



Scoil Tíghearnach Naofa Cullohill N.S.

School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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The Board of Management of Scoil Tíghearnach Naofa 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	16 th May 2025	Staff Meeting
Students	May 2025	Questionnaire
Parents	May 2025	Questionnaire & Focus Group
Board of Management	10 th June 2025	Board Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved: 10 th June 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 10 th 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 that will be used in Scoil Tighearnach Naofa include:

Culture & Environment

- Fostering a positive and inclusive atmosphere in our school where relationships between all members of our school community are based on respect.
- Ensuring all members of staff have a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying is unacceptable.
- Establishing clear expectations for behaviour and ensuring that these are enforced
- Supporting a “Telling” environment where pupils feel safe and comfortable talking about bullying concerns.
- Reenforcing the concept of a trusted adult. Staff are encouraged to support this by letting pupils know that they can talk to staff members about any concerns they might have.
- Creating safe physical spaces in our school where children can always be

monitored and where the staff have a clear line of sight.

- Promoting respectful relationships across the school community.
- Ensuring effective routines and transitions between breaks and all school activities.

Curriculum – Teaching & Learning

- Educating the children on the various types of bullying – identity-based bullying, cyberbullying etc.
- Utilising Stay safe and SPHE lessons that focus on positive behaviour in all classes.
- Promoting Safe Internet use in our school through various resources, such as Webwise and tacklebullying.ie, and through our Safe Internet Day. Outside agencies such as Zeeko are invited to our school to highlight safe internet use and cyberbullying.
- Providing teaching and promoting learning which is collaborative and respectful, fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Giving students regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.

Policy & Planning

- Ensuring there is adequate supervision during the school day. Teachers are aware of their supervision responsibilities during class time and break time
- Following and implementing the school's Code of Behaviour Policy consistently
- Following the school's SPHE Policy
- Following the school's RSE Policy
- Following the school's SEN Policy
- Regularly reviewing relevant policies
- Ensuring that SPHE programmes are included in short-term and long-term classroom plans

Relationships & Partnerships

- Modeling respectful behaviour towards colleagues, pupils and visitors in our school environment.
- Facilitating pupil & parent input and participation in drawing up our Bí Cineálta policy and in reviewing relevant policies.
- Promoting acts of kindness and friendship and recognizing these during fortnightly Tionól.
- Facilitating presentations & workshops with outside speakers/ organisations such as Zeeko.

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 and monitoring are key aspects in providing safe physical spaces in our school and ensuring that our pupils feel safe and comfortable during the school day.

For more information please consult our **Supervision Policy**.

Promoting responsible and safe internet use is key to educating the children on cyberbullying. For more information see our **Acceptable Usage Policy**.

Our **Code of Behaviour** sets out the standard of behaviour that is expected in our school. All parents sign a copy of this when their child is enrolling in our school.

Children with Special Education Needs are more vulnerable to bullying. Our **SEN Policy** sets out how we support children with Special Education Needs in our school.

The policies mentioned above are available to view or download on our school website: **scoiltighearnachnaofa.com**

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- “Relevant Teacher” – the teacher the alleged bullying was reported to.
- Class teacher
- Management: Principal or Deputy Principal

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):

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher should consider the following: what, where, when and why?

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame). With this in mind the school's procedures are as follows:

- In investigating and dealing with bullying the Relevant Teacher will exercise their judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type if it has and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the Relevant Teacher. In that way pupils will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report instances of bullying they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, SNAs, caretakers and cleaners are encouraged to report any incidences of bullying behaviour witnessed by them or mentioned to them to the Class Teacher.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
 - In the case of a group of children being involved, each child should be engaged with individually first. Thereafter all children involved should be met together.
 - At the group meeting each child should be asked their account of what happened so that each child is clear as to the views of the other children.
 - Each child should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after the meeting.
 - Children may be asked to write down their view of what happened.
 - The teacher will record the steps taken and exercise his/her judgement, in consultation with school management, to determine if bullying has occurred.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour the Relevant Teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, who, when and why. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- Where the Relevant Teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- The Relevant Teacher does not apportion blame but should make an effort to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied. She/he emphasises that the intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter. Parents/ Guardians will be contacted to inform them of the situation.
- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the Relevant Teacher will complete a report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy

adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. A review will be carried out within 20 days of the initial bullying investigation.

- If a pupil chooses to continue the bullying behaviour, this can then no longer be considered a once off occurrence. In this event parents/guardians will be contacted again..

Sanctions will be put in place for the pupil. These may include loss of privileges, extra written work, detention during break time etc.

The school should give parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for the pupil.

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable.

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):

In our school, when bullying occurs, we will ensure that all children involved are supported through the process. This includes supporting children who are bullied, children who have engaged in bullying behaviour and children who have witnessed bullying.

Supporting children who have been bullied:

- The first priority is to ensure that the bullying behaviour ceases
- Respecting the privacy of children who have been bullied.
- Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils
- Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations
- Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities)

Supporting children who have engaged in bullying behaviour:

- Ensuring that children who engage in bullying behaviour are given the chance to reform
- Ensuring that once the bullying behaviour does cease immediately, that the child is not subject to blame or sanction
- Respecting the child's privacy
- Regularly checking in with the child who has engaged in bullying to ensure that the bullying behaviour does not happen again.
- Regular contact with parents, through classdojo, telephone or homework journal
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

Supporting children who have witnessed bullying behaviour:

- Listening to the witnesses account of the bullying behaviour
- Ensuring that the witness is treated with respect and confidentiality, if required, and reassuring children of this
- Reenforcing to the children that anyone who is a witness to bullying has a role to play in resolving the bullying
- Regularly checking in with the witness to ensure that there has not been a

reoccurrence of the bullying.

- Contacting the parents/guardians of a witness to bullying if needs be

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

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: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: _____

Date: _____

(Principal)