



# Tuam Educate Together N.S.

## School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

### Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of *Tuam Educate Together National 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 *Cineálta: 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 can be:

- Physical: (e.g.: personal injury, damage to or loss of property)
- Social: (e.g.: withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion)
- Emotional: (e.g.: low self-esteem, depression, anxiety)

Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

### **Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour**

- A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.
- Disagreements between students.
- Some students with special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others.
- Bullying behaviour is not accidental or reckless. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying but must be addressed under 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	Dec 2024	Discussion, Group work, reporting back and working together in groups.
Students	January 2025	Student council Questionnaires
Parents	March 2025	Parents questionnaire on Google shared and responded to.
Board of Management	June 2025	Board explored, amended and ratified the policy
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers.	April 2025	School community asked to contribute to the policy Ger our Lunch Bag operative and Monika our cleaner

Date policy was approved: September 2025

Date policy was last reviewed: September 2025



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**Prevention Strategies used in Tuam ETNS to promote a Whole School approach to Wellbeing Promotion.**

**(as gathered at whole school staff meeting 4/12/2)**

## Culture and Environment

- Assemblies
- Artwork and signage around school that supports positive values
- All cultures and beliefs are celebrated
- Holidays/Culture display
- Show and Tell
- First names for all staff, respectful interactions
- No hidden spaces
- Bright cheery learning environment
- Ethical Education
- Involvement in initiatives like One book, One Tuam/Picker Pals/Food Dudes
- Welcoming bright safe corridors
- Adequate organisation of toilets for break times
- Belonging and sense of community fostered
- Positive social culture where people are interested in each other
- Parental Involvement

## Curriculum

- High expectations of learners
- Team teaching
- Support for all through the Continuum of Support
- Displays of art-work - help to foster pride in achievements
- Active school/Learn together and Wellness noticeboards
- Use of teaching programmes that support the Curriculum; RSE, Stay Safe, Walk Tall etc.
- Group work evident in all subjects in all classes
- Novel Study/Literacy activities/Stations to encourage full participation
- Project Work
- Play as a methodology
- Student Council
- Green Committee
- Restorative Practice
- Incredible Years
- Learn Together
- Buddy Systems
- Winter Post-posting letters around the school
- Circle time to build connection
- Varied after-school activities
- 'We Belong' School

### **Policy and Planning**

- Code of Behaviour
- Restorative Practice
- Acceptable Use Policy
- SPHE Whole School Plan
- SEN Policy
- Communication Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Bullying promotion
- Effective Leadership
- Dignity in Work Policy
- Digital Literacy Policy
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### **Relationships and Partnerships**

- Monthly Presentation of Certificates of Achievement
- Restorative Practice
- Drama and role play to address inclusion
- Excellent home school links
- Community links
- Facebook profile
- Guest speakers
- Regular meetings keeping parents up to date
- Relationships with local pre-schools, secondary and national schools
- Parents Association
- Student participation in school life-school council, yard leaders
- Building relationships
- Staff meetings
- BOM meetings
- In school Management Meetings
- Parental involvement
- Nurture Classroom and resources supports students and Teachers



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## 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

- Staff at all times endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the students by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Digital Learning Policy includes learning about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship, Every student should know the rules of being online . AUP also developed for technology in our school.
- The school's Bí Cineálta/anti-bullying policy is explicitly taught annually in all classes and discussed regularly with the students.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring students who are considered at risk of bullying behaviour/ experiencing bullying behaviour.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying behaviour are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff and recorded using the template for this.
- School wide awareness raising on all aspects of bullying behaviour, supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular activities.
- Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated and students "see themselves" in the school environment.
- Involvement of students in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Student Council/Green Committee/Friendship week, and other activities that can help to pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying behaviour is taking place.

- Refer to appropriate online behaviour when using devices and in SPHE lessons.
- Promote online safety events or material for parents
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports available to the school
- Shared folder of resources on Google Drive for teaching about the Bí Cineálta guidelines
- Challenge gender-stereotypes – equal participation of all and equal recognition.
- Raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour and encourage students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.
- Ensuring the library has material which reflects our diverse school population from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of gender.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of gender.
- Making clear that our school has a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment of any kind.



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Tuam ETNS has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

In addition to all of the practices identified above under Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Planning and Policy and Relationships and Partnerships

In Tuam ETNS we will provide

- Supervision on Yard and in class
- A termly Timetable of student supervision in class and yard is developed to monitor student behaviour and wellbeing. Any causes for concern are dealt with and reported to school management.
- All staff are watchful and observe relationships between students in class, note absence patterns and let it be known that high standards of behaviour are expected
- As a school we encourage students to feel safe as we have a **telling environment in our school**- by using a tell box, worry box, suggestion box. Students wellness and access to support will be highlighted on posters around the school.
- Our Kindness Ambassador is named and their picture will be displayed on the corridor, as a safe adult that children can turn to, this person will have a picture displayed near the wellness wall.
- We have an Online Log of Actions/Behaviour/incident report book to input important information.
- Good relationships with NEPS, Local Tusla support workers, Parents, play therapists and wider community.

## Addressing Bullying Behaviour

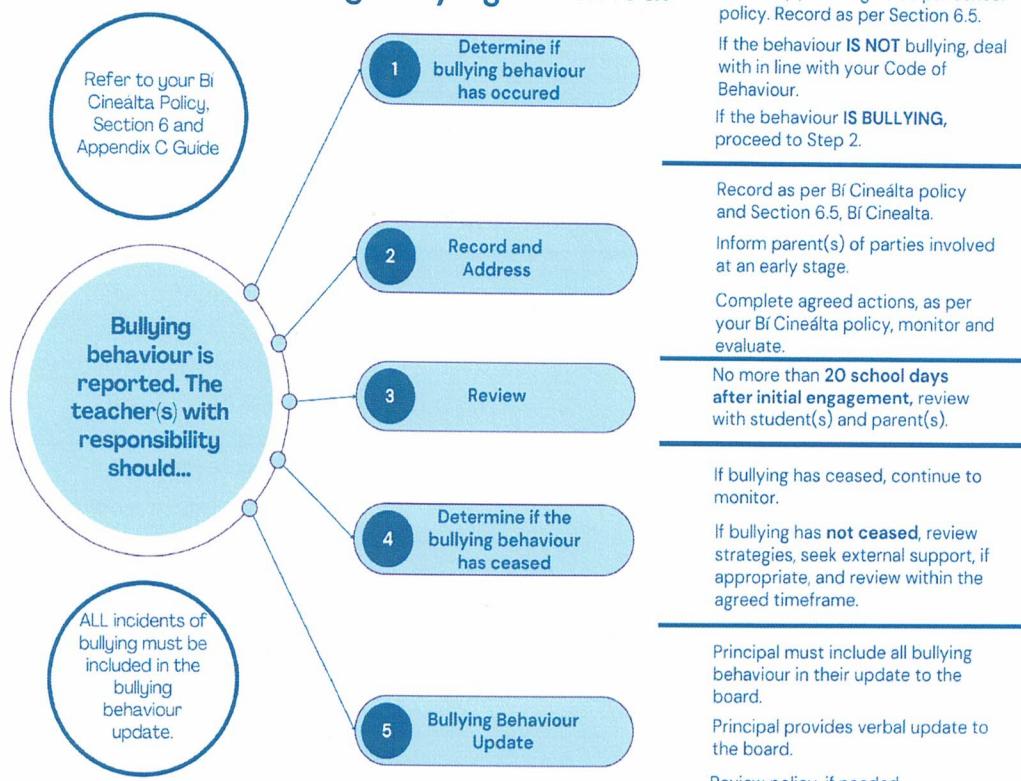
The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is (are) as follows:

**All Class teachers and Support staff including SEN teachers and SNAs**

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
- > Record and review

## Bí Cineálta: Addressing Bullying Behaviour





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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):

1.Determine if bullying behaviour has occurred.	<p><b>Class Teacher</b> investigates a report of Bullying behaviour.</p> <p>If the behaviour IS NOT bullying, deal with it in line with Tuam Code of Behaviour.</p> <p>If the behaviour IS BULLYING proceed to Step 2.</p> <p>A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are requested to support the student(s) involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.</p>
2.Record and Address	<p>On being informed of an alleged incident of bullying behaviour the <b>Class Teacher</b> will first interview the student experiencing bullying. Initial investigations of bullying behaviour will be done in class where possible but some incidents might be best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.</p> <p>If a group is involved each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about the other's statements. Students may be asked to write down their account of the incident.</p> <p><b>Class Teacher</b> must record his/her notes from any investigation on Aladdin making a Bí Cineálta recording template. Parent(s) of parties involved should be informed at an early stage. Principal is informed at the same time.</p> <p>Where the <b>Class Teacher</b> has determined that a student has engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her that 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 student experiencing the bullying behaviour. A restorative agreement is signed and will be referred to again at the review meeting.</p> <p>Both the student displaying bullying behaviour and the student experiencing bullying behaviour need support.</p> <p>When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the Class Teacher will complete the report, to include the findings of the investigation, the strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. This will be recorded in the Tuam ETNS Bí Cineálta recording</p>

	template.(available online on Aladdin Under documents)
3. Review	Review with the student(s) and parent(s) involved <b>no more than 20 school days after initial engagement.</b>
4.Determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased	If the bullying behaviour has ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required. If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the class teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and Principal and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased. If the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour the school may consider using strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour
5.Bullying Behaviour Update	Principal must include all reports of bullying behaviour in their update to the Board of Management. This will include a verbal account of investigations, trends and findings.
6.Complaint Process	If a parent is not happy with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.
7.Supports	Supports to prevent and address bullying are available from the following government agencies NEPS Oide Webwise National Parents Council DCU Anti Bullying Centre Tusla Play Therapist
*Note 1*	In circumstances where the student expresses concern about their parents being informed about a case of bullying behaviour the class teacher will support the student appropriately to explore how it could be handled and work out together how parents may be informed.
*Note 2*	If a parent makes a report of bullying behaviour but requests that the school take no action, they must submit this in writing. We will acknowledge this but may still deem it necessary for a report to be addressed and investigated.

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):



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Our school's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying behaviour involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations

- **Encourage Open Communication:** We have created a safe and supportive environment where students feel comfortable discussing their experiences. They know it's okay to speak up if they see or experience bullying.
- **Behaviour Reflection Sheet:** Through Restorative Practice questioning students are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and its impact on others
- **Promote Inclusion:** Students are encouraged to share experiences and stories. Celebrating diversity and a variety of different festivals and special occasions throughout the year significantly impact students' sense of belonging.
- **Engage in Extracurricular Activities:** Participation in clubs, sports, or arts is encouraged. Being part of a group with shared interests can boost self-esteem and provide a supportive peer network.
- **Involve Parents:** Lines of communication with parents and guardians are kept open at all times. They are informed of different situations at school and collaborate on strategies to support the student both at home and school.
- **Seek Professional Support:** Support is available from professional organisations like NEPS, Oide, NCSE, Tusla, NPC etc.
- **Implement Educational Programs:** Access to programmes like Walk Tall, Incredible years Programme, Weaving Wellbeing, FUSE activities and lessons from Webwise help to build children's resilience and raise awareness of appropriate and acceptable behaviour.
- **Support from Nurture Teachers** and our school's play therapist.

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*.

## **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: Mike Connolly Date: 5/11/2025  
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: Nuala Bourke Date: 5/11/2025  
(Principal)



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## Other important Documents

### Appendix D Report to BOM

<https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/appendix-d-guide-to-providing-bullying-behaviour-update.pdf>

### Appendix E Review Of Bí Cinealta

Fiona editing 7/12/25

### Appendix F NOTification of the Boards Annual Review

<https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/appendix-f-notification-regarding-the-board-of-managements-annual-review-of-the-school.pdf>