COLÁISTE NA hINSE

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Coláiste na hInse has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy is intended to comply with 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. The whole school community has a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that students are kept safe from harm and that their wellbeing is at the forefront of our work. In accordance with equality legislation, the school will take all reasonably practicable steps to prevent harassment of students or staff on the nine grounds specified in that legislation.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm can be physical, social and/or emotional. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people. The detailed definition is set out in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Section A: Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy

All members of the school community must be provided with an opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

School community group	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School staff	19th October and 22nd October 2026	Email/staff meeting
Students	16th October 2026	Email
Parents/guardians	16th October 2026	Email
Board of Management	3rd November 2026	Board Meeting
Wider school community, as appropriate		

Date policy was approved: 3/11/26.

Date policy was last reviewed: 3/11/26.

School vision: Coláiste na hInse is an outstanding, progressive centre of teaching and learning where bród (pride), uaillmhian (ambition) and dearfacht (positivity) are lived daily. Through positive relationships, respect, inclusivity and encouragement, students are empowered to aimigh ar réalta eolais (reach for your star).

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

Culture, environment and relationships

- Promote a positive, inclusive school culture based on respect, care, integrity, trust and a sense of belonging.
- Promote a telling environment in which students feel comfortable raising concerns and know how to report bullying behaviour.
- Promote the trusted-adult approach. Staff should reassure students who report concerns and, without delay, inform the staff member responsible for addressing bullying behaviour.
- Promote parent/guardian partnership and open communication between home and school.
- Use good lighting, remove visual barriers where possible, and maintain vision panels in classrooms.
- Provide reasonable supervision during breaks and lunch, including additional personnel around toilet-block areas.
- Use artwork and signage to promote equality, diversity, inclusion and respect; encourage lunchtime clubs and activities.

Curriculum and whole-school initiatives

- Promote collaborative and respectful teaching and learning, including opportunities for students to work in small groups.
- Use SPHE and RSE to develop respectful, healthy relationships, inclusion and understanding of diversity.
- Use CSPE, History and relevant senior-cycle subjects to develop awareness of communities, racism and colonialism.
- School initiatives including Bí Cineálta posters, first-year induction, bonding trips and activities, the Dearfacht system and Lá Dearfacht, Réalta na Míosa, Cinnirí, Tionóil, Check and Connect, Stand Up Week, morning club and the Nurture Programme.
- Support positive relationships through student support teams, anti-bullying workshops and seminars, student council participation, parent/guardian participation, peer mentoring, prefects and activities that promote empathy, respect and resilience.

Prevention of specific types of bullying behaviour

- Online bullying: a ban on mobile phones and smart watches, implementation of SPHE and digital media literacy, conversations about respectful online relationships, an acceptable-use policy, online-safety events for parents and supervision when ICT is used in teaching and learning.
- Homophobic/transphobic bullying: maintain an inclusive environment, encourage peer support, provide awareness workshops and encourage students to speak up when they witness such behaviour.
- Racist bullying: celebrate cultural diversity, make diversity visible in the school, provide awareness workshops, support peer mentoring and encourage bystanders to report racist behaviour. Support staff communicating with students and families for whom English is an additional language.
- Sexist bullying and sexual harassment: staff model respectful behaviour and treat students equally; provide equal access to school activities and curricular subjects; challenge gender stereotypes; use SPHE/RSE and awareness activities to promote gender equality and respect.

Supervision and monitoring arrangements

Supervision during breaks and lunch, additional supervision around toilet blocks, supervision in the canteen and toilet areas, and supervision for PE/ clann tionails.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Staff with responsibility

The following staff have responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour:

- Eilis Flood, Principal and Designated Liaison Person (DLP)
- Gabrielle Harte, Deputy Principal and Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLP)
- Martin McCabe, Deputy Principal
- Sarah McCabe, Acting Deputy Principal
- Réaltoirí

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will

- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured.
- Seek to protect the privacy of those involved.
- Conduct conversations sensitively.
- Consider the age and ability of those involved:
- Listen to the views of the student experiencing bullying behaviour on how best to address the situation.
- Take action in a timely manner.
- Inform the parents/guardians of those involved.

Reporting concerns

Possible reporting routes for students: Caomhnóir, Réaltoir, Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor, any staff member with whom the student feels comfortable, parents/guardians, or a friend who can speak on their behalf. Reports may be made directly to a teacher, by note, by phone or email through parents/guardians, by a bystander, through the school website Anti-Bullying Reporting Tool, or through the anti-bullying audit.

Steps to determine whether bullying behaviour has occurred and to address it

1. Listen to the student and encourage them to explain what happened. Reassure the student that help is available.
2. Respect privacy but do not promise absolute confidentiality. If there is an immediate safety concern, report it to the DLP/DDLP without delay in accordance with child-protection procedures.
3. The existing policy uses a Bullying Record Form (1) and routes information through the relevant Caomhnóir and Réaltoir. Confirm that these forms and local routing arrangements align with the current Bí Cineálta procedures before adoption.
4. The staff member responsible investigates calmly and sensitively, generally outside the classroom to protect privacy. Students are heard individually at first where appropriate; each member of a group is interviewed individually before any group meeting deemed appropriate.
5. Use professional judgement to determine whether bullying behaviour has occurred, focusing on resolving interpersonal issues and restoring relationships as far as practicable rather than assigning blame.
6. Where bullying behaviour is found to have occurred, inform the parents/guardians of the parties involved, explain the actions being taken and discuss ways they can reinforce or support those actions.
7. Make clear to a student who has engaged in bullying behaviour how the behaviour breaches the policy, support reflection and discuss possible solutions.
8. Check progress and whether the behaviour has ceased. The existing policy specifies escalation to the Principal/Deputy Principal if the relevant teacher considers that the matter has not been adequately addressed within 20 school days; verify this against the current procedures before final approval.

Support for students

The school will support students who experience, witness or display bullying behaviour. Existing school supports and structures include the Junior and Senior Student Support Teams, Guidance Counsellors, AEN coordination,

Check and Connect, the Nurture Programme, trusted adults, Caomhnóirí, Réaltoirí, peer mentoring and engagement with parents/guardians.

Recording and child protection

All bullying behaviour must be recorded, including the type of behaviour, where and when it occurred, dates of engagement with students and parents/guardians, and actions and supports agreed. If the behaviour is a child-protection concern, address it without delay in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. Staff must follow the school's current child-protection reporting arrangements.

Section D: Oversight

The Principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each Board of Management meeting. The update will include the number of incidents reported since the previous meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents have occurred, a verbal update will, where relevant, identify trends and patterns, strategies used to address the behaviour and wider prevention strategies. The update must not contain personal or identifying information.

The policy will be available to the school community on the school website and in hard copy on request. A student-friendly version will be displayed in the school and made available on the website and in hard copy on request.

The policy and its implementation will be reviewed with input from the school community each calendar year, or as soon as practicable after a material change. Complete the relevant official annual-review and notification templates.

Approval

Signed: Wayne Harding Date: 3/11/26
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Date: 3/11/26.
(Principal)