

St. Cronan's Junior National School



Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Policy Summary Details

Policy Title	Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour
Date Written	May 2025
Date Ratified by the Board of Management	17 th June 2025
Review Date	June 2026

The Board of Management of St. Cronan's Junior National School 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.

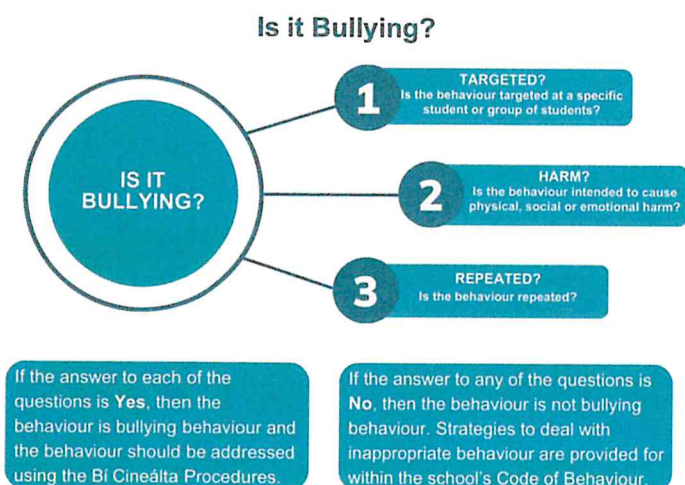
We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to 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.



Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is not bullying behaviour. However, 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 becomes a repeated behaviour. Disagreement between two students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups. Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that their behaviours are not deliberate or planned, but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control.

Bullying behaviour that occurs outside of school

As per the Bí Cineálta Procedures, 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 bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved.

Examples of prohibited bullying behaviours that can occur outside of school (non-exhausted list):

- Bullying behaviour that occurs in the area immediately outside the school, the local shops and the wider local area.
- Bullying behaviour that occurs on the journey to and from school.
- Bullying behaviour that occurs in organised clubs and groups outside of school such as sports clubs.
- Online bullying (cyberbullying) behaviour, along with other types of bullying behaviour can cause significant harm and have a lasting impact on students who experience this behaviour. Access to technology means that online bullying behaviour can happen any time and that the student's home is no longer a safe place. The nature of these technologies means that digital content can be shared and seen by a very wide audience almost instantly and the content is almost impossible to delete permanently.

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. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult 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. However, while acknowledging the parent’s request, schools have a right to act and may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying 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	30/05/2025 12/06/2025	In person meeting Survey
Students	12/06/2025	Survey
Parents	16/06/2025	Survey
Board of Management	17/06/2025	
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	17/06/2025	Cleaners, us drivers, bus escorts, lollipop lady, afterschool providers
Date policy was approved: 17 th June 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: n/a		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice provides the following four key areas that are essential for a holistic, whole-school approach to wellbeing promotion: Culture and Environment; Curriculum; Policy and Planning and Relationships and Partnerships. This section sets out the prevention strategies that are used by the school to prevent bullying behaviour.

Culture and Environment

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Display our five rules poster around the school:



- ☐ Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with additional needs and/or differences.
- ☐ Systems of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines may be used where appropriate.
- ☐ All staff will actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- ☐ Promote acts of kindness and celebrate 'Kindness Week' annually.
- ☐ Focus on transitions – use mosaic documents for pre-school to primary school transition and in-house Transition programme for Junior School to Senior School.
- ☐ Create a telling environment – children are encouraged to report bullying behaviour and are supported when they do.

Curriculum

- ☐ Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- ☐ The implementation of the Social Physical and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum, according to our school plan, including the Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE), Welcome to Well-being (Junior Infants – 1st Class), Weaving Well-being 2nd Class and Stay Safe Programmes.
- ☐ School-wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence-based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, programmes to teach about cyberbullying (e.g. Webwise teachers' resources and lessons from www.cybersafekids.ie)
- ☐ Picture/story books can be used to teach important concepts – all families can look different, we all look different but are valued etc.
- ☐ Group work/collaboration
- ☐ Supporting regulation breaks and regulation tools when needed

Policy and Planning

☐ Have our child-friendly Bí Cinealta Policy on display prominently around the school.

☐ Policies that relate to Bí Cinealta Policy:

-Code of Behaviour

-Acceptable Use Policy

-Child Safeguarding Statemen

-Statement of Attendance Strategy

-SPHE Policy

-Sen Policy

-SSE – Wellbeing in Education

☐ All staff, to the best of their ability, will ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision

Relationships and Partnerships:

☐ Catch the children being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.

☐ At assemblies, school rules are reinforced on a regular basis.

☐ Raise awareness of the definition of bullying behaviour and how the school deals with such behaviour.

☐ Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.

☐ Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.

☐ Support the active participation of students in school life through formal and informal structures, e.g. circle-time activities, assemblies, 2nd class buddies and paired readers.

☐ Support the active participation of parents in school life, e.g. being a member of the Parents' Association.

☐ We have a Nurture Room that can be accessed by identified children needing a Soft Start in the morning

☐ Working restoratively: We use Restorative Practice. We use the following questions:

Restorative Practice questions for St. Cronan's J.N.S

1. What happened?

2. What were you thinking when that happened?

3. I wonder how (insert child's name) feels?

4. ***What can we do to make it better? (infants)**

*How can we make sure this does not happen again?

(1st/2nd)

Strategies to prevent types of bullying behaviour:

Preventing Cyberbullying:

The best way to address cyberbullying is to prevent it happening in the first place. As a Junior National School, the access to information and communication technologies is generally class based and monitored. Our Acceptable Usage Policy details the levels of supervision in place when on line.

While pupils do not need a mobile phone while in school, we recognise that some parents provide their children with phones for outside hours. Mobile phones are not permitted in school.

Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following:

- ☐ implementing the SPHE curriculum: implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship.
- ☐ having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
- ☐ developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology.
- ☐ promoting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online.
- ☐ holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.

Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour:

All students including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students, have a right to feel safe and supported at school.

Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour include the following:

- ☐ maintaining an inclusive physical environment.
- ☐ Inclusive books around the topics of gender stereotypes, disability and the various types of families are available in our school library
- ☐ challenging gender-stereotypes.
- ☐ encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour

Preventing Identity Based Bullying:

Approaches to decreasing the likelihood of identity based bullying for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) include:

- ☐ Paying attention to key moments such as transitioning from pre school to the Junior School and the Junior School to the Senior School.
- ☐ Cultivating a good school culture which has respect for all and helping one another as central.

- ☐ This school's prevention and awareness raising measures are appropriate to the type of bullying and take into account the age and gender of the pupils involved.
- ☐ We work to raise the awareness of bullying so that all members of the school community understand what bullying is and how the school deals with bullying behaviour.

Preventing Racist Bullying:

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following:
fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment.

- ☐ having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display.
- ☐ encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour.
- ☐ providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents.
- ☐ providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students
- ☐ ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Preventing sexist bullying behaviour:

Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following:

- ☐ ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex.
- ☐ ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex.
- ☐ celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students.
- ☐ encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home.

Preventing sexual harassment:

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include the following:

- ☐ promoting positive role models within the school community.
- ☐ challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

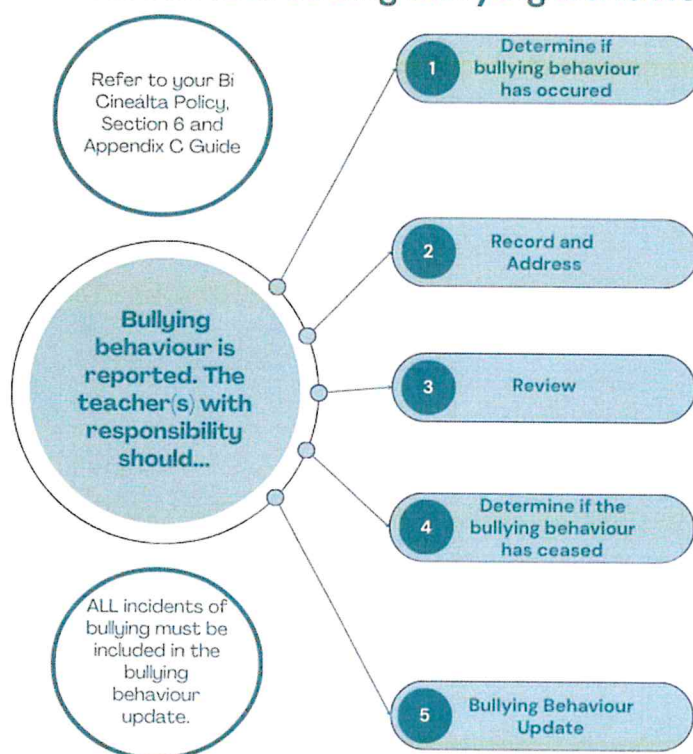
The Class Teacher

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:

Bí Cineálta: Addressing Bullying Behaviour



Teacher(s) investigate as per school policy. Record as per Section 6.5.

If the behaviour **IS NOT** bullying, deal with in line with your Code of Behaviour.

If the behaviour **IS BULLYING**, proceed to Step 2.

Record as per Bí Cineálta policy and Section 6.5, Bí Cineálta.

Inform parent(s) of parties involved at an early stage.

Complete agreed actions, as per your Bí Cineálta policy, monitor and evaluate.

No more than **20 school days after initial engagement**, review with student(s) and parent(s).

If bullying has ceased, continue to monitor.

If bullying has **not ceased**, review strategies, seek external support, if appropriate, and review within the agreed timeframe.

Principal must include all bullying behaviour in their update to the board.

Principal provides verbal update to the board.

Review policy, if needed.

1)Teacher/teachers investigate all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour with a view to establishing the facts and managing the behaviour. In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.

2)Teacher(s) should consider the following: who, what, where and when?

3)Teachers will be fair and consistent in their approach when addressing bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

4)Interviews will be conducted outside the classroom in a fair and consistent way. If a group has been involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first and, thereafter, as a group when each child will be asked for his/her account of what happened.

5)It may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident.

6)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.
- Inform parents of those involved.

7) Non-teaching staff such as special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them – report them to the class teacher if known.

8) School staff should know what to do when bullying behaviour is reported to them.

9) 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 in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.

10) Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support.

11) Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour.

12) The primary aim of the teacher investigating bullying is to resolve issues and to restore relationships. 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 bullying behaviour.

13) In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before. The parents/guardians of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school will give parents/guardians an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the support provided to the pupils. It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents/guardians) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter (under GDPR) between the pupil being disciplined, his or her parents/guardians and the school.

14) When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the teacher will complete a report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. Any written accounts recorded by pupils to be kept on their profile on Aladdin.

15) Staff will fill out a Bullying Incident report on Aladdin. This report will be attached to the child's profile on Aladdin. The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.

16) If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased. If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

17) If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school. If a parent(s)/guardian(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary Schools, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures. If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they 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 school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.

Supporting pupils experiencing bullying behaviour:

- ☐ Ending the bullying behavior.
- ☐ Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils.
- ☐ Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils.
- ☐ Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil.
- ☐ Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations.
- ☐ Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extracurricular group or team activities during or after school).

Supporting Pupils Engaging in bullying behaviour:

- ☐ Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet'.
- ☐ Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honourable thing and giving them praise for this.
- ☐ Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).
- ☐ Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth.
- ☐ In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child, - In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

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: Mary-Liz Donoghue Date: 17/06/2025
(Chairperson of board of management)

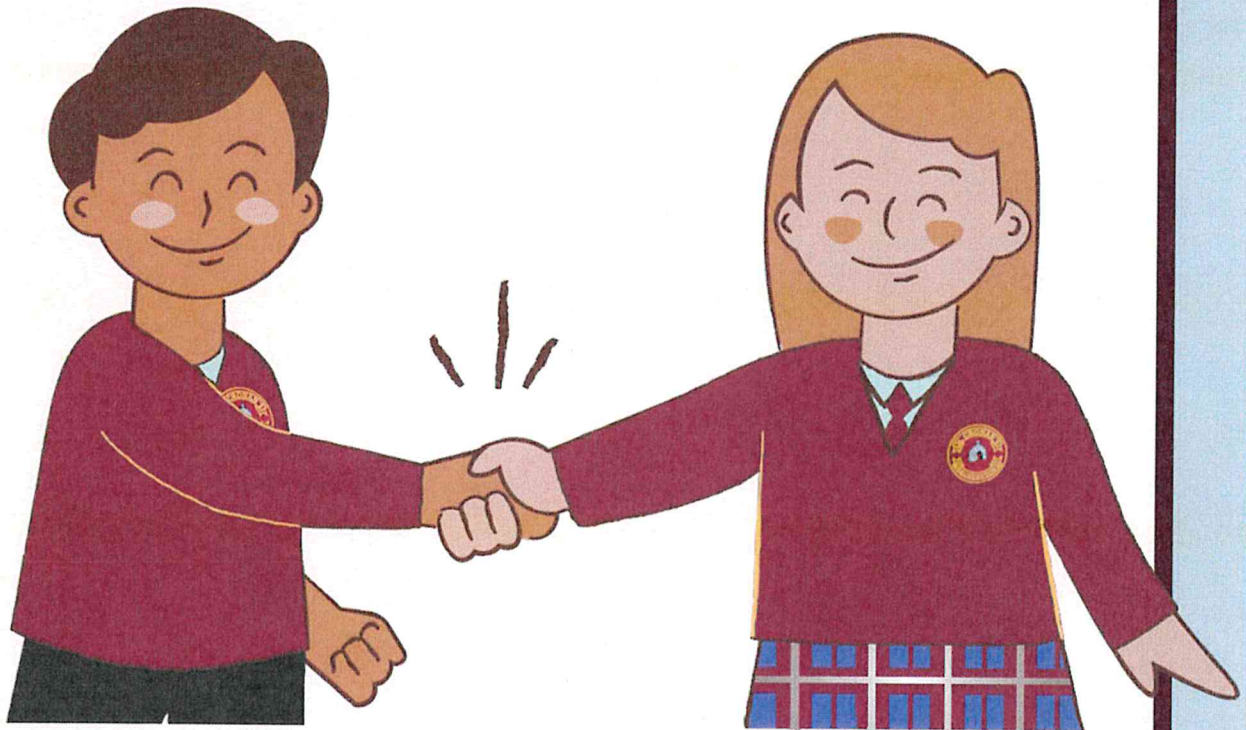
Signed: Edel Blake Date: 17/06/25
(Principal)

BÍ CINEÁLTA!

Our rules for a safe and happy school!

Get help!

Tell
someone!



If you think that you are being bullied or
someone else is being bullied, tell a
teacher or trusted adult. They can help!

Bullying is when someone keeps being mean to others over and over.

Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Names of Children Involved

Student(s) Experiencing Bullying _____

Student(s) Engaging in Bullying Behaviour: _____

Other Witnesses (if any) _____

2. Form of Bullying

(Refer to Section 2.5 – Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing)
- ☐ Verbal (e.g., name-calling, teasing, insults)
- ☐ Psychological (e.g., intimidation, manipulation)
- ☐ Cyberbullying (e.g., harmful messages, social media misuse)
- ☐ Relational (e.g., exclusion, spreading rumors)
- ☐ Other: _____

3. Type of Bullying

(Refer to Section 2.7 – Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Peer-to-Peer
- ☐ Teacher-to-Student
- ☐ Group Bullying
- ☐ Prejudicial Bullying (e.g., based on race, religion, gender)
- ☐ Sexual Bullying (e.g., inappropriate comments, harassment)
- ☐ Other: _____

4. Where and When

(If known)

-Location: _____

-Date/Time: _____

5. Date of Initial Engagement

- With Student(s): _____

- With Parent(s): _____

6. Views of Student(s)/Parent(s)

(Regarding the actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour)

7. Date of Review

(To determine if bullying behaviour has ceased) (reminder - 20 days)

- Review Date: _____

-Outcome: _____

- Views of Student(s): _____

- Views of Parent(s): _____

8. Engagement with External Services/Supports

(If any)

- Services Contacted: _____

- Details of Engagement:

9. Recording Teacher

- Name: _____

- Date Recorded: _____
