Bí Cineálta Policy

To

Prevent and Address

Donabate Portrane Educate Together

Table of Contents

1. **<u>Introduction Statement and Rationale</u>**

The Board Donabate Portrane Educate Together 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.

2. <u>Vision and Aims</u>

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.

3. <u>Definition of Bullying</u>

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.

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.

4. 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	February 2024 May 2025 June 2025	Neuro-Inclusion Teacher Survey Bí Cineálta In-School - Half Day Training Consultation Day Bí Cineálta Team Meeting
Students	May 2025	Pupil Questionnaire
Parents	May 2025 October 2025 September 2025	Parent Questionnaire Student Council Meeting – Student Friendly Bí Cinealta – discussion and review

		Share policy with Parents' Association for feedback
Board of Management	September 2025	Share policy with BOM for feedback and approval
Wider School Community	September 2025	Share Policy on Website Share Policy with all staff and traffic wardens
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):

Culture and Environment

- Teachers promote positive attitudes towards bullying prevention through curricular initiatives, inclusive language and modelling respectful practices. The children are taught to "Respect yourself, respect others, respect our school."

- Students identify a trusted adult in school every year. This may include the class teacher, a Special Needs Assistants or a Special Education Teacher.
- A "telling environment" is actively promoted, encouraging pupils to report concerns to a trusted adult.
- Yard Rules and Guidelines – safe physical spaces, staff wear hi-vis vests, friendship benches, PlayWorks games, yard helpers from senior classes support junior classes
- Murals and artwork which promote the school's values - "No Child an Outsider".

Curriculum

- The SPHE curriculum makes specific opportunities to explore bullying and related areas such as belonging, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
- The Learn Together Curriculum promotes critical thinking, respect for diversity and active citizenship. Pupils explore fairness, equality, and social responsibility, reinforcing a whole-school culture of inclusion and respect. Diversity is celebrated.
- The Stay Safe programme enhances children's self-protection skills, including their ability to recognise and respond to bullying.
- The Golden Rules are taught in all classes. Staff write in The Golden Book(located in staff room) acknowledging observed demonstrations of exceptional work by an individual/group of students on the core values of our school. These observations are shared at assemblies.

- RSE supports children in developing moral, caring and responsible approaches to relationships and sexuality.
- Learning about and celebrating neurodiversity.
- Emotional Regulation programmes to develop pupil's self-awareness and self-regulation skills.
- Restorative Practice approach used to address social, emotional or behavioural incidences constructively. We recognise, explore and learn about the three distinct approaches to resolving conflict- negotiation,

mediation and arbitration. Restorative practice supports accountability, consequences and interventions to support growth.

- ∉ Additional resources and programmes may include: Walk Tall, Roots of Empathy, Social Detectives, Circle Time, Classroom Wellbeing Boxes, Classroom Suggestion Boxes.

Policy and Planning

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):

- ∉ Bí Cineálta Policy
- ∉ Code of Behaviour
- ∉ Child Protection
- ∉ Health and Safety
- ∉ Critical Incident Policy
- ∉ SPHE Policy
- ∉ Learn Together Policy
- ∉ Risk Assessment
- ∉ Acceptable Use Policy
- ∉ Complaints procedure
- ∉ Special Education Policy

Relationship and Partnership

- ∉ A Leadership Role for Bí Cinéalta has been appointed.
- ∉ A Wellbeing Team works together to promote and coordinate wellbeing and inclusion.
- ∉ Professional learning for staff in emotional and behavioural wellbeing, Bí Cineálta and Restorative Practice is encouraged and supported.
- ∉ Pupils have a voice through the Student Council, which meets regularly with School Leadership to share concerns and suggestions.
- ∉ Positive relationships and strong communication links with parents are fostered through the Parent Teacher Association, Aladdin, open-door

practices, yard interactions at drop-off and pick up, and in-class volunteering

∉ Respectful and expected behaviours are reinforced in Acquaintance Meetings with teachers and parents at the start of the year.

∉ Classroom rules are co-created with pupils at the start of each year to place respectful expected behaviours at the core of classroom culture.

∉ Age-appropriate awareness initiatives through SPHE and Learn Together look at the causes and impacts of bullying behaviour including those dealing with navigating friendships, identity-based bullying, racist bullying, homophobic/transphobic bullying, sexism and sexual harassment.

Preventing Cyber Bullying Behaviour

Please Note – 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. Therefore children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account

∉ An annual focus on cyberbullying includes pupil and parent talk.

∉ Promoting digital citizenship

∉ Implementing the SPHE curriculum

∉ 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 becoming a repeated behaviour

Homophobic, Transphobic and Sexist Bullying Behaviour

- Inclusive physical environment – challenging gender stereo types through displays, resources and learning spaces that reflect diversity and promote equality

- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities.

- Promoting Peer Support - through SPHE and Learn Together, as well as assemblies and whole-school initiatives, foster empathy, understanding

and peer support among students. Learn about all types of bullying behaviour including homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour.

- Celebrating Pride Month– Incorporating picture books and a broad range of resources that include LGBTQ+ individuals and families as part of everyday life, where their identities are incidental rather than central to the narrative.
- Celebrating Human Rights Month
- Celebrating Wellbeing Month

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The staff with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are as follows:

Board of Management:	– Anti-bullying report to the BOM at every meeting – Respond to on-going behaviours in line with the school code of behaviour and Bi Cineálta Policy
Principal Deputy Principal	– Provide support for staff, parents and pupils in dealing with any incidences of bullying.
The Leadership Team:	– Model positive and respectful interactions – Annual policy review – Supporting class teachers.
Teaching Staff	– Model positive behaviour. – Proactively address bullying and respectful behaviours – Investigate and record incidents of bullying behaviour, seek support from leadership team
SNAs	– Model positive behaviour. – Assist teachers in monitoring pupils and activities on the yard and around the school – Report any witnessed behaviours of concern to a teacher or member of the leadership team.
Administrative, Ancillary and External Staff	– Report any witnessed behaviours of concern to the relevant adult

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

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):

- ∉ All members of the school community have access to the Bí Cineálta policy and should know what to do if they experience or witness bullying behaviour

- ∉ When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the staff member should consider the following:
    - ⊄ What, Where, When and Why?
    - ⊄ If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged with individually at first.
    - ⊄ Thereafter, all students involved may 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.
    - ⊄ Parents will be informed
    - ⊄ Each student should be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting.
    - ⊄ It may also be helpful to record or ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident.

- ∉ It is important for school staff to be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour. One or more than one staff member can be present

when engaging with students individually or in a group.

- Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support.
    - It is important that the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour is engaged with without delay so that they feel listened to, supported and reassured.
    - School staff should identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

- The following principles must be adhered to when addressing bullying behaviour:
    - 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 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
    - Where bullying behaviour has been identified as having occured, inform parents of those involved at an early stage and work with parents throughout the process

Requests to take no action:
- A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than "look out" for them. Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.
- Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school or be facilitated to do so where there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent's

request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

⊄ Where bullying behaviour has occurred when students are not under the responsibility of the school, but the behaviour has an impact in the school, the school will support the students involved (see below).

⊄ Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in the school, but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school will   support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken.

⊄ 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.

Determining if Bullying Behaviour has Ceased:

⊄ The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention. They should consider:
  ⊄ the nature of the bullying behaviour
  ⊄ the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
  ⊄ the relationship between the students involved
⊄ Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour. It can take time for relationships to settle and for supports to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behaviour occurred.
⊄ If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

- Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school should consider 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.

Recording Bullying Behaviour:

- All bullying behaviour will be recorded on our Aladdin system. 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, engagement with external supports and the outcome. Please see appendix for suggested template.
- The Aladdin report is password protected, but will be made available to staff members where necessary to support pupils
- At each Board of Management meeting, the Principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out:
    - The number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting
    - Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing
    - Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of the school year

Complaint Process

- If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
- In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and/or parent 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.
- The Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie

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):

- A range of appropriate in-school supports and opportunities will be provided for the pupils affected by bullying to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience. These may include:
    - Social skills groups
    - Nurture Programme
    - Buddy Programmes
    - Group work such as circle time
    - Revision of specific Stay Safe lessons with class groups
    - Individualised support with a trusted adult (SET, SNA…etc)
- If pupils require counselling or further supports the school will endeavour to liaise with the appropriate agencies. This may be for the pupil affected by bullying or involved in the bullying behaviour. This may include:
    - NEPS psychologist
    - Primary Care – Jigsaw
    - GP
    - Education Welfare Service
    - TUSLA

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.
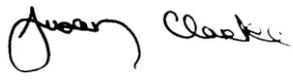
This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers. Please see Appendix

Signed: *Cathal Brady.*
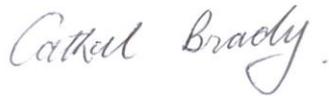
Date: 10th September 2025

(Chairperson of **BOM**)

Signed: *Susan Clarke*

Date: 10th September 2025

(Principal)

5. Appendix

- A. Child friendly policy

- B. Bí Cineálta Recording Meeting Forms

  - Bí Cinealta Recording Forms.docx

- C Annual Review Board Of Management Template

  - Appendix D Board of Management Review

- D DPETNS Meeting Form

Donabate Portrane Educate Together

Bí Cineálta
Kindness Policy

Our school has a Bí Cineálta Policy because we want everyone at our school to feel safe and happy.

Bullying is...
Several
Times
On
Purpose

STOP BULLYING
DON'T STAND BY!
STAND UP
STAND STRONG
STAND TOGETHER

I should...
Start
Telling
Other
People

Who can I tell if I am being bullied or see bullying?

My parents or guardians

An adult in school

My friends

How will the school help?

- We will listen to you
- We will check what you want to happen
- We will talk to your parents
- We will talk to the other pupils involved
- We will talk with the other pupil's parents
- We will work out a plan together

Is it working?

- We will check with the pupils every year to see if the Bí Cineálta Policy is working.

- You can share your ideas or worries using the Wellbeing Box

Let's make DPETNS a safe and happy place for everyone

Appendix B For Editable Version<u>Bí Cineálta Recording Forms.docx</u>

Bí Cineálta First Recording				
Student/Students: *If a group of students are involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first, and then as a group.*	**Staff Member:** **Date when staff member was first engaged:**		**Can the behaviour be identified as bullying? Bullying behaviour....**	
			Is targeted	
			Intentionally causes harm Physically, Socially and/or emotionally	
			Is repeated over time Or, if online, can be one incident	
			Involves an imbalance of power	
When bullying occurred, date/time:			**Total** *Behaviour is identified as bullying only if the score is 4 Otherwise, follow the Code of Positive Behaviour procedures*	
Type of Behaviour	**Where Bullying Behaviour Occurred**		**Types of Bullying Behaviour**	
Direct Bullying Behaviour Types:	**Inside School**		Disablist bullying behaviour	
Physical bullying behaviour	School yard		Exceptionally able bullying	
Verbal bullying behaviour	Classroom		Gender Identity bullying	
Written bullying behaviour	Corridors		Homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying	
Extortion			Physical appearance bullying	
			Racist bullying	
			Poverty bullying	
Indirect Bullying Behaviour	**Outside School ***		Religious identity bullying	
Exclusion	Coming to school		Sexist bullying	
Relational	Leaving school		Sexual harassment	
Online Bullying Behaviour	Online		Social bullying	

What happened?	Why?
How can we ensure that the bullying stops? What supports or strategies will we use?	**Team Engaged with Bí Cineálta Process**
	Parents: **Date parents were engaged:** **Staff:** **Students:**
Planned review date (within 20 days)	

Bí Cineálta Review	
Date: _____	
What supports or strategies were used?	Parents:
	Staff:
	Students
	Have the strategies been successful in addressing the bullying behaviour?
	☐ - Yes. Ongoing supervision and support may still be required, continue to monitor
	☐ - No Review and consider alternative strategies, or, if these strategies continue to be unsuccessful consider using strategies from Code of Behaviour. Next steps will be individually dealt with between the school, the student and their parents

Appendix D

Donabate-Portrane

Educate Together

Meeting Form

Date of Meeting: _____   Pupil Name/Class: _____
                                              (if applicable)

Purpose of meeting: _____

_____

People in attendance: _____

_____

Discussion _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Decision(s) made/agreed: _____

_____

_____

_____

Action Taken/Follow Up: _____

_____

_____

_____

Signed_____