Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Mol an Óige CNS 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 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):

1. Culture and Environment

   o Foster a school ethos of inclusivity and respect, reflecting Steiner educational principles.
   o Promote a culture of kindness and cooperation through morning verses, circle time, weekly assembly and storytelling.
   o Ensure all staff model positive behaviour and respectful interactions.
   o Regularly review (1st staff meeting of every month) and enhance supervision in small yard spaces to promote safe play and interactions.
   o Celebrate diversity through school assemblies, festivals and cultural appreciation events.
   o Extra adult in Junior Infant classroom.

2. Curriculum

   o Integrate themes of kindness, empathy, and inclusion into the Steiner curriculum through storytelling, drama, and artistic expression.
   o Deliver Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE) lessons focusing on anti-bullying awareness and emotional literacy.
   o Incorporate discussions on diversity, identity, and respect into classroom activities. *Links with GMGY.*
   o Use the Steiner curriculum framework for early years to foster social-emotional development.
   o Supervised and supported free play in younger class.
   o Use of outdoor classrooms.

3. Policy and Planning

   o Code of Behaviour
   o Child safeguarding statement
   o SPHE Policy
   o Maintain and regularly review (every October) the school's anti-bullying policy in line with **Bí Cineálta** guidelines.
   o Prominently display the student friendly Bí Cineálta policy on notice boards around the school and in classrooms.
   o Ensure all staff, pupils and parents are aware of the procedures for reporting and addressing bullying incidents by circulating summary in early correspondence of each year.
   o Develop a restorative justice approach to conflict resolution and behaviour management.

By implementing these prevention strategies, the school aims to create a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment for all pupils.

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):

1. Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour you should consider the following questions:

   o Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
   o Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
   o 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.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher 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 will be met as a group where appropriate.

At the group meeting, each student will be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views. Each student will be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting. It may also be helpful to ask the students (4th to 6th class) involved to write down their account of the incident.

2. Where bullying behaviour has occurred

A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

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.

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.

A student's agency or sense of power can be decreased when they experience or witness

- o Managing the bullying behaviour.
- o Supporting the pupils who have experienced bullying behaviour, displayed bullying behaviour and witnessed bullying behaviour.
- o Promote a positive school culture where pupils feel safe, respected and valued.
- o Raising awareness of the appropriate programs and teacher training.
- o Helping pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills. For example, participation in group work in class, team activities during or after school, small social groups with SET.
- o In dealing with challenging behaviour, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on positive reinforcement.
- o Child study.
- o Circle time.
- o Parent workshops.

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.
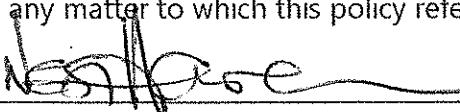
Signed: _____ Date: 24/06/2025

(Chairperson of board of management)
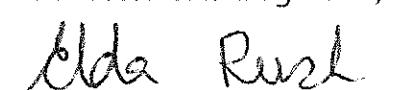
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(Principal)