Appendix A
School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Tynagh 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 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.

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	25th August	Meeting
Students	10th - 14th November	Lesson
Parents	12th November	Survey
Board of Management	29th September	BOM meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	12th November	Survey

Date policy was approved: 29th September

Date policy was last reviewed: 2024

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):

5.1 Culture and Environment

A telling environment

- Promote positive and respectful relationships through highlighting positive behaviours during the school day and celebrating this in assemblies.
- Encourage open communication and encourage children to disclose incidents of possible bullying behaviour. Children can identify safe trusted adults.
- Promote inclusion and diversity by celebrating different cultural events and opportunities for all to contribute to the wider school community.
- Opportunities for all students to participate in class and whole school activities to nurture self esteem. Assemblies, sporting events, trips, sharing stories and work in front of peers and teachers.

A Trusted Adult

- Concept of trusted adults introduced by lessons and teaching, and reinforced during school days.
- Positive parental engagement and communication.
- Trusted adult should reassure the student they have done the right thing by reporting

the behaviour. A trusted adult should continue to support students as appropriate while the behaviour is being addressed.

Creating safe physical spaces in schools

- Weekly visits by a caretaker.
- The playground is broken up into specific areas for different games.
- Student and parent voice (survey) feedback on unsafe spaces.

Supervision

- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils throughout the school day.
- Staff are encouraged to engage with students during break times.

5.2 Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- Promote inclusion and diversity by celebrating different cultural events in our curriculum and assemblies.
- Opportunities for all to contribute and celebrate culture to the wider school community.
- Opportunities for all students to participate in class and whole school activities to nurture self esteem. Assemblies, sporting events, trips, sharing stories and work in front of peers and teachers.
- SPSHE (Social Personal HealthEducation) and RSE (Relationships Sexuality Education) curriculum aims to foster students' well being, self confidence and sense of belonging and develop students' sense of responsibility for their own behaviour and actions.
- Learning about different religions in our RE curriculum and Cultures in History and geography.

5.3 Policy and Planning

- Bi Cinealta Policy and Student Friendly Bi Cinealta Policy
- School Code of Behaviour displayed
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Sen Policy
- RSE policy
- Pupil Voice, through feedback and designing Child Friendly Policy
- Staff meetings and planning
- Annual review of Bi Cinealta Policy

5.4 Relationships and Partnerships

- Strong interpersonal connections.
- Age appropriate materials
- Leadership opportunities for students. For example 6th Class run and organise Sports day
- Promoting acts of Kindness by celebrating positive behaviour during school day and in assemblies.
- Encourage appropriate questioning in class and opportunities for children to share.

Preventing specific types of Bullying

- Engage with the whole school when creating and reviewing with Bi Cinealta Policy, to ensure it is well understood by all.
- Engage with a wider community who are in regular contact with students.
- Showing diverse role models and challenging stereotypes.

5.5 Preventing cyberbullying behaviour

- The digital age of consent is 16 years. Children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account.
- Promoting digital citizenship.
- Implementing SPHE curriculum

- Open conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
- Referring to appropriate behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour.
- Promoting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online.
- Holding internet safety day.

Note - the digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before social media or internet companies can collect, process and store their data. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. Children between 13 and 16 must ave 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.

5.6 Preventing homophobic / transphobic behaviour

- Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated
- Modelling respectful behaviour by staff of all, irrespective of sex
- Encourage peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex
- Challenging gender stereotypes.

5.7 Preventing racist bullying behaviour

- Fostering school culture where diversity and where students see themselves in their school environment.
- Having cultural diversity of the school and wider school community visible on display and online.
- Encourage peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour.
- Help students identify racist behaviours through curriculum.
- Inviting speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds.
- Ensuring that library material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- Support school staff to support students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents.
- Providing support to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students and to encourage communication with their parents.

5.8 Preventing sexist bullying behaviour

- Members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex.
- All students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex.
- Celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging contributions of all students.
- Challenging gender stereotypes and showing a range of role models
- Encourage parents to reinforce these values of respect.

5.9 Preventing sexual harassment

- Promoting positive role models within the school community.
- Challenging gender stereotypes.
- Promote mixed gender collaboration.

> 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):
>
> **Supervision**
> - Two members of Staff to be present to supervise at small break and lunch time.
> - Children are accompanied by at least two staff members on school trips.
>
> The Board of management confirms that appropriate and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

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):

Identifying if bullying behavior has occurred

When considering if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher should consider the following; what, where and why?

Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group?

- Intentional and knowingly causing harm.

Is the behaviour repeated over a period of time?

- Intentional behaviour is repeated over a period of time.
- If you post something online that can be shared again by others.

Is there an imbalance of power?

- Are there any differences that make the person or group more vulnerable?
- Size, strength, age, peer group, ability, religion, social status, money, ethnic origin, disability.

If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually. It may also be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account. Thereafter, all students involved should meet up as a group and give their account.

If bullying has occurred

- Ensure the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured
- Seek to ensure privacy of those involved.
- Conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- Consider the age and ability of those involves
- Listen to the view of the student who is experiencing the behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- Take action in a timely manner
- Inform parents of those involved. Consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour outlined in the school's Bi Cinealta policy.

Not one approach works in all situations, therefore it is important to decide on an approach best suited to its own circumstances. The school can also consider using the School's Code of Behaviour.

- All students should be supported after the incident to help better manage difficulties and their needs are met.
- Set date to review.

Recording bullying behaviour

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded on 'Alleged Bullying Record' form . The record should document the following.

- The events of the incident, where, when, who
- The form of bullying behaviour if known.
- Any students accounts should be kept
- The date of the initial engagement with students and parents.
- The record should include views of the students and parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.
- Any action taken
- A review of the bullying behaviour to determine if it has ceased and the views of the students and parents in relation to this.
- If a student chooses to continue with the bullying behaviour or is no longer a one of occurrence. 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 support for the pupil.
- Any engagement with external services/support should be noted

Records should be retained in accordance with school records policy and data protection regulations.

Request 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. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them or others. Where this occurs it is important to:

- Show empathy and deal with the matter sensitively.
- 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 they feel safe.
- It must be made clear to the student that other parties may need to be informed for their own welfare.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour and request no action to be taken. Parents should put this request in action. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, the school may decide that based on circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

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):

Approaches to support those who experience bullying

- Ensure the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured.
- Indicate the bullying is not their fault
- End bullying behaviour
- Agree on regular check-ins where appropriate.
- Helping students raise self esteem by encouraging them to take part in activities to develop friendships and celebrate their skillset.

Approaches to support those who display bullying behaviour

- Making it clear that when a student is doing the right thing that the behaviour is reinforced and praised.
- Challenge and correct negative behaviours.
- Agree on regular check-ins where appropriate.
- Making adequate opportunities to discuss problems that may occur and strategies to help them manage their responses.
- Helping students raise self esteem by encouraging them to take part in activities to develop friendships and celebrate their skillset.
- Seek resolution and offer a fresh start, and the opportunity of reform.

Approaches to support those who witness bullying

- Ensure they feel listened to and reassured.
- Indicate behaviour is wrong.
- Remind them it is important to protect those experiencing the bullying behavior.
- Remind them to talk to their Trusted Adults.
- Remind them of how to identify bullying behaviour.
- Discuss how best they would like to be supported.

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: F. Seamus Bohan_____ Date: 29/09/2025_____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: Jack Perez_____ Date: 29/09/2025_____

(Principal)