



Bí Cineálta Policy To Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

**Drumbaragh National School,
Drumbaragh, Kells, Co. Meath.
Roll Number: 10801Q**

Introduction

The Board of Management of Drumbaragh 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 targeted behavior, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behavior is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.'

(Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools)

Our Bí Cineálta policy 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	3/4/2025 11/5/2025 19/05/2025	In-School Management Meeting Policy Formulation Whole Staff Training & Consultation
Students	30/04/2025	Classes Third to Sixth Questionnaire
Parents	30/04/2025	All Parents Online Questionnaire
Board of Management	13/05/2025	Policy Review Consultation
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):

Our Prevention Strategies are outlined using the four key areas of the Wellbeing Framework for practice to ensure that we are continuing to develop a holistic, whole-school approach to wellbeing promotion and addressing and preventing bullying behaviour. We accept that many of our school practices encompass more than one of these areas but will only list them under one heading.

Culture and Environment

- Drumbaragh NS staff are very proud of our school culture where bullying is considered unacceptable by all members of our school community and have developed a consistent approach to all incidents of bullying behaviour.
- We strive constantly to make Drumbaragh School a place, where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported. Respect, care, integrity and trust are fundamental in our approach to all relationships in the school.
- Staff consistently model high standards of behaviour modelled for the students and similarly set high expectations for their behaviour. Kindness, inclusion, empathy and

respect towards each other is promoted within our school and among our school community to ensure all children feel valued and safe.

- Telling environment – Children are encouraged to report any behaviours that impact them negatively and teachers take time to listen to and discuss these behaviours with the child or the class.
- All classroom teachers endeavour to be a trusted adult for the children in the class but on occasion, support teachers and SNAs may take on this role.
- The school is lucky enough to have three playground areas, a playground, and a large grass area for break times. The children have designated play areas, scheduled for classes to allow all children to access the different areas. While this has required extra supervision, it has allowed for virtually incident free break times.
- The Board of management, Parents' Association and staff work collectively to ensure that Drumbaragh NS is safe and welcoming. We have built up a wide range of well-maintained playground activities that children can access at break times.
- We have regularly changed noticeboards (Friendship Week, Affirmations) that promote our school values of equality, diversity, inclusion and respect.

Curriculum and Teaching

- Group work is used regularly in classrooms. Children are also given opportunities to engage in peer assessment.
- We are constantly developing our communal sense of self-worth through both curricular and extra-curricular activities. We are engaged in a wide range of athletic activities: football, Olympic handball, basketball, athletics, soccer, and swimming. We bring a range of visitors to the school (Biodiversity, School of Archaeology's Big Dig, Pride of Place, Local Authors, etc.).
- Our SPHE curriculum seeks to give the children the skills to maintain student's wellbeing, self-confidence and sense of belonging and develop student's sense of responsibility for their own behaviour and actions. Classes also regularly cover classes on anti-bullying to monitor the classroom culture and provide skills and opportunities to discuss situations they are coping with. These are taken from the Anti-bullying campaign or Fuse websites. We cover the Weaving Wellbeing programme in every class to provide the children with skills and tools to enhance their wellbeing and deal with stressors that life may throw at them. We strive to cater for any additional needs among the children with any other programmes that will promote their social and emotional learning.
- Classes regularly engage in lessons on how to stay safe online. We have a yearly visit from Paula O Connor, Don't be Mean Behind your Screen, on safety online. We also try to get the Gardaí in to talk to the classes about online safety.
- Our religious education programme encourages respect and understanding of all people, their different beliefs, perspectives and ways of living.

Policy and Planning

- We regularly review our Supervision Policy, especially if any staff or student has expressed concerns about safety on the yard. Timetables are reviewed and

additional staff are rostered if problems arise.

- Our SEN team are constantly monitoring the progress of children on the Continuum of Support to ensure that interventions are meaningful and that they are experiencing challenge and success. We also regularly review our SEN policy to ensure it meets the needs of the children in our school.
- Our SPHE programme is constantly under review to ensure that programme is effective and useful.
- Our Wellbeing Plan is also under constant review to adapt and change if we feel the needs of the children or staff are not being met.
- The following policies are reviewed yearly: Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision, Safety Statement, Code of Behaviour.
- The following policies are reviewed within 3 year policy review plan: Digital Learning framework, School Tour Policy,
- To increase awareness and ensure effective implementation, our student council are consulted in reviews of our policies.
- Staff CPD is constantly promoted. First Aid courses are provided every 3 years. The board of management is generally happy to provide funding for necessary training.

Relationships and Partners

- Parents' Association – We have a very committed Parents' Association, who arrange many school activities throughout the year to provide the children with memorable events and to raise money for the school: Christmas Raffle, Easter Bunny Hop, Sports Day, Teas and Coffees after the First Communion. They are happy to support the school in all its endeavours.
- Student Councils contribute to policy review and initiatives for the school. We presently have Green School Committee and Student Council, in operation.
- Student support teams: Our SEN team work tirelessly to ensure that children with additional needs are catered for. They provide both in-class support but withdraw individual children and groups where necessary. They are in constant communication with the class teacher to ensure that all needs are catered for, in as far as time and personnel allow.
- To ensure that all children can participate in every facet of school life, we strive to ensure that children are regulated and ready for work. To facilitate this, our teachers, SNAs and SEN team encourage children to voice their needs for regulation, be it movement breaks or quiet time.
- We have invested in Playground equipment and games to provide every child with socialisation opportunities and encourage communication with peers. We have invested in games and activities that will help promote STEAM skills and aptitudes throughout the school.
- Our SEN team and teachers regularly meet with representatives of the secondary schools to discuss the strengths and needs of the students they will enrol. These transition meetings are requested by our school, especially if student is on our Continuum of Support. We also regularly meet with parents of children on the

Continuum of Support to discuss their support plans and set achievable targets for the children. Finally, our SEN team meets with our NEPS psychologist, SENO and any other outside agencies to assist us in helping children with additional needs.

- Children have a range of curricular and extra-curricular activities to get involved with: school teams (football, Olympic handball, basketball, soccer). Our school choir provides beautiful music in all our religious celebrations.
- Parents have ready access to their child's teacher and can either contact the teacher themselves through Aladdin or making an appointment through the office. We have Parent Teacher meetings once annually, but parents are free to contact teachers with any concern at any time. We have an open day in June for children joining us the following September.. Parents of Children with Additional educational needs are consulted when drawing up Individual Education Plans.
- Every year the school engages in activities that build empathy, respect, resilience during Friendship Week. In Friendship week we focus on promoting Acts of Kindness between the children.

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

Supervision Policy

The school reviews its Supervision policy on a yearly basis, with the supervision rota regularly reviewed by staff and amended to address any issues that arise throughout the year. Teachers are aware of their responsibility to report any concerns to the principal or a member of the ISM team and to ensure that the issue has been addressed. We have a teacher supervising each play area at break times, where possible with SNA support for children with additional needs playing in this area. Children are supervised from the opening of the gates in the morning until they leave the school at the end of the school day. We also ensure that there are two members of staff travelling with any group of students leaving the school premises and that all school tours have adequate supervision for the needs of the children in the group.

The school supervision policy clearly outlines the duties of the teacher, while on supervision: To ensure that children are following our school rules and playing in a kind and inclusive manner. Children who fail to follow these rules are given an age-appropriate sanction. Constant and serious misbehaviours are reported to the class teacher. The principal will also be involved in the case of any repeated and intentional acts of disrespect towards any member of our school.

Code of behaviour

Our Code of Behaviour sets out our expectations in terms of acceptable behaviour. Our goal is to enable the child to understand that the rules are there to keep all members of our community safe.

SEN policy

This policy outlines how we identify and prioritise the children needing additional supports in school. Behavioural issues are one of the areas outlined in this report.

Acceptable Use Policy

This policy provides guidance on online behaviours and the school's guidelines for use of technology for educational purposes in school and out of school programme.

SPHE School Plan / School Wellbeing Plan

The School SPHE Plan outlines the programmes such as Stay Safe, RSE, Walk Tall, Friends For Life, that the school engages with towards providing space and opportunity for pupils to consider and discuss everyday relationships and issues for them, whilst also providing the vocabulary and language around such issues for pupils.

Substance Use Policy

This policy sets out the school's guidelines and procedures in the instance of a pupil or pupils using prohibited substances while in school or engaging in school activities on the instance of a pupil arriving to school under the influence of prohibited substances.

Well Being Policy

School SPHE plan links with the School Wellbeing Plan and both provide a composite programme to address pupil wellbeing and any issues that may arise around bullying pupils are encouraged who to talk to and what actions to take.

Child Protection Statement and Risk Assessment

The school recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life, and must be reflected in policies, procedures, practices, and activities and will adhere to best practice to ensure governance in this area.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Class teacher (If the class teacher is absent when the report comes to light, then the principal or deputy principal will speak with the children, rather than the substitute teacher)

Principal may become involved at a later stage if initial supports are not effective. Teacher on supervision and SNA on duty will report behaviours to class teacher. Sixth class children helping with supervision will not correct children but will encourage good behaviour and report misbehaviours to class teacher or teacher on yard supervision.

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 at an early stage /when bullying behaviours are first identified

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:

With all incidents of poor behaviour in school, our first step is to determine whether they fall under the remit of our Bí Cinéalta policy or our Code of Behaviour. Then the steps outlined in the relevant policy will determine the steps to be followed.

Step 1 - Identifying if Bullying has Occurred

The class teacher will elicit what happened, where it happened, when it happened and the events that led to the incident being reported. The involved parties will be spoken to individually and their view of the events will be recorded, writing down their account of the incident if their age and ability allow. If a group of children are involved, each student will be engaged with individually at first. Thereafter the children involved should meet as a group, where each child is asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views. In the event the class teacher is absent for any reason, then the principal/ deputy principal will take on this duty.

To determine whether the reported behaviour is bullying behaviour, the class teacher will consider the following questions:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific 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 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.

If the answer to any of these questions is no, then the unacceptable behaviours will be addressed using our Code of Behaviour.

Step 2 – Where Bullying has Occurred

If behaviours fall under the Bí Cinéalta policy, all students, those experiencing the bullying behaviours and those displaying the bullying behaviours will be supported, listening to their perspective and involving them in the actions to be taken to deal with the issue. The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying is always to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable the relationship of the parties involved.

Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour

- > it is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- > a record should be kept of the engagement with all involved

> All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, the date of initial engagement with the pupils and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address the bullying behaviour will be documented.

> the record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour

Bullying behaviour that is a child protection concern, will be addressed without delay in accordance with our Child Protection Policy.

Our school is only responsible for dealing with bullying issues that occur when the students are under the care and responsibility of the school. However, if this bullying behaviour has an impact in the school, school is required to support the students involved. If the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in our school, we 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 (As per Dept. of Education Bí Cinéalta procedures)

Requests to take no action:

If students requesting that no action be taken for fear that will make the situation more difficult for them, staff will deal with the matter sensitively and work out what steps can be taken to address the matter and inform parents of the situation. If parents make school aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and request that the school take no action, parents will be required to put this request in writing but will be made aware that based on the circumstances, the school will decide if it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Step 3 – Determining if the Bullying has Ceased

Within **20 days** of the initial discussion, progress of the intervention will be reviewed, evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies used and the present relationship between the students involved. Parents will be contacted in this evaluation to elicit their opinions, as well as the opinions of the students. If the strategies have been unsuccessful and no changes in behaviour have been noted, then a further approach will be utilised. Ongoing supports may be required for the inappropriate behaviours to be modified. If following a second review, the situation has not improved, then the school will adopt the procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour.

- ☐ the teacher should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this
- ☐ the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded
- ☐ any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted
- ☐ ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where

bullying behaviour has ceased

- 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
- The file will be attached to the students' files and any interventions will be encompassed in their Continuum of Support files.
- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying bullying behaviour continues to display the behaviour, then consideration should be given to 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
- if a parent(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 and Post-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:

- Class teachers may complete a lesson/ lessons on bullying to address an issue in their class.
- Class teachers already cover a lesson on bullying at least once every eight weeks.
- The class teacher may decide to use any of the anti-bullying lessons that are available. The teachers have a range of programmes available to them on Webwise (HTML Heroes, All aboard Digitown, My Selfie and the Wider World), the antibullyingcampaign.ie website, the suite of lessons provided by the Anti-Bullying institute and the FUSE programme (Dublin City University Anti-Bullying centre).
- The class teacher may decide to use the anti-bullying campaign class survey to determine what is happening in the class. While time consuming, this can often highlight behaviours that children themselves are uncomfortable about.
- The National Educational Psychological services (NEPS) may be contacted to look for advice on the matter. They will decide if the case demands direct involvement or if

they will support the school with advice on best practice.

- The teachers may look for resources on OIDE to help in this particular situation. If necessary, the school may look for an advisor to visit the school and offer support.

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.

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: _____

(Chairperson of
board of management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Principal)