together curriculum.

Definition of Bullying

In line with *Bí Cineálta* and *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying*, bullying is defined as:

Targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm can be physical, social or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships. Further elaboration is available in Chapter 2 of the [Bí Cineálta Procedures](#).

Isolated incidents or conflict that do not meet this definition are addressed through our Code of Behaviour.

Section A: Policy Development

The development of this policy was informed by extensive consultation with the school community, including staff, students, parents/guardians, and the Board of Management. Surveys were conducted in Spring 2025 to gather feedback on the school's climate, understanding of bullying, and suggestions for improvement.

This feedback has directly shaped the content and structure of this policy, ensuring it reflects the lived experiences and insights of our school community.

Group	Date	Method
Staff	May 2025	Survey (Microsoft Form)
Students	May 2025	3rd–6th (Microsoft Form)
Parents/Guardians	May 2025	Microsoft Form
Board of Management	June 2025	Feedback & review
Wider Community	June 2025	Individual feedback (where relevant)

Student Feedback (3rd–6th Class)

- 98% of students reported that the school is a happy and safe place, and 93% felt the same about their classrooms.
- 98% indicated they had learned about bullying in school.
- 82% said they had an adult at school they could talk to if worried about bullying.
- Some students expressed uncertainty about what constitutes bullying, and a few noted feeling left out or unsure if certain behaviours were bullying.
- A small number identified the yard, car park, or routes to school as areas where they felt unsafe.
- Student suggestions included:
 - Creating anti-bullying stations or suggestion boxes.
 - Increasing adult supervision and awareness.
 - Promoting inclusive games and activities.
 - Educating students on the impact of bullying and encouraging kindness.
 - Recognising kind behaviour and using restorative approaches.

Parent/Guardian Feedback

- Nearly all parents felt their children were safe and knew who to talk to if concerns arose.
- Most were aware of the anti-bullying policy, though some requested clearer access and communication.
- A minority reported incidents of bullying, with mixed satisfaction regarding how these were handled. Some felt responses were delayed or insufficient.
- Recommendations:
 - Stronger follow-up and communication with parents.
 - Clearer reporting channels (e.g. avoiding WhatsApp for sensitive issues).
 - Continued training and workshops for parents and staff.
 - A zero-tolerance approach for repeated bullying behaviour.

Staff Feedback

- All staff surveyed had engaged in professional learning related to bullying prevention, including Bí Cineálta training, restorative practices, and trauma-informed approaches.
- Staff reported using SPHE, Circle Time, class charters, role play, and modelling respectful behaviour.
- Some noted the complexity of addressing bullying involving neurodiverse students and the need for further CPD in this area.
- Suggestions:
 - Continued CPD on neurodiversity and inclusive practices.
 - Strengthening communication with parents.
 - Reinforcing a whole-school culture of kindness and respect.

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

Our approach is rooted in proactive prevention and values education. Specific strategies include:

- SPHE Curriculum: Explicit lessons on friendship, respect, inclusion, and conflict resolution. Stay Safe, Walk Tall & RSE: Taught school-wide to enhance protective skills and respectful relationships.
- Ethical Education (Learn Together): Promotes moral reasoning, empathy, and social justice.
- Circle Time & Class Charters: Encourage student voice and shared norms.
- Annual Anti-Bullying/Kindness Week: Including pupil surveys and whole-school activities.
- Student Council: Acts as a platform for student perspectives and leadership in kindness initiatives.
- Positive reinforcement. Highlighting prosocial behaviors throughout daily school life.
- Cyber Safety Lessons: Annually taught, using Webwise, HTML Heroes and CyberSafe Kids content.
- Staff CPD: Ongoing training in wellbeing, restorative practice, and inclusion.
- Yard Supervision Protocols: Enhanced adult presence and reporting systems.
- Buddy Systems & Peer Supports: Especially during key transitions (e.g. Junior Infants with 5th Class, Senior Infants with 6th Class).

Section C: Responding to Bullying Behaviour

Key Personnel:

All school staff play an important role in recognising potential bullying behaviour. Given their diverse responsibilities, any staff member may receive a disclosure or witness bullying in the course of their work e.g. teacher, SNA, caretaker, secretary. Students may choose to confide in any trusted adult within the school community. Initial concerns are addressed by the class teacher, supported where appropriate by the Support Teacher, Principal or Deputy Principal.

Core Principles:

- Respect and privacy for all students involved.
- Listening and reassurance for the student affected.
- Age-appropriate and sensitive communication.
- Involvement of parents/guardians at an early stage.
- Prompt action and ongoing review.

Process:

1. Reporting

Concern raised by student, parent, or staff to the class teacher.

2. Investigation (within 3 school days)

Conversations with those involved (individually), notes recorded on Aladdin.

3. Determination

Teacher assesses whether the incident meets the threshold for bullying. Parents are informed.

4. Action Plan (20-school-day window)

Support and interventions put in place for all parties, e.g.:

- Restorative conversations or reflections.
- Reflection sheets (age-appropriate).
- Increased yard monitoring.
- Support groups or Circle Time.
- Home-school communication.

5. Review (Day 20 and beyond)

Follow-up with students and parents. If bullying has not ceased, strategies are reviewed and escalated as needed under the Code of Behaviour.

Recording Bullying Behaviour

All confirmed bullying incidents are logged using the Aladdin system, in line with the national template. Records include:

- Type, location, and date of behaviour.
- Names of involved parties.
- Actions taken and supports provided.
- Follow-up and resolution outcomes.

Where a child protection concern arises, the Child Protection Procedures are followed.

Complaints

If parents are dissatisfied with the response, they may follow the school's Complaints Procedure, available on the school website.

After completing this process, unresolved complaints may be directed to the Ombudsman for Children at ococomplaint@oco.ie.

Support for Students

Supports available include:

- Social skills or regulation groups.
- Circle Time and peer support.
- Targeted SPHE lessons (Stay Safe, Walk Tall, RSE).
- Use of FUSE, HTML Heroes, All Together Now.
- One-to-one support with SNAs, AEN teachers or the Principal.
- External referrals (if needed): NEPS, CAMHS, TESS, Primary Care.

Section D: Oversight & Review

The Principal will provide a summary report at each Board of Management meeting, highlighting overall trends related to bullying behaviour without including any personal or identifying information. The policy will be reviewed annually following consultation with staff, students, and parents to ensure its ongoing relevance and effectiveness. A student-friendly version of the policy is displayed in the school, and the full policy is accessible on the school website. and in hard copy.

Signed: _____

(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date: _____

Signed: _____

(Alan Bedford, Principal)

Date: _____

For more information, please refer to the Bí Cineálta Guidelines available at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/b%c3%ad-cine%c3%a1ta-resources-for-primary-schools-post-primary-schools-and-parents/>