

# Doonaha National School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

## Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Doonaha 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.

## 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 2025	Google form - questionnaire
Students	february 2025	Google form - questionnaire
Parents	February 2025	Google Form - questionnaire
Board of Management	April 2025	Board of Management Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	February 2025	Verbal Questioning
Date policy was approved: 10/04/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 10/04/2025		

## 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):

A schoolwide approach (involving school management, staff, parents and pupils) to deal with the problem of bullying behaviour is a key element of effective practice. Bullying behaviour affects not only those immediately involved. It can affect everyone in the classroom, in the school and ultimately, in the wider community.

The school, as appropriate, will seek to involve and receive support from the other partners in community education i.e. those members of the wider community who come directly in daily contact with pupils. This could include the wider parent body, ancillary staff, bus driver and members of the local community. In certain cases, however, it may be necessary for the school to seek the assistance of other local persons and formal agencies such as NEPS, HSE social workers, community workers, Gardaí, local sports organisations etc

### Culture and Environment

1. Whole School Approach to promote a culture of kindness and respect - use of Friends for Life programme, social stories, Stay Safe, SPHE curriculum, RSE,

2. Amber Flag initiative. Create a positive and inclusive school culture and environment.
3. Buddy Area/Wellbeing Area - a safe physical space in the yard and encouraging peer support to challenge stereotypes. Encouraging students to speak up if they see any injustices and report accordingly. Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
4. Foster a school culture where diversity and difference is celebrated.
5. Simple and age-appropriate restorative practice procedures are drawn on in resolving conflicts
6. A telling environment - children will be encouraged to tell a trusted adult if they feel they are being bullied or if they witness bullying behaviour. Through the use of the child friendly 'Bí Cinneálta' policy, the children will be aware of the steps that will be taken by the school if bullying behaviour is reported.
7. Two staff members are on the yard at all times. Children are also supervised while they are eating. If any particular area of the school or yard has been identified as a place where bullying is occurring, supervision will be increased in this area.

## Curriculum

8. School wide awareness and Educational Training - to include pupils, parents/guardians and the wider school community. eg: local Garda coming to the school, Internet Safety Week, educating the students on Webwise, discussions with children at Assembly time in class and on an informal occasional basis. This list is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive – school-wide awareness raising will take a variety of forms as opportunities and needs present themselves, and as time and resources permit, bearing in mind the overall priorities and resources of the school as they evolve.
9. Doonaha NS will engage with the new Primary Curriculum framework. An emphasis on play based learning and collaborative learning will be seen in all lessons and classes. There will be opportunities to engage in group and pair work with a view to fostering a sense of belonging and empathy among students.
10. Universal Design for Learning is also to the forefront of our lessons, with a view to seamless integration of all the learners in our school. This in turn fosters a feeling of self-worth and success among our students.
11. A bank of anti-bullying resources is retained and developed in the school for teacher use in preventing bullying and addressing it.

## Policy and planning

12. Clear reporting mechanisms - ensure all parties understand the clear procedures for reporting any instances. These are listed in the Anti Bullying Policy on the school website and displayed in classrooms.
13. Annual Policy Review - conduct annual reviews of the anti bullying policy to ensure its effectiveness and any necessary updates. This will include consultation with parents, students, staff and Board of Management.
14. Our DEIS plan was written with the wellbeing policy and framework interwoven throughout. Every area has a wellbeing aspect to it.
15. Child Protection procedures are adhered to in the school.
16. A comprehensive child friendly policy that is accessible and understandable to all students - the school's anti-bullying policy will be displayed in every classroom and in public areas in English and Ukrainian. . This can be referred to by class teachers regularly throughout the school year.

### **Relationships and partnerships**

17. Parental involvement and partnership with parents - engage in regular communication and involve them in seasonal initiatives.
18. Children and parents will be actively supported to engage in school life. This will be through our summer camp, seasonal initiatives and social media.
19. Parents who find it difficult to engage with the school and participate in school life will be supported through the use of translating software and also with practical issues such as transport to the school.
20. Parents and children will be invited to participate in workshops to raise the awareness of the impacts of bullying.

### **The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour**

Two staff members are on yard each breaktime and the children are also supervised while they eat their lunch.

Walk and talk sessions with teachers when requested or when teachers observations deems it necessary.

Feelings box where children are encouraged to write any issues they might be having and place them in the box for the teacher to read.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

**G.Collins, P. Talty, L.Sexton, O.Clancy, J-M O'Connell**

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**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
- > carefully record all conversations and store securely.

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## **Steps that will be taken by the school to determine if Bullying behaviour has occurred**

### **Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred:**

To determine if the behaviour is Bullying behaviour, the following questions will be asked:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a particular student or group of students?
2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
3. Is the behaviour repeated?

If the answer is YES to all of these questions, the behaviour is bullying behaviour and it will be addressed using the following steps:

### **Addressing the bullying behaviour**

A - Each student involved will be spoken to individually.

B - If a group of students are involved, all students involved will meet with the relevant teacher. At this meeting each student will be asked to write down their accounts of the events.

C - All reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with. These include verbal, anonymous and written reports.

D - Parents of all parties will be invited to a face to face meeting individually.

E - All bullying incidents will be documented and only initials will be included.

These records will include type of bullying, form of bullying, when and where the bullying took place and the date of the initial engagement. We also include the views of the students and parents regarding the actions to be taken with the bullying behaviour. We will agree on a date for review with the students and parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased.

Details with external services if any will also be recorded. All records will be stored in a secured folder in Google Drive. Where a student has a SSF we will include a copy of the report in their SSF.

F - The needs of both the children experiencing the bullying and displaying the bullying behaviour will be taken into account.

G- Strategies will be put into place to prevent the continuation of the bullying behaviour. This will be done as a matter of urgency.

H. Increased supervision in the area in question. increased conversations with the children involved. Targeted lessons using Friends for life and the SPHE programmes.

## Review

We will engage in a review of the situation not more than 20 days after the initial report.

Students and parents will be contacted and involved in the follow up. The effectiveness of the strategies implemented by the school will be analysed.

The teacher will document the review to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased.

The nature of the relationship between the children involved will also be examined at this review.

the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased, will also be noted.

Ongoing supervision and monitoring of the children involved will continue even if it has been determined that the bullying behavior has ceased.

If the bullying behaviour has NOT ceased, the teacher will analyse the strategies used in consultation with the student and their parents. A timeframe will be agreed on for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying bullying behavior is continuing to display the behaviour, then consideration will be given to using strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as outlined in the school's Code of Behaviour.

If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter to be dealt with between the relevant student, their parents and the school.

If parents are not satisfied with how the behaviour is being dealt with , they should refer to the school's complaints procedures.

If a parent is not satisfied with how a complaint has been dealt with they can make a complaint to the children's Ombudsman if they feel that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the child.

**The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour**

**To support these children involved, each case will be dealt with on an individual basis. Following the procedures in this policy will help both parties.**

Pupils who have been bullied may need opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem.

- All pupils will receive the support and help they need. This may take the form of withdrawal to the SET on a regular basis.
- Follow-up meetings will be arranged for pupils, separately and together.
- Pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour should be encouraged to discuss them with teachers.
- Relevant SPHE programmes will be taught and referred to during lessons.
- Pupils involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis
- necessary changes to the environment will be made.
- increased supervision will be put into place. specifically where the bullying has occurred.
- If necessary the support of outside agencies will be used eg. NEPS, Oide and Webwise



## 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: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of board of management)

10/04/2025

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Principal)

Date: 10/04/2025

