



Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

1st September, 2025

Introduction:

The Manager of the Intermediate School Killorglin 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 Manager also 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.

This policy aims to create a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all members of the school community, ensuring that every individual is treated with dignity and respect. In line with the *Bí Cineálta Action Plan*, this policy promotes respect for diversity, fosters inclusivity, and aims to eliminate all forms of bullying. The school is committed to ensure that everyone feels safe, supported and valued, regardless of their background, gender, ethnicity, sexuality or abilities.

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 *Bí 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 in 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.

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	March/April 2025	Staff meeting, questionnaire
Students	April 2025	Consultation with student council, questionnaire with 2 nd and 5 th year students
Parents	April/May 2025	Consultation with parents association, questionnaire to 2 nd and 5 th year parents
Manager	School year 2024-2025	Consultation meetings
Wider school community as appropriate, for example bus drivers	June 2025	Questionnaire with local businesses and bus provider
Date policy was approved:	01/09/2025	
Date policy was last reviewed:	01/09/2025	

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

Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour

- Implementation of Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum
- Regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships, both online and in person. These conversations are conducted by class tutors, year heads, class teachers, learning support teachers, Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) among others
- Regular review of Acceptable Use Policy for technology
- Use of Yondr pouches during the school day
- Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour
- Hosting and promoting online safety events for parents and students
- Use of filters on all school computers to prevent access to social media websites and platforms

Preventing Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying Behaviour

All students including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students, have a right to feel safe and supported at the Intermediate School Killorglin.

Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour includes the following:

- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment by displaying relevant posters
- Encouraging peer support through the use of peer mentoring programmes
- Implementation of the Relationships and Sexuality Education specification
- Hosting and promoting workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic and transphobic bullying
- Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic and transphobic behaviour

Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

Students attending the Intermediate School Killorglin come from a diverse range of cultures and backgrounds. This enriches the school community and offers an opportunity for a greater range of experiences for all.

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include:

- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students see themselves in their school environment
- Conducting and promoting workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise awareness of racism
- Encouraging peer support through the peer mentoring programmes

- Encouraging students to report when they witness racist behaviour
- Providing supports to school staff to support students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
- Ensuring that learning materials and textbooks represent the appropriate, lived experiences of students from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds

Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour

As a co-educational school, the Intermediate School Killorglin values gender equality as part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful learning environment for all members of the school community.

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include:

- Ensuring all members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex
- Ensuring that all students 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 and supporting parents in reinforcing the values of respect at home

Preventing Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. The Intermediate School Killorglin has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment must never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include:

- Full implementation of the SPHE specifications to teach students about healthy relationships and how to treat each other with respect and kindness
- Promoting positive role models within the school community
- Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

The teachers with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are:

- Year Heads
- Guidance Counsellor
- Deputy Principal

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will

- Ensure that the student experiencing the 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 guiding principles for addressing bullying behaviour in the Intermediate School Killorglin are as follows:

- **Respect for diversity:** the Intermediate School Killorglin celebrates diversity, acknowledging that every student has a unique background, culture, identity and set of experiences. We are committed to ensuring that all students feel valued and respected for who they are.
- **Inclusion:** Every student, regardless of their background, gender, sexual orientation, race, or ability, is entitled to a learning environment that is free from discrimination, exclusion, or harassment.
- **Empowerment:** All members of the school community – students, staff and parents – are empowered to take active roles in preventing bullying and supporting those affected by it.
- **Collaboration:** Collaboration between students, staff, parents and external agencies is essential to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. The Intermediate School Killorglin is committed to creating a whole-school approach to tackling bullying.
- **Accountability and Responsibility:** Everyone in the school community has a responsibility to contribute to a culture where bullying is not tolerated, and appropriate actions are taken when bullying occurs.

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:

- The bullying behaviour may be reported to any member of staff. Reports can be made: verbally, written or by contact from a parent/guardian.
- Once a report is received, a designated member of staff (as decided by the principal) will investigate the situation promptly to determine if bullying has occurred. To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour, the following questions will be considered:
 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.

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.

- **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 repeated 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 will be engaged with individually at first
 - Thereafter, all students involved will be met as a group
 - At the group meeting each student will be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views
 - Each student will be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting
 - The students involved will be asked to give written accounts of the incident(s).
- Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where it is deemed that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved will 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
- A record will be kept of the engagement with all involved. This record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents. This record will also include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.
- 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*.

Approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

- **Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports** – this framework focuses on reinforcing positive behaviours and promoting a safe school environment. It sets out clear expectations for behaviour, consistent discipline and regular monitoring.
- **Restorative Practices** – this focuses on repairing harm caused by bullying rather than sanctioning. It brings together the affected parties to discuss the impact of the behaviour and to come up with solutions to prevent future incidents.
- **Counselling** – The school Guidance Counsellor offers support to students who have experienced bullying behaviour by providing a safe space for students to talk about their experiences and feelings, helping them to process the emotional impact of bullying. The Guidance Counsellor can also help students who have engaged in bullying behaviour to understand the consequences of their actions, identifying underlying issues, and develop strategies to change their behaviour.

- **External Supports** - a range of agencies may be useful to support those who have experiences bullying behaviour as well as those who have engaged in bullying behaviour. These include: the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and external counselling agencies.

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.
- The teacher will document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of the students and their parents in relation to this.
- The date that is has been deemed determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should be recorded.
- Any engagement with external services/ supports should be noted
- Ongoing supervision and support will be available for the students involved, if needed, even where the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher must 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 continues to become clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the behaviour will be dealt with as provided for in the school's Code of Behaviour. Disciplinary procedures are 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 a negative effect on the student.

Oversight

An Oversight Committee consisting of the Principal, Deputy Principal and Guidance Counsellor will meet once per school term. The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each 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 the wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. See Chapter 7 of the *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

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 included in each student journal, on the school 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.

Ratified by: J. J. J. J. J.
Date: 01/09/25

Appendix A - Bullying Incident Record Template

1. Incident Details

Date of Incident	
Time (if known)	
Location (Room no, yard etc)	

2. Individuals Involved

Targeted Student (Name and class)	
Student(s) involved in bullying (Name(s) and class(es))	
Other witness(es)	

3. Source of Report

- Self-report (target)
- Report by peer/ other student
- Parent/Guardian
- Teacher/Staff member
- Other: _____

4. Type(s) of Bullying Behaviour

- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Isolation/exclusion
- Cyber-bullying (online)
- Intimidation/coercion
- Malicious gossip/rumour

7. Actions Taken & Follow-Up

Immediate steps taken	
Follow-up actions	
Check-Back Date (≤20 days)	
Outcome Has bullying behavior ceased?	

8. Communication Log

Date of parent/guardian contact	
Summary of contact with parent/guardian	
External agency/agencies involved and details	

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9. Reporting & Oversight

Entered into school's central record/behaviour log: Yes No

Flagged for principal's update at next Board of Management meeting: Yes No

Included (anonymously) in national data submission: Yes No

10. Staff Handling the Case

Name & Role of Staff Member Completing This Form

Signature / Date:
