

Scoil Iognáid de Rís

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Bí Cineálta Policy



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School Profile

School Name Scoil Iognáid de Rís, CBS Primary School.

School Address Stephen Street, Kilkenny.

School Details

Scoil Iognáid de Rís is a voluntary Roman Catholic Primary School under the Trusteeship and the Patronage of the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST). The School is grant aided by the Department of Education and Skills and is a co-educational school.

School Management

The Board of Management of Scoil Iognáid de Rís is a statutory board appointed pursuant to the provisions of the Education Act 1998.

Mission Statement

Inspired by its founder, Scoil Iognáid de Rís aims to provide Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition. The school endeavours to be a caring Christian Community which promotes to the best of its ability the personal, spiritual, physical and intellectual development of its students.

Ethos

As an Edmund Rice School, Scoil Iognáid de Rís seeks to promote the five key elements of an Edmund Rice School as espoused by the ERST Charter:

- Nurturing faith, Christian spirituality and Gospel-based values.
- Promoting partnership in the school community.
- Excelling in teaching and learning.
- Creating a caring school community.
- Inspiring transformational leadership.

Introduction

The Board of Management of Scoil Iognáid de Rís 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 here at Scoil Iognáid de Rís 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.

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single 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 it becomes a repeated behaviour.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:

- If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying. This is addressed under the school's Code of Behaviour.
- Disagreements between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves

deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups.

- 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. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned, but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control.

Section A: Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	Term 2 & 3 2024-25 school year	• School half-day closure. • Staff meeting provided staff the opportunity to discuss the new Bí Cineálta Action Plan and staff were informed of the important points in relation to dealing with an incidence or reporting of bullying. • Staff were given time to discuss and relay feedback. • Completion of staff questionnaire prior to the half-day closure. • Principal and Deputy Principal attended the Bí Cineálta training. • Sharing of draft policy with staff to consult and make any amendments to the policy.
Students	April-May 2025	• Student Questionnaire 3rd – 6th class. • Student Council voice.
Parents	Term 2 & 3 2024-25 school year	• Parent Questionnaire – parents were given a questionnaire seeking their input in developing our policy.
Board of Management	May 2025	• Discussion at BOM meeting. • Review of policy draft, leading to consultation and ratification after amendments made where necessary.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	May 2025	• Consultation with relevant non-teaching staff and school bus drivers to discuss expectations in relation to behaviour for students.
Date policy was approved:	23/09/25	Date policy was last reviewed: September 2026

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by Scoil Iognáid de Rís. 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.

Culture and Environment

- Through our Code of Behaviour, School Ethos and Philosophy, Scoil Iognáid de Rís promotes an atmosphere of friendship, respect, connection and belonging.
- We actively promote the concept of ‘a trusted adult’ – a reliable and caring staff member that students can turn to for guidance, support, and reassurance. This trusted adult helps ensure that students feel safe and confident in expressing their concerns and seeking help when needed.
- There is a strong sense of community and co-operation between the Board of Management, staff, pupils and parents, and each has a clear role in the prevention of bullying.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences/achievements, by acknowledging and rewarding good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- To foster an atmosphere of togetherness, co-operation, and mutual respect, our school utilises notice boards and the school hall for artistic and wellbeing activities which highlights key initiatives at certain times during the year such as the Student Council, Amber Flag committee, Anti-Bullying, Positive Mental Health, sporting achievements, reading achievements, Neurodiversity and our Parents’ Association activities. These initiatives serve to celebrate student achievements, student voice, student agency, promote positive contributions to the school community, and ensure that every child feels valued and respected.
- School assemblies serve as a platform to recognise and celebrate achievements, as well as a platform of communication within the school. We aim to provide a space where every student feels supported. During these assemblies, the school’s Bí Cineálta Policy is regularly referenced to remind students of the importance of respect, kindness, and empathy and that bullying behaviour is unacceptable.
- Scoil Iognáid de Rís supports a ‘telling’ environment where reporting of bullying behaviour is encouraged. All students are aware that they can report bullying behaviour to all members of staff and this information will then be brought to the class teacher initially.

- Our school grounds are carefully maintained to foster a sense of ownership and respect within the school community, including classrooms, play spaces and our school field.
- Scoil Iognáid de Rís creates a safe physical space for all our students as this supports psychological safety. The staff will ensure that spaces have clear lines of sight for supervision purposes.
- Consistent supervision strategies and ongoing monitoring of students are implemented throughout the school day, including during transitions, break times, and extra-curricular activities. These efforts are designed to ensure a safe and supportive environment, effectively prevent bullying and quickly identify and address any concerns related to student behaviour, well-being, or safety.
- All school staff consistently model respectful behaviour towards colleagues, students, and visitors, demonstrating professionalism, courtesy, and consideration in all interactions.
- Open communication between the Patron, Board of Management, school staff, students and their parents help foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibilities in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.
- The school leadership team influences the school culture and set the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing bullying and addressing bullying behaviour.
- Each member of school staff has a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.
- Students shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all. The school's Student Council is an important voice in this process.
- Parents, as active partners in their child's education, help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.
- Ensuring the full implementation of the SPHE, RSE, Stay Safe and Walk Tall Programmes throughout the school.
- We have established a buddy system in our school for playground games involving senior/junior pupils. Buddy reading systems are also implemented in the school.
- All staff members took part in Restorative Practice training throughout the 2024-2025 school year. Circles and Restorative Circles will be implemented throughout term 1 of the 2025-2026 school year.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- Scoil Iognáid de Rís promotes teaching and learning that is collaborative and respectful.
- Children have regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, fostering the development of friendships and interpersonal connections.
- Curricular subjects provide opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Scoil Iognáid de Rís provides opportunities for students to develop a sense of self-worth, team inclusion and respect through curricular and extra-curricular activities e.g. hurling, camogie, chess, Lego construction club, basketball, music lessons, artists in residence, etc.
- Children participate in SPHE, Stay Safe, RSE, Walk Tall and Religion classes to develop diversity, inclusion, respect and understanding of different beliefs. Resources are available for supporting the implementation of the SPHE Programme.
- The community Garda will be invited to discuss issues around personal safety and cyber bullying.
- The use of circles in classes may also be an avenue through which bullying behaviour may be explored with the children. All staff members have been trained in Restorative Practice.
- The school acknowledges and values the cultural diversity within our community, actively fostering an environment where inclusivity, respect, and understanding thrive, and where students “see themselves” in the school environment.
- Students’ cultural backgrounds are actively incorporated into classroom activities, discussions, and learning experiences to promote inclusivity and respect.

Policy and Planning

- The wellbeing of the school community will be at the heart of school policies and plans. Our Bí Cineálta policy will be reviewed annually along with the range of other policies that contribute and support the implementation of our Bí Cineálta Policy.
- A variety of policies such as the Acceptable Usage Policy, Digital Learning Policy, Supervision policy, Special Education Policy, Code of Behaviour and Child Safeguarding all support the implementation of the Bí Cineálta policy.
- Student voice will be a key component in shaping school policy and planning, promoting greater awareness and supporting the successful implementation of initiatives.
- Teachers and school staff may engage in appropriate professional learning courses to support us in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

- As part of SSE we have undertaken training in Restorative Practice. Oide facilitators provided 10 hours of training for all staff members.

Relationships and Partnerships:

Strong interpersonal relationships are an integral part of Scoil Iognáid de Rís in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours. Examples of promoting positive relationships and partnerships within our school are:

- Anti Bullying Week awareness initiative.
- Supporting the active participation of students in school life.
- Supporting the active participation of parents in school life.
- Workshops to raise awareness of bullying behaviour.
- Wellbeing integrated into all aspects of school life to build empathy, respect and resilience.
- Promoting Acts of kindness.
- Classroom rules created by the children in each class at the beginning of the school year.
- Encouraging the active involvement of parents and students in the development of the school Bí Cineálta Policy, as well as a child-friendly version of the policy. This will ensure their participation in promoting and discussing effective strategies to identify and reduce bullying behavior, while also outlining procedures for addressing and resolving incidents if they occur.
- We seek advice and support from NEPS when and where it is necessary.
- Outside tutors are welcome to our school to provide a wide range of activities.
- One of the key elements of an Edmund Rice School is the promotion of partnerships in the school community. This is something we look to strengthen year on year through links with outside agencies and clubs.

Preventing Cyber Bullying Behaviour

The increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour. Scoil Iognáid de Rís will proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments.

Scoil Iognáid de Rís actively promotes the prevention of cyber bullying with the use of the following strategies:

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum.
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum encourages responsible online behaviour. Elements of Webwise and FUSE may be used where deemed suitable and age appropriate.
- Having regular conversations with students about developing respectful and kind relationships online.
- Developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology.
- Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards in behaviour for the Code of Behaviour of Scoil Iognáid de Rís.
- Promote and host online safety workshops each year for the parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online. (Hosted by Ger Brick)
- Host an internet safety workshop each year for children in 5th and 6th class (Ger Brick)
- Activities on Internet Safety Day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour.

Preventing Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying Behaviour

All students including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students, have a right to feel safe and supported at school.

Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- 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 pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging good behaviour and by providing opportunities for success.
- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities such as cooperative games.
- Challenging gender stereotypes
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, school staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour- this is included in the workshops provided by Ger Brick to student, staff and parents.
- Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour.

- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff and recorded on our school's template.
- Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of sex.
- Celebrating diversity in school and acknowledging the contributions of all students.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex.
- The school's Bi Cinealta Policy is discussed regularly with students.

Preventing racist bullying behaviour

Scoil Iognáid de Rís has become much more culturally diverse over the last number of decades. Students attending Scoil Iognáid de Rís come from many different cultures and backgrounds. Students from diverse backgrounds may face discrimination and prejudice and may be subject to racist bullying behaviour.

Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their school environment.
- Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities.
- Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour.
- We have cultural diversity visible and on display in our school.
- Providing support to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents e.g. use of iPads for translation purposes.
- Providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, and to encourage communication with their parents.
- Ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Preventing sexist bullying behaviour

Scoil Iognáid de Rís focuses on gender equality as part of the school's measures to create a supportive and respectful environment.

Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally irrespective of their sex.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex.
- Celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students.
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home.

Preventing Sexual Harassment

Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. Scoil Iognáid de Rís makes it clear that there is a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Using the SPHE curriculum and the Bí Cineálta Policy 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.

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

- Implementation of effective supervision strategies and continuous monitoring of students are implemented throughout the school day, including during transitions, break times, and extracurricular activities, to maintain a safe environment, prevent bullying incidents, and swiftly address any concerns related to student behaviour or well-being (See Scoil Iognáid de Rís Code of Behaviour).
- Classroom teachers actively encourage students to report any incidents of bullying they witness or experience, promoting a culture of trust and responsibility.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place.
- Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers.

- School assemblies are used to emphasise the importance of positive behaviour and looking after one another.
- The Student Council serves as a key student voice, providing valuable insight into identifying and addressing issues related to school practices or procedures that impact student wellbeing.
- SPHE lessons play a crucial role in promoting positive behaviour and providing students with strategies to address negative behaviour when it arises.
- Use of restorative practice and the language associated with it, if necessary.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Class teachers, Deputy Principal and Principal.

- The class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and record bullying behaviour on the correct form/ incident book.
- All reports of bullying will first be addressed by the class teacher, with the Principal being notified at this stage.
- If the teacher's interventions do not resolve the issue and the negative behaviour continues, the matter will be escalated to the Principal for further action.
- Principal will inform the Board of Management of incidences of Bullying Behaviour at Board of Management meetings.
- Bí Cineálta Policy Coordinator will be available to provide up to date information and support if needed to assist class teachers in addressing concerns.
- Any teacher may act as a relevant teacher if circumstances warrant it.

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- Aim to resolve any issues to restore as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving issues and restoring relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured

- Ensure that the student displaying bullying behaviour and those witnessing bullying behaviour are fully supported within the school.
- 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 Classroom Incident Book/form will be used to record a written account of discussions.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.
- Inform parents of those involved.

Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful, but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

The steps that will be taken by Scoil Iognáid de Rís 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):

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the school will consider the following 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 each of the questions is YES, then the behaviour is bullying and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures. If the answer to any of these questions is NO, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider **what, where, when and why?** The steps that will be taken by the school to identify if bullying behaviour has occurred are as follows:

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the 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.

- Teacher will meet with the student(s) involved individually.
- If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged individually first.
- Thereafter, all students involved will be met as a group providing the child allegedly experiencing the bullying behaviour is comfortable to do this.
- 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 member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after an interview by the teacher.
- Children may be asked to write down their account of an incident.
- If deemed necessary, accounts may be gathered from students who observed the bullying behaviour or were present during the incident.

Where Bullying Behaviour has occurred

The approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour are as follows:

Stage 1 – Informal - Class Teacher

The teacher will exercise their judgment to determine what type of bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.

- Teachers will take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- Once it has been established that bullying has occurred the teacher dealing with the bullying will first interview the child experiencing bullying behaviour and discuss the feelings the child experienced because of the bullying 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.
- If a group is involved each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group providing the child allegedly experiencing the bullying is comfortable to do this.
- At the group meeting, each member will be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about the other statements.
- Each member of a group will be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the other members of the group after an interview by the teacher.

- If deemed necessary, accounts may be gathered from students who observed the bullying behaviour or were present during the incident.
- The teacher will inform the Principal of the bullying behaviour.
- At this stage the Principal will not become involved if it is felt that the issue can be resolved by the class teacher.
- Parents of students who have experienced bullying behaviour and who have displayed bullying behaviour will be informed at an early stage.
- A record should be kept of the engagement with all involved – File or incident book.
- Teachers will record incidents in a factual and impartial manner.
- 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.
- If deemed necessary, record accounts from students who observed the bullying behaviour or were present during the incident.
- Where the teacher has determined that a pupil has engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and efforts will be made to try to get him/her to empathise with the pupil experiencing bullying behaviour.
- The child/ children involved will be asked to assure the teacher and the child experiencing the bullying behaviour that further incidents will not take place.
- The primary objective at this first stage will be to restore the relationship between parties involved. This may involve employing strategies specific to the situation.
- Ongoing extra supervision will be arranged if necessary.

Reviewing Progress

- The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.
- 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 the student and their parents in relation to this.

- The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.
- Any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.
- Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If it is determined that the bullying behaviour has not ceased, then the process will proceed to Stage 2 outlined below.

Stage 2 – Formal- Principal

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased following initial interventions, the Principal will take additional steps to address the issue. These will include;

- Meeting with the students involved to review the situation in detail, ensuring that all parties have an opportunity to express their concerns and perspectives.
- A thorough assessment of the situation will be conducted to determine whether further strategies or additional supervision measures need to be implemented to prevent further incidents of bullying.
- The Principal will also arrange meetings with the parents or guardians of the students involved. These meetings will serve to collaboratively discuss the ongoing issues, put in place further interventions, and develop a tailored plan of action aimed at addressing the bullying behaviour.
- The focus of the plan will be on fostering positive behavioural change, promoting respect, and ensuring the well-being of all students.
- The school will work closely with parents to monitor progress, provide ongoing support, and ensure that both the student experiencing the bullying behaviour and the student displaying bullying behaviour receive the necessary guidance and support to resolve the situation effectively.
- Continuous monitoring and follow-up will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the interventions, with the aim of ending the bullying behaviour.
- If, after all interventions and supports have been implemented at this stage, it is determined that the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the process will proceed to Stage 3, as detailed below.

Stage 3 – Code of Behaviour

The school has a fundamental responsibility to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all students. If initial interventions and supports do not effectively address bullying and the behaviour persists, a more structured program of appropriate sanctions may be implemented. This will be done by the Principal in consultation with the student's parents and the Board of Management. The sanctions will be designed to not only address the bullying behaviour but also to encourage positive behaviour, promote personal growth, and uphold the dignity and self-esteem of the child. The aim is to support the student's development in a constructive manner, while reinforcing the importance of respect and responsibility within the school community

If the bullying recurs, a formal contract will be entered into by both parties and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of both parties will be informed. The contract will be monitored regularly by the Principal / Deputy Principal with the assistance of the class teacher to see that the situation is resolved.

If after the above, the bullying behaviour recurs, a formal meeting of the student displaying bullying behaviour, his/her parent(s)/guardian(s), the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be held and a formal suspension in line with the schools Code of Behaviour may occur. The Chairperson will have the authority to enact an immediate suspension. or in certain circumstances may issue a final Chairperson's warning to the student displaying bullying behaviour where an extended period of time has elapsed since the last incident. The school's Code of Behaviour will be invoked from this point on.

Recording 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.
- Please see Appendix B and Appendix C for our recording templates. 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.

Requests to take no action:

- A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask a member of staff to do nothing about the behaviour other than 'look out' for them.

- Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation.
- It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.
- Parents may also make the school aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school. However, while acknowledging the parents request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Social Media

- In the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour and the school reserves the right to inform parents where this occurs.
- 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 required to support the students involved.
- Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with in accordance with the Bí Cineálta policy.

Complaints Procedure

- If a parent is not satisfied 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.
- In the event that a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a parent may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student.

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):

- The school offers a range of programs and initiatives designed to support and promote students' wellbeing. These include, wellbeing displays, school assemblies, the school garden, extracurricular activities, SPHE lessons, and the Grow in Love program. Each of these initiatives plays a vital role in fostering a positive and supportive environment that prioritises the emotional, social, and mental well-being of all students.
- The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) provides a comprehensive range of supports including both direct supports; working with affected children, and indirect support in the form of CPD and advice.
- The NCSE has a range of supports available to schools in the form of advisors to visit the school and provide advice and support as well as providing a range of CPD opportunities for teachers and staff.
- Oide is the Department of Education support service for schools and it supports professional learning for primary teachers and school leaders.
- Webwise is the online safety initiative of the Department of Education and may be used in the classes to help support the promotion of safer, better internet use through awareness raising and education initiatives targeting teachers, students and parents.
- If necessary we can contact our internet safety facilitator, Ger Brick, who is willing to advise us with any incidents of online bullying.

Supporting students who experience bullying behaviour:

- Victims are reassured from the outset that they are not to blame.
- Staff will, as well as reasoning with the pupil displaying bullying behaviour, will offer continuing support and comfort to the victim.
- Strategies for restoring self-esteem will be explored between teacher and parents/guardians.
- The whole school will take a restorative approach to bullying.
- The relevant teacher, and also the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable, will continue to monitor the situation, checking in regularly with the victim and offering empathy and assurances of continuing support.
- Parents will be updated as to what has occurred, measures being taken to modify behaviour and opportunities for them to support the process.
- Those who have experienced bullying behaviour may be chosen for Social Skills sessions. As a part of skills learnt in individual/group sessions, children may be offered opportunities within the school to participate in some form of buddy system

relative to their own circumstances These groups provide a supportive environment where students can build self-esteem, and practice conflict resolution strategies. The aim is to foster meaningful friendships and equip students with the tools needed to navigate social situations constructively and respectfully.

- Children may participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop friendships and social skills and build resilience e.g.
 - Pastoral care system
 - Buddy / Peer mentoring system
 - Student Support Team
 - Group work such as circles
 - Friends programme

Supporting students who engage in bullying behaviour

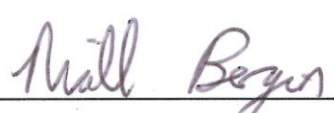
- Ensuring that students who improve their behaviour are not blamed or penalised, and are given a fresh start.
- Recognising and praising students who demonstrate behavioural improvements, affirming their decision to make positive and honourable choices.
- Students will be encouraged to engage in activities that foster friendships and social skills, such as group work in class or extracurricular team activities, to support the development of self-esteem
- Teachers and parents are encouraged to focus on addressing and correcting negative behaviour while maintaining continuous support for the child's overall growth and well-being.
- Those who have experienced bullying behaviour may be chosen for Social Skills sessions. As a part of skills learnt in individual/group sessions, children may be offered opportunities within the school to participate in some form of buddy system relative to their own circumstances to help them develop more positive social interactions. These groups provide a supportive environment where students can build self-esteem, and practice conflict resolution strategies. The aim is to foster meaningful friendships and equip students with the tools needed to navigate social situations constructively and respectfully.
- Specific topics in SPHE and other related subjects, including friendships, feelings, caring for others, and bullying, may be revisited by the class teacher with the whole class as required. This allows for reinforcement and revision of important principles related to positive social interactions and behaviour.
- Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention programme works in all situations. Therefore, various approaches and intervention strategies may be used, including suggesting that parents seek referrals to appropriate outside agencies in order to receive further support for the pupils and their families if needed.

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: 6.10.26
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed:  Date: 06/10/26
(Principal)

Appendices

Appendix A: Student Friendly - Bí Cineálta Policy

Appendix B: Scoil Iognáid de Rís Alleged Bullying Behaviour Report Form

Bí Cineálta Report Form Scoil Iognáid de Rís

Part 1: Alleged Bullying Behaviour

Date of Alleged bullying behaviour:		
Date Part 1 of form completed:		
Location of alleged bullying incident:		
Staff member report was made to:		
Behaviour reported by:		
Student(s) who experienced the behaviour:		Class:
Student(s) who displayed the behaviour:		Class:
Student(s) who witnessed the behaviour:		Class:
Summary of Behaviour (please include nature of the behaviour, where it occurred, when it occurred):		
To determine whether the behaviour is bullying behaviour please answer the following questions: If the answer is 'yes' to all three questions then it is bullying behaviour but if the answer is 'no' to any of the questions then it is not regarded as bullying behaviour and should be dealt with using the Code of Behaviour.		
1. Is the alleged bullying behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?		
2. Is the alleged bullying behaviour intended to cause harm?		
Yes ☐ No ☐		
If 'Yes', please state physical, social or emotional in the adjoining boxes		
3. Is the behaviour repeated?	Yes ☐ No ☐	
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 a repeated behaviour.		
Based on the above Information gathered, is it determined that the behaviour is bullying behaviour?		
Yes ☐	No ☐	
Proceed to Part 2: Record of Bullying Behaviour.	Address the behaviour under the Code of Behaviour.	

Account of Alleged Bullying Behaviour:

(To be joined to and filed with part 1-Use as many copies of this template as needed)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Please Tick as Appropriate:

I am the:

Child experiencing Alleged Bullying Behaviour:

Child displaying Alleged Bullying Behaviour: ☐

Child witnessing Alleged Bullying Behaviour: ☐

In your own words, please explain what happened in the case being discussed:

[illegible]

This information is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: _____

Appendix C: Scoil Iognáid de Rís Record of Bullying Behaviour

Part 1: Record of Bullying Behaviour Scoil Iognáid de Rís.

Date Part 2 of form completed: _____ Staff member report was made to: _____

Where did the bullying behaviour take place? (Tick as appropriate – can be more than one)

Online		Toilets	
In the Classroom		Outside School Gates	
School Common Areas		Other	
School Yard			

When did the bullying behaviour take place? (Tick as appropriate- can be more than one)

During Lessons		Online during school hours	
During Lunch or Break times		Online outside of school hours	
During Extra-Curricular activities		On the way to or from school	
During Unsupervised Times in School		Outside of school hours	

What **form of bullying behaviour** was reported? (Refer to section 2.5 of the procedures for description of forms) This is not an exhaustive list.

Form	
☐ Direct Physical	
☐ Direct Verbal	
☐ Written Bullying Behaviour	
☐ Extortion (where something is obtained through force or threats)	
☐ Other	

What was the **type of bullying behaviour** displayed?(not an exhaustive list) (Refer to section 2.7 of the procedures for description of motivations)

Motivation	
☐ Academic Ability (high/low)	☐ Peer Conflict
☐ Additional Education Need	☐ Physical Appearance
☐ Cultural Background	☐ Poverty
☐ Disability	☐ Racist
☐ Family Status	☐ Religious Identity
☐ Gender Identity	☐ Sexism
☐ Homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ)	☐ Sexual Harassment
☐ Member of Travelling Community/Roma	☐ Other

Signature of teacher: _____ Date: _____

Initial Engagement

(Please use this form in conjunction with Part 1 Appendix C - Record of bullying behaviour)

This form must be filed with all other documentation on this case.

Please use one form per child, i.e. use one form for every child experiencing the bullying behaviour and one for each child displaying bullying behaviour.

Date of initial engagement with student and parent(s): _____

Name of Student: _____

Name of Parent: _____

Name of Staff Member: _____

How were the discussions conducted e.g. (phonecall, in person etc):

Student _____

Parent(s) _____

Summary of initial engagement:

Feelings and views of the child/parent(s)

Part 2: Actions to be taken Scoil Iognáid de Rís.

Actions to prevent further bullying behaviour
For students involved; / for whole class / for whole school:

Actions to address bullying behaviour
To support student experiencing bullying behaviour:
To support student(s) displaying bullying behaviour:
To support student(s) witnessing bullying behaviour:

Discussions
Date of Discussion with the student experiencing bullying behaviour: _____
What are the views of the student in relation to the proposed actions?
Date of discussion with parents of student experiencing the bullying behaviour: _____
What are their views in relation to the proposed actions?

Agreed actions for parents (as appropriate)

Date of discussion with **student displaying the bullying behaviour**: _____

What are their views in relation to the proposed actions?

Date of discussion with **parents of student displaying the bullying behaviour**? _____

What are their views in relation to the proposed actions?

Agreed Actions for Parents (as appropriate)

Collaboration with external agencies or bodies (if appropriate)
Name of Agency/Body:
Date of engagement:
Name of individual engaged with:
Description of discussion and outcome:

Signature of teacher:

Date: _____

These actions will be reviewed no later than 20 days from the above date.



Signature of teacher:

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Part 4: Report to the Board of Management

All incidents of bullying behaviour should be reported to the Board of Management at each meeting of the Board. When this record has been included in the Bullying Behaviour Oversight Report to the Board of Management the date of the Board of Management meeting should be inserted below.

Date Reported to Board of Management	
--------------------------------------	--

Signature of Principal

Date: _____

Appendix D: Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update (Board of Management)

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management meeting of _____.

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous Board of Management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the Board of Management:

Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last Board of Management meeting.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school year.	

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which should include the following information where relevant:

- The trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc.
- The strategies used to address the bullying behaviour.
- Any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour.
- If any serious incidents of bullying b have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student.
- If a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school be cause of reported bullying behaviour.
- If any additional support is needed from the Board of Management.
- If the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review.

This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.

Appendix E: Bí Cineálta Policy Review

The Board of Management (the Board) must undertake an annual (calendar) review of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and its implementation in consultation with the school community. As part of the review, this document must be completed.

1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school. ____/____/20____
2. Where in the school is the student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?
3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the studentfriendly policy on the school website? ____/____/20____
4. How has the student-friendly policy been communicated to students?

5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student-friendly policy been communicated to parents

6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour?

8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented? ☐ Yes ☐ No

12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

14. Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review?

15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?

16. Does the student-friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

17. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signed: _____
 Chairperson of Board of Management
 Date: _____

Signed: _____
 Principal
 Date: _____

Date of next review: _____

Appendix F: Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy Review

The Board of Management of _____ confirms that the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of _____ [date].

This review was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education's *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management
Date: _____

Signed: _____
Principal
Date: _____

Appendix G: Overview of the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Preventing and Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The following is a guide to the main changes between the requirements of the 2013 *Antibullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* and the requirements of the 2024 *Bí Cineálta procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, which replace the 2013 procedures. This is not an exhaustive list.

Chapter 1	Responsibilities of the school community	All members of the school community must work together in partnership to prevent and address bullying behaviour at school.
	Legal basis	Legislation underpinning Bí Cineálta: - Children First Act 2015. - Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020 also known as Coco's Law.
Chapter 2	What is bullying behaviour?	Updated definition of bullying behaviour based on Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2022).
	Criminal behaviour	Updated information on when bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour.
	Child protection concerns	Updated information relating to when bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern.
Chapter 3	Impacts of bullying behaviour	Updated information on how bullying behaviour can impact students who experience bullying behaviour, students who witness the behaviour and students who engage in bullying behaviour.
Chapter 4	Bí Cineálta Policy	Schools must engage with the whole school community to develop their Bí Cineálta policy, using the template in Appendix A. The policy must list preventative strategies that are used including those to specifically prevent cyberbullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate. Schools must list specific support strategies for individuals experiencing bullying behaviour, those who witness bullying behaviour and those displaying bullying behaviour. All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded. The school principal is required to provide a bullying behaviour update at each ordinary board of management meeting.

		The school's Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed in collaboration with the whole school community once each calendar year and sooner if a serious incident occurs and the board of management determines an urgent review is required.
Chapter 4	Appendix A Bí Cineálta Policy	This template document must be used as a basis for each school's Bí Cineálta Policy.
	Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	Every school must develop a student-friendly version of its Bí Cineálta policy and display it where students and the school community can see it.
	Appendix B Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	This template document can be used by schools as a basis for their student-friendly policy.
Chapter 5	Preventing Bullying Behaviour	Prevention measures are linked to the four areas of Wellbeing Promotion. Importance of fostering a "telling environment" in schools and the role of the trusted adult. Prevention strategies must be provided relating to specific types of bullying behaviour including cyberbullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment, as appropriate.
Chapter 6	Appendix C Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour	Guide can be used to address bullying behaviour.
	Remit of the school in addressing bullying behaviour	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 required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.
	Requests to take no action	Guidance for schools on how requests by students and parents to "take no action" should be addressed.
	Engagement with students involved in bullying behaviour and their parents	Schools must engage with students who have experienced bullying behaviour to decide the actions to be taken to address the incident of bullying behaviour. Schools must also engage with their parents. Schools must engage with students who have displayed bullying behaviour as well as their parents when deciding actions to be taken. Schools must engage with all involved when reviewing progress and determining whether bullying behaviour has ceased.

	Recording Incidents of Bullying Behaviour	All incidents of bullying behaviour must be recorded by the teacher addressing the behaviour.
Chapter 7	Update to the board of management	Principal must provide an update to the board of management at each ordinary board meeting. This report includes the number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board meeting, the number of incidents ongoing and the total number reported since the beginning of the school year. The principal must provide a verbal update which will include, where relevant, trends and patterns, the strategies used to address the incidents and whether an urgent review of the policy is needed. The update is to inform discussion at each ordinary board of management meeting regarding the effectiveness of the preventative strategies used by the school and the overall effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta Policy.
	Appendix D Guide to providing bullying behaviour update to the board of management	Guide can be used to assist principals in providing bullying behaviour update to board of management.
	Review of Bí Cineálta Policy	The Bí Cineálta policy must be reviewed once each calendar year, in collaboration with the whole school community, and earlier if the Board determines an urgent review is warranted.
	Appendix E Review of the Bí Cineálta policy.	The Review template must be completed when the Bí Cineálta policy is reviewed.
	Appendix F Notification of Annual Review	The template can be used to notify the school community that the annual review has been completed.