



Scoil an Athar Tadhg

Bí Cineálta

**Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying
Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary
Schools**

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scoil an Athar Tadhg 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	22/05/25 22/05/25 30/05/25	Staff Meeting Questionnaire Half Day School Closure
Students	07/05/25 23/05/25	Focus Group – Student Council Questionnaire
Parents	08/05/25 11/06/25	Questionnaire Draft Policy feedback
Board of Management	11/06/25	Draft Policy feedback & discussion
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		Consultation as deemed necessary
Date policy was approved: 17/06/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 17/06/2025		

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.

Culture and Environment

- A positive and inclusive school culture and environment which
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.
 - Is a ‘telling’ environment which encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment.
 - promotes and models respectful relationships across the school community.
- Effective leadership that sets high standards and expectations.
- A school-wide approach where each member of staff takes a consistent approach to effective observation and addressing of bullying behaviour.
- Students promoting kindness and inclusion in peer groups.
- Parents as active partners in their child’s education, fostering an environment where bullying is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect .

- A ‘trusted adult’ who reassures and supports students they have done the right thing by reporting bullying behaviour.
- Creating safe, visible physical spaces in school.

Curriculum- Teaching and Learning

- A shared understanding of what bullying is, its impact and bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
 - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils.
 - promote inclusion and diversity.
 - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying. including homophobic, transphobic, racist, sexist bullying and sexual harassment as appropriate.
 - provide teaching and learning in SPHE that equips students with skills to build positive relationships, resolve conflicts and recognise and deal with bullying behaviour.
- SPHE Curricular Programmes to include:
Stay Safe, RSE, Walk Tall, Weaving Wellbeing, Grow in Love etc.
- SPHE methodologies to include -e.g.
 - Group work/ Collaboration
 - Role - play, acting out scenarios
 - Extra - curricular activities to develop positive self - worth
 - Circle Time
 - Co-operative games (particularly in P.E) etc.

Policy and Planning

- Bí Cineálta Policy developed, communicated, implemented and reviewed in consultation with all partners..
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies).
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta Policy.
- Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy.
- Code of Behaviour.
- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment.
- Acceptable Use Policy.
- Supervision Policy.
- Arrivals and Dismissals Policy.
- SPHE & RSE Policy.
- SEN Policy
- Health and Safety Policy Statement
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils (both within school and on yard, unstructured activities, trips, swimming etc)
- Teacher Professional Learning and other such relevant supports for staff

Relationships and Partnerships

- Strong interpersonal connections supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as Student Council, Green Schools Committees, Parents' Association, focus groups etc.
- Student and parent/guardian active participation.
- Workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
- Promoting acts of kindness and activities that build empathy, respect and resilience e.g. Random Acts of Kindness Day during Well Being Week.
- Culture Day.
- Teaching problem solving skills.
- Critical Thinking Skills.
- Promoting self-awareness and awareness of others.
- Encouraging peer tutoring, mentoring and buddying etc.

Preventing Cyber Bullying Behaviour:

Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour.

Scoil an Athar Tadhg strives to proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments.

Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- 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.
- referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour.
- promoting or hosting 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.

(Note: The digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their data. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16. Children between 13 and 16 must have 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).

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, which is not an exhaustive list:

- maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters.
- encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- challenging gender stereotypes .
- conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour .
- encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.

Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

As our school becomes more culturally diverse, we strive to prevent potential racist bullying behaviour.

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- 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.
- conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of racism.
- encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- 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, and to encourage communication with their parents.
- inviting speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds .
- ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds .
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Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour:

Scoil an Athar Tadhg will focus on gender equality as part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment.

Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

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

Preventing Sexual Harassment:

Scoil an Athar Tadhg promotes a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. It strives to support this through a focus 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, which is not an exhaustive list:

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

Supervision and Monitoring:

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behavior.

- Supervision Policy.
- Arrivals and Dismissals Policy.
- Yard Supervision Rota – ratified by the Board of Management annually.
- Teachers, along with SNAs under the direction of the yard duty teacher, provide yard supervision and wet day supervision inside the school.
- Classes are assigned designated areas on the yard to ensure age-appropriate interactions and ease of monitoring and observing of behaviour.
- Children are accompanied by at least one teacher, and SNAs as relevant and necessary, on all trips, outings, swimming etc.
- Supervising personnel are deployed at strategic positions on buses, walks, trips etc to ensure adequate supervision and monitoring of interactions.
- If patterns of inappropriate behaviour are detected these are investigated and documented, as relevant on an Aladdin log of action.
- If there are reported incidents or issues between children that warrant closer monitoring on yard and trips this is notified to relevant staff via an Aladdin message and through handover meetings.
- A report on incidents of bullying behaviour is given at each BOM meeting
- A range of activities during break times are organised to accommodate a range of preferences and interests.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are All Teachers

The whole school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour. This appendix is intended as a guide to addressing bullying behaviour. It is based on the information contained in Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

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.

Approach

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the students involved, rather than to apportion blame.

Identifying if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

Where bullying behaviour is suspected, the child/parents/guardians/staff report it to the class teacher. To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour we 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 behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Note: One-off incidents may be considered bullying behaviour in certain circumstances. 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.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred (Stage 1), teachers should consider what, where, when and why? as follows:

(Note that these steps are required – as outlined in the Procedures):

- Where one student is reported to be involved, the student should be engaged with individually at first.
- Thereafter, this student and the student who is reported to be experiencing the bullying behavior should be met together.
- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first.
- Thereafter, all students involved and the student who is reported to be experiencing the bullying behaviour should be met as a group.
- At the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views
- Each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting. It may be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
- Parents will be supported by the school, if needed, with recommendations for useful resources/guides to help them support their children.

Where Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

- 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.
- All bullying behaviour will be recorded (Appendix A). This will include the form and type of behavior, if known, 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.
- The record should be shared with the Principal.

Follow up Where Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

- The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement. Important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
- 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.
- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing 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 BÌ Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures (available on our website).
- 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 behavior.

Supports:

The school's programme of support for working with pupils who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour, in addition to supports referenced in the steps above, may include but is not limited to the following:

- Listening
- Showing empathy
- Reassuring the student
- Asking them to let you know if the bullying behaviour occurs in school
- Devising appropriate 'check in' mechanisms
- Discussing how the pupils can inform their parents of the situation if they haven't already done so
- Discreet lessons may be taught as appropriate
- Pupils who have been bullied, witness or engage in bullying behaviour will be supported by the school, within the limits of resources available in the school, through the provision of opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and thereby build resilience and a sense of self-worth whenever this is needed.
- Where relevant and available, a referral for appropriate supports as offered through e.g. The Family Resource Centre may be made.

Supports available to help prevent and address bullying include the following;

- NEPS- providing advice on best practice to prevent and address bullying when issues arise in schools and/or training in preventative initiatives pg.46
- Oide – providing TPL pg.47
- Webwise – online safety awareness raising and education initiative for pupils and parents pg.47
- National Parents Council – online and in person courses to support parents to prevent and address bullying pg. 48
- DCU Anti bullying centre- FUSE programme that can be used to promote a positive school culture and assist in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours. Pg.48
- Tusla – for cases where it is considered that bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern. Pg.48

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 may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

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: *Dan Crowley*
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 17/06/2025

Signed: *Cormac Duggan*
Principal/Secretary to the Board of Management

Date: 17/06/2025

The Original, signed copy of this policy is available in the School Office.
This policy will be communicated to parents via the Parents Association and to the Board of Management.