Knockmore JNS

Bí Cineálta Policy

Ratified by BOM on 10th June 2026
Review date 9th June 2027

Knockmore Junior School (Scoil Cnoc Mhuire)
Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scoil Cnoc Mhuire (Knockmore 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	28/03/25	Staff meeting
Students	Was completed by 6th June	Questionnaire
Parents	Was completed by 23rd May	Questionnaire

Board of Management	17/06/25	Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	Was completed by 6th June 2025	Questionnaire
Date policy was initially approved:	17/06/2025	
Date policy was last reviewed:	10/06/2026	

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):

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):

Culture and Environment

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times.
- Display our three key 'respect' rules "Kind Hands, Kind Words, Kind Feet"
- 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 'Friendship Week, Anti Bullying Week' annually.

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) Include Programme 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)
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Organise seminars/workshops given by relevant professionals to older pupils and to parents/guardians, focusing on educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online and also on developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber-bullying. The school-wide approach and the role of parents is of great importance in this regard.
- Picture/story books can be used to teach important concepts (e.g. Amazing Grace considers

gender & race through story etc.)
- Participation in pilot programmes eg the Counselling in Primary Schools Pilot which aims to support schools in their work to put well-being at the heart of their school community.
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.

Policy and Planning

- Have our child-friendly Bí Cinealta Policy on display prominently around the school.
- Mobile phones or other smart devices to school are not allowed in school.
- Please refer to the school's policy documents on the Code of Behaviour (including the Acceptable Use of Devices and the Internet Policy), Child Protection Policy, Supervision of Pupils, and Attendance.
- 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.
- Encourage parents/guardians to sign up to the voluntary agreements to defer smartphone/device ownership during the primary school years.
- 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, sports' teams, student council, playground pals and paired readers.
- Support the active participation of parents in school life, e.g. parents courses, volunteering.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

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):

Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The whole school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour. Schools should work in partnership with their patron, board of management, staff, students and their parents to develop and implement their Bí Cineálta policy. 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.

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.

When addressing bullying behaviour teachers should:

> 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 the students 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

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

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.

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour you should 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.

Note: One Off incidents may be considered bullying 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.

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.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider what, where, when and why?

> if a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first

> thereafter, all students involved 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)

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

> a record should be kept of the engagement with all involved

> this record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bi Cineálta procedures), where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents

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

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 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. 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 (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

We take all instances of bullying behaviour on a case-by-case basis, but we may use the following approaches generally:
All students involved will be checked-in with regularly and behaviour will be monitored carefully.

The teacher will check-in with parents too and will look for their ongoing support to monitor their child at home and to communicate with the school if needed.

We will use resources, as appropriate – including those developed by

- NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service),
- Oide (support service for schools) and from programmes/sites such as
- Webwise.
- National Parents Council
- DCU Anti Bulling Centre
- Tusla
- Gardaí

Staff CPD

- ★ Teachers and SNA's are trained in Restorative Practices and Emotion Coaching and Trauma Informed Practice
- ★ The school follows the Nurture Programme and has a Support Teacher

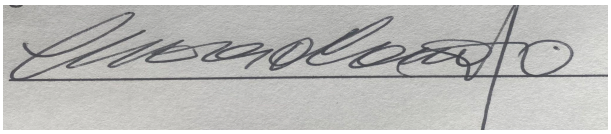
All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern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

Section D: Oversight

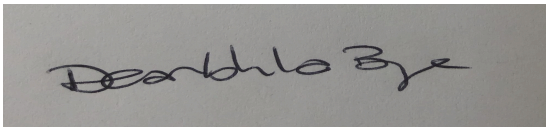
The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning 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:10/06/26

Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed:  Date:10/06/26

Principal

Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group
Name _____ Class_____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report (parent, pupil, teacher, SNA, other pupil, other)

4. Location of incidents

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

6. Form of Bullying Behaviour (Specify using pgs19-20 Bí Cineálta Guidelines)

Direct Bullying behaviour		**Indirect Bullying Behaviour**	
Physical bullying behaviour including physical property		Exclusion	
Verbal bullying behaviour		Relational	
Written bullying behaviour,		**Online Bullying Behaviour**	
Extortion			

7. Type of Bullying Behaviour

Disableist		Physical appearance		religious identity	
exceptionally able		racist		sexist	
gender identity		poverty		sexual harassment	
homophobic/transphobic, LGBTQ+					

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

9. Details of actions taken by the School

10. Parents/Guardians contacted Date :

11. Views of students regarding actions to be taken in order to address the bullying behaviour

12. Views of parents/guardians regarding actions to be taken in order to address the bullying behaviour

13. 20 day review with teacher, parents and student Date :

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)
Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Necessary Additional Information