

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Edmund Rice College 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.

- Random Acts of Kindness e.g. Christmas Raffle, Ice Cream Truck
- Student friendly Bí Cineálta Policy displayed in all classrooms & common areas.
- Staff engaging with students to help them to identify places and times when bullying can occur.
- Staff CPD on area of anti-bullying

Curriculum

- Using the space available within the teaching of all subjects to foster an attitude of respect for all in accordance with the ethos of Edmund Rice College, Carrigaline.
- Highlighting and explicitly teaching students the content of and rationale for the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Various awareness weeks throughout the school calendar
- Variety of programmes are run in SPHE and Wellbeing & Guidance Classes
- Delivery of SPHE programme.
- Wellbeing is at the centre of all subject plans
- Wellbeing indicators addressed in all areas of Teaching & Learning
- 1st year transition programme through SPHE/Wellbeing
- Informing incoming 1st year students of the Anti-Bullying ethos of the school during their orientation programme.
- Explicitly teaching students what respectful behaviour and language looks like, acts like and sounds like both in class and around the school.
- Teaching students about the appropriate use of social media and implementing the school's Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

Relationships and Partnerships

- Linking with external services e.g. NEPS, CAMHS, Tusla, Gardaí
- Linking with BOM, PA, Students' Council, Local clubs, Local Sports partnership, Mini Projects, Subject specific CBAs e.g. CSPE Action Project, SPHE CBA Class events, Fundraising events
- Guest Speakers
- Community Garda Visits
- Extra-Curricular- Coaches, Artists, Creative Schools

Policy and Planning

- Bi Cineálta Policy
- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Child Safeguarding
- Data Protection
- Wellbeing Policy
- Staff aware that they are mandated persons, child protection procedures in the staff handbook.
- Principal & Deputy Principal complete DLP/DDLP training and refreshers

Cyberbullying

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship

areas and outside areas before school, during break & lunch times and after school. Staff monitor student behaviour and wellbeing. Any causes for concern are dealt with and reported to school management.

- All staff are reminded of their duty as responsible adults in the school community to be watchful and observe relationships between students in class, note absence patterns and let it be known that high standards of behaviour are always expected. Concerns are discussed weekly at pastoral care meetings.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

It is of the utmost importance that students are encouraged to talk if they are being bullied in school or if they know if another student is being bullied.

The student may report bullying to any teacher or adult in the school community.

Those with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is (are) as follows:

Year Heads, Deputy Principal, 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

The whole Edmund Rice College school community has a responsibility to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

The school worked in partnership with the patron, Board of Management, staff, students and their parents to develop and implement the Bí Cineálta policy.

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.

When addressing bullying behaviour teachers should:

- > ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured

- > 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 will be kept of the engagement with all involved
- > this record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents
- > the record will include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour

**In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the school will develop an appropriate plan to support the student and for how their parents will be informed.*

The school will consider communication barriers that may exist when communicating with parents, for example, literacy, digital literacy or language barriers.

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 will 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 will be recorded.
- > any engagement with external services/supports will 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

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.

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: B. J. J.

(Chairperson, Board of Management)

Date: 20/5/25

Signed: A. Flynn

(Principal)

Date: 20/5/25