



Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Coralstown NS 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.

Catholic schools have a distinctive understanding of the human person, recognising that every person is created in God's image and likeness and has inherent dignity as a child of God. This is the basis for ensuring that each person in our school is treated with respect and care, in accordance with the Catholic Schedule.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to respecting the dignity of every individual. No human person is to be devalued, and all have an indispensable part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

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.

Corrinstown NS 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 our 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. This policy was developed collaboratively.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	February 19 th 2025	One half day closure to discuss and develop our BÍ Cineálta policy
Students	March 2025	Student Council focus group Wellbeing Committee focus group SPHE lessons
Parents	May 2025	Questionnaires Directions as to where to access the BÍ Cineálta draft policy on the school website
Board of Management	June 2025 September 2025	Steps of Policy development outlined CPSMA input received and included in policy Complete Policy to be presented to the BOM
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	September 2025	Professional conversation to be had with bus drivers, caretaker, secretary, GAA coaches, and other visitors as appropriate and relevant. Reminder to do this at the start of school year Staff Meeting
Date policy was approved: September 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: May 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):

In developing preventative strategies which this school will use to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour, we come from the context of our Catholic ethos where inclusivity permeates the school in a real way.

This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference, by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at board of management and staff meetings.

The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence.

In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies.

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice provides the following four key areas that are essential for a holistic, whole-school approach to wellbeing promotion:

1 Culture and Environment: promoting a positive, inclusive, welcoming and friendly school environment in Coralstown NS by:

- Staff meeting and greeting the students as they arrive each morning
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.
- Our Bí Cineálta policy will be published on our school website. Parents and children will be made aware of where to find the policy each September. Procedures for prevention and addressing bullying behaviours will be taught and revised consistently throughout the school.
- Integration of our Acorn Class students into age appropriate peer groups for curricular lessons and social skills promotion where appropriate
- Staff modelling respectful and appropriate social interactions daily
- Respectful and open relationships between the patron, BOM, parents, school staff and students are encouraged and valued
- ISM and school leadership team to set and promote standards and expectations for the school community
- Each staff member will be aware of this policy and have clear expectations around behaviours that are acceptable and unacceptable in our classes and school environment
- Implementation of this policy should be consistent throughout the school
- Student voice in our school is valued and promoted through our Student Council, Glór na n-ÓG, our Wellbeing Committee, Green School Committee and our Active Committee. Students will be encouraged to promote kindness at every opportunity through play and working together
- Parents can help to promote a positive school culture though supporting the schools zero tolerance for bullying while encouraging empathy and respect
- We will promote "A Telling Environment" in our school, where students can feel comfortable and supported in discussing their concerns. With this in mind:

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.

Students should be encouraged to use their voices without fear of retaliation or making the situation worse

- Students will be made aware of our Bí Cineálta policy and steps through our age appropriate Bí Cineálta posters and specific lessons on the policy. The child-friendly poster version is to be included in student journals and displayed publicly in classrooms and in common areas of the school.
- Supervision in our school is carried out by our teachers and SNA's daily as per our Rota available in the staffroom. Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- The implementation of the Coralstown NS Internet Acceptable Use Policy in the school to include the necessary steps to ensure that the access to technology within the school is strictly monitored. Pupils are not allowed to have or use smart phones or mobile phones.
- A Bus Escort accompany our Acorn class to school and home from school each day
- A colourful, clean, bright, warm and inviting school is valued in Coralstown NS
- Student's Art and Creativity will be used to decorate the school to promote a feeling of belonging
- Student's will be encouraged to take great care of their school environment and to be responsible to help to keep it clean and welcoming
- Staff are friendly and caring to allow for each child to have at least one *Trusted Adult* that they feel they could discuss any concerns around bullying behaviours
- Children will be encouraged to report any bullying behaviours that they may witness.
- Children will only play in areas that they can be seen. They are not permitted to play in the trees at the back of the school. The gate at the alley beside the oil tank is to remain closed during break times. Infants will remain on the playground and not pass the climbing wall.
- Children will not re-enter the school during yard time unless they ask an adult.
- School grounds and interiors are inspected and audited by the Health and Safety team each May and any works to address issues are carried out over the summer months. This helps to maintain our building and grounds from year to year.

2 Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

Teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful should be promoted. Students should have regular opportunities to work in small groups with their peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy among students.

The curricular subjects offered to students provide opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity. Schools are encouraged to provide opportunities for students to develop a sense of self-worth through both curricular and extracurricular programmes.

- The full implementation of the SPHE and the RSE and Stay Safe Programmes.
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying
- Delivery of the Garda Programmes at 4th, 5th & 6th class primary. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying. If appropriate, the Gardaí will visit the Junior classes also.

- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of Special Educational Needs pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately.
- Where appropriate, the following programmes may be used to address different forms of bullying behaviour. Selection and implementation of these programmes will be age and circumstances based. All programmes are recommended by Oide and the PDST and can be accessed [here in the Catalogue for Wellbeing Resources for Primary Schools.](#)

3 Policy and Planning

- Coralstown NS discussed and developed its new Bí Cineálta policy in Term 2 and 3 of the 2024/2025 academic year. This policy will replace our current anti-bullying policy in September 2025.
- The Bí Cineálta policy will be developed collaboratively with the staff, students, parents and BOM. The final ratified version of the new policy will be published on the school website in September 2025.
- The recommended half day closure for staff collaboration on the new Bí Cineálta took place on February 19th 2025.
- Mrs Fox attended the Bí Cineálta leaders online seminar on Tuesday March 22nd 2024
- Mrs Fox attended the Bí Cineálta PLE full day training in Athlone Education Centre on Wednesday 11th December 2024.
- Coralstown NS used the recommended template in Appendix A of the Bí Cineálta publication to develop their policy.
- Coralstown NS used the recommended template in Appendix B to develop a student friendly version of our Bí Cineálta policy
- Staff will be encouraged to attend and engage with teacher professional learning courses to support school staff to prevent and address bullying behaviour. School staff should share their experiences and examples of best practice after such courses in staff meetings or during Croke park hours or via email updates and resource sharing where appropriate.
- Preventative programmes and strategies will be recorded in the Whole School Plan for SPHE and in teachers' individual preparation for teaching and learning. All implemented lessons will be recorded in Cuntais Míósúla.

4 Relationships and Partnerships

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. In Coralstown NS, these interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as Glór na n-Óg, our student council, our Wellbeing Committee, our Active School Committee, our parents' council, our BOM and our school staff.

These relationships are strengthened and supported by:

- Age appropriate awareness initiatives that look at the causes and impacts of bullying behaviour including those dealing with navigating friendships, identity based bullying, racist bullying, homophobic/transphobic bullying, sexism and sexual harassment
- supporting the active participation of students in school life through our student council
- supporting the active participation of parents in school life, including those who may find it difficult or daunting to engage with the school due to being unfamiliar with the education system or due to language or cultural barriers. We host coffee mornings, meet and greet for Infants, tours of the school for new families, parents' council events and meetings and a range of other opportunities for support.

- conducting and sourcing workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying
- supporting activities that build empathy, respect and resilience
- encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and buddy activities throughout the year
- promoting acts of kindness
- teaching problem solving
- hosting debates and encouraging exploring different views and opinions.

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):

Coralstown NS has a supervision policy dated 2016. We will review and ratify this policy in Term 1 2025.

- Supervision in our school is carried out by our teachers and SNA's daily as per our Rota available in the staffroom. Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff will be encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision will also apply to monitoring student use of communication technology within the school.
- Children will only play in areas that they can be seen. They are not permitted to play in the trees at the back of the school. The gate at the alley beside the oil tank is to remain closed during break times. Infants will remain on the playground and not pass the climbing wall.
- Children will be encouraged to use the toilet prior to going outside to play. Children will not re-enter the school during yard time unless they ask an adult.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teachers with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are as follows:

All class teachers and SET where appropriate.

The Principal/Deputy Principal will provide support and advice and will become involved where appropriate

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):

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The process of addressing bullying behaviour in Coralstown NS follows the *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*. This process is structured in three stages:

Stage 1: Identifying if Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

Bullying is defined 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. A detailed definition is outlined in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Where bullying behaviour is suspected, parents/guardians report it to the class teacher. To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying, we consider the following three 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 all three questions is Yes, the behaviour is considered bullying and the procedures outlined in this policy will be followed.

Note: A one-off incident may also be deemed bullying in certain situations — for example, a hurtful message posted online that is likely to be shared or viewed multiple times.

If the answer to any of the questions is No, the behaviour is not considered bullying. In such cases, school strategies to address inappropriate behaviour (as outlined in the *Code of Behaviour*) will be used.

When investigating whether bullying behaviour has occurred, the teacher will follow these steps:

- Where **one student is reported**, the student is met individually at first.
- Then, the **student who experienced the behaviour** and the **student displaying the behaviour** are met together.
- Where **a group** is involved, each student is met **individually** first.
- Then, all students involved, including the student experiencing the behaviour, are brought together for a group meeting.
- At the group meeting, all students are asked to share their perspective to ensure clarity and accountability.
- Each student is offered appropriate support following the meeting.
- Students may be asked to provide **written accounts** of what occurred.
- **Parents will be supported** with guidance and resources where needed to help support their children.

Stage 2: Where Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

- **Parents/guardians** of the students involved will be contacted **early** in the process and will be included in discussions on how the matter will be addressed.
- The **views of the student experiencing the bullying behaviour** will be considered in deciding the best course of action.
- A **formal written record** will be created, including:
 - The **form and type** of behaviour (see Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures).
 - The **time and place** of the behaviour,
 - The **date of engagement** with students and parents,
 - The **actions and supports agreed** to address the behaviour.
- If the behaviour presents a **child protection concern**, it will be addressed immediately under the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools**.
- The completed record will be shared with the **Principal**.

Stage 3: Follow-Up Where Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

- The **teacher must engage again** with the students involved and their parents **no more than 20 school days** after the initial meeting.

- During this follow-up, the teacher will:
 - Evaluate the **effectiveness** of the strategies used,
 - Review the **current relationship** between the students,
 - Determine whether the bullying behaviour has **ceased**,
 - Record the **views** of students and parents regarding the outcome,
 - Note the **date the behaviour was deemed to have ceased** (if applicable),
 - Document any **engagement with external services/supports**.
- **Ongoing support** may be necessary even if the behaviour has stopped.
- If bullying behaviour **has not ceased**, the teacher will:
 - Review and adapt the strategies used,
 - Continue engagement with parents and students,
 - Set a **new timeframe for review** and further follow-up.
- If the behaviour continues, the school may:
 - Use strategies outlined in the *Code of Behaviour*,
 - Apply **disciplinary sanctions** where appropriate (as a private matter between the school and the families involved).

Complaints

- If a parent is **not satisfied** with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed, they will be referred to the school's **Complaints Procedures**.
- If a parent remains dissatisfied, they may contact the **Ombudsman for Children** if they believe the school's response has negatively affected the child.

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):

Coralstown NS is committed to supporting all pupils affected by bullying — whether they are the target, the bystander, or the pupil displaying bullying behaviour. Our approach is restorative, inclusive, and focused on building resilience, emotional literacy and social connectedness.

General Supports Provided

The school's programme of support may include, but is not limited to, the following actions:

- **Listening actively** and without judgment
- **Showing empathy** and validating the child's experience
- **Reassuring** the pupil that they are not to blame and that they are being taken seriously
- Encouraging the pupil to **inform a trusted adult** if any further incidents occur
- **Check-in systems** (e.g. teacher-led, SNA support, pastoral check-ins)
- Facilitating **discreet or targeted lessons** on topics such as assertiveness, friendship, or emotional regulation
- Supporting pupils in **discussing the incident with their parents**, if this hasn't already been done
- Offering **group or paired activities** to rebuild peer confidence and promote inclusion
- **Monitoring pupils sensitively** during yard time and transitions

Targeted Support Activities

Where needed, and within the resources available, pupils will be supported through participation in:

- Activities that help **build self-esteem**, confidence and a sense of belonging
- **Friendship-building programmes** and structured group work to develop social skills
- Elements of *Friends for Life* or *Incredible Years* that focus on **emotional resilience**
- Engagement with **restorative practices** where appropriate to repair relationships
- Ongoing **pastoral care** provided by class teachers, SNAs and leadership team

Referral and External Supports

Where appropriate, and in collaboration with parents, referrals may be made to external supports such as:

- **The Family Resource Centre**, local support services or school liaison initiatives
- **NEPS** (National Educational Psychological Service) for guidance on tailored supports
- **Tusla**, if bullying behaviour constitutes a child protection concern

Programmes and Resources to Support Prevention and Intervention

Coralstown NS also draws on national supports and resources if required and where appropriate including:

- **Webwise** – for online safety and cyberbullying education (pupils and parents)
- **Oide** – for staff CPD in bullying prevention and restorative practice
- **National Parents Council** – for parent education on bullying awareness
- **FUSE Programme** (DCU Anti-Bullying Centre) – for building a positive school culture
- **Internet Safety Talks** – for both pupils and parents

NEPS workshops and publications on supporting children's social and emotional development

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: Thomas Se Date: 24. Sept. 2025
(Chairperson of board
of management)

Signed: Michael Jand Date: 24 / 9 / 25
(Principal)