



# Newtown Junior School

## Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

### **Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**

The Board of Management of Newtown Junior 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	4 <sup>th</sup> April, 2025	Staff Meeting and Training Day
Students	24 <sup>th</sup> June, 2025	Meeting
Parents	20 <sup>th</sup> to 24 <sup>th</sup> June, 2025	Via text and website
Board of Management	25 <sup>th</sup> June, 2025	Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	20 <sup>th</sup> to 24 <sup>th</sup> June, 2025	Website
Date policy was approved: 25 <sup>th</sup> June, 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: N/A as first introduced on 25 <sup>th</sup> June, 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):

### Prevention strategies:

#### Culture and Environment

We strive to

- keep the Quaker SPICES, the Golden Rules, kindness and respect at the heart of school life
- create a positive school environment where all students feel safe, respected and valued
- establish clear expectations for behavior which are consistently enforced
- reward positive behavior generally with House Points and via individual classroom based reward programmes such as our *Warm Fuzzies*
- promote diversity and inclusion in all aspects of school life
- encourage open communication between students, staff and parents
- promote the concept that our school is a 'telling' environment
- use our House Clans and our twice weekly assemblies to help students develop their voice and to foster a sense of connection, belonging and empathy

### Curriculum(Teaching and Learning)

We

- fully implement the SPHE curriculum, in particular the RSE Programme and the Stay Safe Programme
- where possible, integrate anti-bullying messages across all curricular areas
- model respectful behavior towards colleagues, students, parents and visitors to our school
- use pair work, group work, drama and circle time across all curricular areas to enable children to get to know one another, work together and build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy

### Policy and Planning

Our teaching and non- teaching staff have:

- attended training on the Bí Cinéalta procedures and worked together to develop this policy
- worked with our students to develop a student friendly Bí Cinéalta policy
- developed and implement our Code of Behaviour
- developed and implement our Child Safeguarding Statement
- developed and implement our Acceptable Use Policy
- developed and implement a supervision system
- developed and implement a SPHE policy to include RSE
- developed and implement a SEN policy
- attend further professional learning
- implement a restorative practice approach to the resolution of issues

### Relationships and Partnerships

In our school we

- focus on the centrality of kindness and respect in our school and in our relationships with one another
- encourage active participation in school life by all members of our school community including all teaching staff, non teaching staff, all students, parents/guardians and Board of Management members
- communicate regularly with parents
- work with parents and students to educate them about online safety and cyberbullying
- use of Clan system to help children get to know one another and work together
- use Playground Buddies to support one another

### Strategies aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour:

- focus on the centrality of kindness and respect in our school and in our relationships with one another
- explicitly teach what is meant by online bullying
- explicitly teach ways in which to stay safe online
- mark Internet Safety Day annually
- from time to time, for parents and students, run workshops with outside facilitators, to teach about online safety

### Strategies aimed at preventing homophobic and transphobic behaviour

- focus on the centrality of kindness and respect in our school and in our relationships with one another

- explicitly teach about the importance of respecting all people, regardless of their sexual orientations or gender identity

#### Strategies aimed at preventing racist bullying behaviour

- focus on the centrality of kindness and respect in our school and in our relationships with one another
- explicitly teach about the importance of respecting all people always
- have a range of books in each classroom which represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds

#### Strategies aimed at preventing sexist bullying behavior

- focus on the centrality of kindness and respect in our school and in our relationships with one another
- explicitly teach about the importance of gender equality
- celebrate diversity in school and acknowledge the contribution of all students
- ensure all students have the same opportunities to engage in all school activities irrespective of gender

#### Strategies aimed at preventing sexual harassment

- focus on the centrality of kindness and respect in our school and in our relationships with one another
- challenge gender stereotyping

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

#### Supervision

- All staff have had training on the Bí Cineálta procedures which enable them to recognise and respond to bullying behavior.
- Students are supervised by Class Teachers during class times and on school trips
- Staff have a visible presence in classrooms, common areas and in the school garden during break times. This supervision is organized on a rota basis.
- Visitors to the school are supervised at all times

#### Monitoring

- The Class Teacher investigates all instances of reported or suspected bullying behavior with a view to establishing the facts and then will record this on an incident report form
- The Principal will review all incident report forms on a regular basis and will report to the Board of Management as per the requirements of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

### **Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

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

Class Teacher in the first instance and In School Management Team

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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

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

The school's procedures for investigation, follow up and recording of bullying behavior are as follows:

- The school will follow the Bi Cinealta procedures in this regard, particularly those set out in Chapter 6 and Appendix C of the procedures
- The Class Teacher (s) will investigate all instances of reported or suspected bullying behavior with a view to establishing the facts and managing the behaviour
- In investigation and dealing with bullying, the Class Teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying as per the definition set out above has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved with a view to restoring relationships where possible
- The Class Teacher will complete an incident form outlining the established facts, the actions taken, the notification of parents and the review date
- The Class Teacher will engage with the students and parents involved nor more than 20 days after the initial discussion to review the progress. If the matter has not been resolved, a timeframe will be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behavior has ceased.
- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behavior is continuing to display the behavior, then consideration will be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behavior 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.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying behavior is as follows:

- Listening with empathy to all those involved
- Managing the bullying behavior
- Supporting pupils who have experienced bullying behavior, displayed bullying behavior

and witnessed bullying behaviour through the teaching of strategies to help them manage their experience

- using a restorative approach to build bridges and where possible, repair relationships
- focusing on the centrality of kindness and respect in our school and in our relationships with one another to create a positive school environment


All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

### Section D: Oversight

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on our website and in hard copy on request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed:  Date: 26/6/2025  
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed:  Date: 26/6/2025  
(Principal)