COLÁISTE IASCAIGH

Anti-bullying policy

Chairperson of Board of Management .....

Principal .....

Date. 29th Sept '26

Review Date ..... Sept '27

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* 2024.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Each school is required to develop and implement a Bí Cineálta policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

The core elements of the definition are explained further below:

Targeted Behaviour: Bullying involves deliberate, harmful actions that the person displaying the behaviour knows will negatively affect someone else. This harm may be physical, social, or emotional and can have serious long-term effects on the student experiencing the bullying.

Repeated Behaviour: Bullying involves a pattern of behaviou**r** over time. A single in-person incident is not bullying but must still be addressed. However, a single harmful online post that is likely to be shared can be considered bullying behaviour.

Imbalance of Power: Bullying includes a power imbalance, where the student being targeted finds it difficult to defend themselves. This can stem from differences such as physical strength, social status, race, disability, or online anonymity and control.

Students with additional educational needs may sometimes display behaviours that appear hurtful but are not intentional or planned—these are not considered bullying and should be understood as automatic responses which they can not control.

Criminal Behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years.

Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images.

If bullying behaviour involves physical violence or threats of violence, it may be considered assault.

If bullying behaviour involves discrimination or hate speech targeting a student based on their race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, it may be considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 198911, and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges.

If bullying behaviour involves sexual harassment or sexual assault, this may also be considered criminal behaviour.

An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour.

Types of Bullying behaviour deemed to be inappropriate:

General behaviours which apply to all	• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g., sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed. • Exclusion
Cyber	•Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone call / Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages / email / communication on social networks e.g., Facebook/Instagram/Tik Tok/Be Real/Twitter/You Tube etc. or on games consoles / abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
Identity Based Behaviours	• Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).
Homophobic and Transgender	• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g., gay, queer, lesbian ... used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats

Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	• This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include: malicious gossip, intentionally trying to harm friendships, spreading rumours, talking loud enough so that the victim can hear, intentionally making someone feel uncomfortable, use of hurtful and inappropriate words/terms i.e. nerd.
Sexual	• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Additional Educational Needs	• Name calling • Taunting others because of their additional educational need • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

*This list is not exhaustive

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.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	2nd May 2025	Microsoft Forms
Students	8th May 2025	Microsoft Forms
Parents	14th May 2025	Microsoft Forms
Board of Management	12th June 2025	In person
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		Our local bus companies were emailed a copy of the policy once ratified.
Date policy was approved:		

Date policy was last reviewed:

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):

Culture & Environment

School Culture: A successful anti-bullying strategy begins with cultivating a whole-school culture of respect, inclusion, and wellbeing. Events such as Anti-bullying Week are held to prevent, to raise awareness and to encourage reporting of bullying. Coláiste Iascaigh is committed to fostering a positive and inclusive environment where every student and staff member feels safe, valued, and supported.

Living the School Ethos: The five core values of our school Ethos are respect, care, equality, excellence in education and community. Our ethos is not just written; it is lived and reinforced daily.
Inclusive Environment: Events such as Cultural Days and Stand Up Awareness Week and celebrate the diversity within our student body. These initiatives not only broaden cultural awareness but also highlight the importance of respecting difference central to Anti-Bullying.

Support Structures: A dedicated Student Support Team meets regularly to identify and support students who may be at risk. Initiatives like the Check and Connect training for teachers and the First Year and TY mentoring programme further enhance peer and staff engagement, creating meaningful connections and a culture of care.

Supervision and Safety: We recognise the importance of high levels of staff visibility during free times. Staff supervision rotas for break and lunch, along with CCTV cameras in common areas, helps to prevent negative behaviours and promote students feeling safe.

Clear Communication and Visibility: The presence of anti-bullying charters in classrooms communicates rights and responsibilities in relation to Anti-bullying. The student-friendly Bi Cinealta policy on display around the school and the online reporting tool empowers students to speak up in a safe and confidential manner. Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) and Deputy Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) signage is clearly visible and accessible to the school community.
Promoting Positive Behaviour: Teachers model respectful and inclusive behaviour, setting a tone for how students are expected to engage with one another

Wellbeing and Whole-School Events: Wellbeing is a pillar of our school culture. Regular wellbeing events, along with targeted supports (where needed) help maintain a strong sense of community. Our goal is to make the best possible use of available spaces and resources to create a pleasant and inclusive school environment where every student feels equally valued

and given the same opportunities to thrive.

Relationships and Partnerships

Student Voice & Leadership: There is an active Student Council representing student voice in school decisions. Transition year students have a leadership role in supporting and mentoring the incoming First Year Students. Bonding trips are also organised to encourage connections.

Staff-Student Relationships: All school staff play a vital role in maintaining a respectful school environment. Strong, respectful relationships between staff and students exist in the school. Each class group have a tutor who checks in with them daily and supports them from First to Sixth Year. There are two Year Heads—one for the Junior Cycle and one for the Senior Cycle—who regularly engage with students, teachers, and tutors, and meet weekly with Senior Management to discuss student wellbeing and any emerging issues There are a number of supports available in school to ensure that every student feels supported

Parental and Community Partnerships: There is an open-door policy in the school and we pride ourselves on excellent communication with Parents /Guardians. There is a very active Parents Council who regularly meet in the school. The HSCL works closely with many parents, as needs arise and also with the wider school community. The school also engages with the School Completion Programme and Home Youth Liaison Service who foster strong partnerships with home. There is a very strong relationship between the school and community groups who work closely together. The school works closely with the local Garda community Liaison Officer who speaks to students about relevant topics throughout the year.

Educational and Cultural Partnerships: There are strong links with feeder primary schools as well as local further and higher education partners. The Board of Management is supportive and committed to promoting student wellbeing. The school participate in the Erasmus+ programme which enriches cultural understanding and builds international partnerships.

Curriculum Teaching and Learning

Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE): equips students with the social and emotional skills to build respectful relationships, manage conflict, and understand difference.

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE): Embedded within SPHE, this programme addresses topics such as healthy relationships, consent, identity, and respect, fostering a culture of mutual understanding and inclusion.

Social Education (LCA): The Leaving Certificate Applied pathway includes Social Education, which links closely with inclusion, anti-bullying themes, and active community participation.

Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) plays a vital role in teaching students about inclusion, respect for others, and democratic participation. Lessons focus on empathy, rights and responsibilities, and the importance of standing up against injustice, aligning closely with the values of our anti-bullying approach.

Physical Education (PE): Emphasises teamwork, participation, and inclusive practice, ensuring that all students, regardless of ability, feel welcome and valued during physical activities.

Wellbeing Curriculum: Timetabled Guidance and the Transition Year Wellbeing module provides students with tools for emotional literacy, stress management, and resilience. This is reinforced through thematic Wellbeing Weeks, mindfulness activities, and classroom-based wellbeing sessions. The Wellbeing Co-Ordinator leads initiatives throughout the year, ensuring student voice is represented in our anti-bullying efforts.

Extra- and Co-Curricular Opportunities: The school offers a broad and inclusive curriculum complemented by a wide range of, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, ensuring there is something for everyone. These opportunities are crucial for student engagement and belonging.

Teacher Continuous Professional Development (CPD): There is a strong cutlture of CPD within the school, this helps ensure staff are equipped with the strategies and knowledge to help prevent and address bullying.

Policy and Procedures

The following key policies form the foundation of our anti-bullying framework:

Bi Cinealta Anti-Bullying Policy: Outlines definitions, procedures for reporting, investigating, and responding to bullying. The policy is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect best practice.

Code of Behaviour: Promotes respectful conduct and outlines expectations and consequences related to bullying and unacceptable behaviour.

Acceptable Usage Policy: outlining responsible use of technology and consequences for misuse.

School Uniform Policy: expectations of how students should be dressed for school promoting belonging and equality.

Mobile Phone Policy: A clear policy outlining the rules for mobile phone use within school and consequences for breaches of the policy.

DEIS Plan: Includes strategic targets and measures focusing on addressing educational disadvantage and promoting equality within the school.

Guidance Plan: Provides a framework for the gudiance and Support services available to all students.

Wellbeing Plan: Outlines wellbeing provision within the school.

In order to address and prevent bullying behaviour the following strategies are implemented:

Preventing Online Bullying Behaviour

- Internet safety education
- Online and or in-person student and parent information sessions on digital safety and cyberbullying
- Mobile phone policy
- Bi Cineáltas / Anti-Bullying Policy
- Talks and workshops from external agencies (e.g., Webwise, CyberSafeKids, An Garda Síochána)
- Wellbeing Plan
- Online reporting tool for Bullying
- Promoting diversity and inclusion through school-wide campaigns and education
- Developing an inclusive school environment
- Code of Behaviour

Preventing Homophobic Bullying Behaviour

- SPHE classes promoting wellbeing and anti-bullying, addressing issues relating homophobic bullying
- RSE in SPHE addresses issues related to bullying, respect, healthy relationships, and homophobic bullying
- Integration of LGBTQI+ topics across various subjects and awareness events
- Inclusive school environment and promotion of school ethos: inclusion, respect, and care for all students
- Gender-neutral / non-gendered toilets to support inclusion
- LGBTQ+ posters and visual displays around the school
- Gender-neutral / non-gendered toilets to support inclusion
- Anti-Bullying Week with a focus on inclusion and diversity
- Stand Up Awareness Week and Rainbow Jumper Day
- Anti-bullying poster initiatives and student-led awareness campaigns
- Wellbeing Plan
- Online reporting tool for Bullying
- Code of Behaviour

Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

- Promoting an Inclusive School Ethos
- Wellbeing initiatives that support cultural diversity and student voice
- Ethos Week with a focus on valuing difference and promoting respect
- Cultural Day / Week activities celebrating diversity through food, music, and traditions

- Culture-themed activities in subjects
- Erasmus exchange programs for students and teachers
- Hosting exchange students from diverse backgrounds
- DEIS pan promoting inclusion
- Shared Education for Positive Innovation programme
- Wellbeing Plan
- Online reporting tool for Bullying
- Code of Behaviour

Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour

- Promoting an Inclusive School Ethos
- SPHE and RSE classes promoting respect, equality, and healthy relationships
- CSPE and other subjects incorporating gender equality and human rights education
- Guest speakers / workshops on consent and respectful behaviour
- Education on gender identity and inclusivity embedded in teaching
- School uniform policy that is inclusive and non-discriminatory
- Curriculum and Extracurricular activities are accessible to all students regardless of gender
- Wellbeing Plan
- Online reporting tool for Bullying
- Code of Behaviour

Preventing Sexual Harassment

- Promoting an Inclusive School Ethos
- Child Safeguarding Statement
- RSE in SPHE
- Online reporting tool for Bullying
- Wellbeing Plan
- Code of Behaviour

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):

A supervision rota is established at the beginning of each academic year to ensure effective staff coverage during student break and lunch times. The school grounds are divided into clearly defined, colour-coded areas, with one member of staff assigned to supervise each area. This rota operates on an 11-week rotation cycle, allowing all supervising staff to rotate through different supervision areas evenly over time. The aim is to maintain consistent supervision quality while also providing variety and fairness in duty allocation.

- Bi Cinealta Anti Bullying Policy
- Bi Cinealta Anti Bullying Child Friendly Policy
- Code of Behavior
- Child Safeguarding
- School Uniform Policy

- Acceptable Usage Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Wellbeing Plan

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is (are) as follows: Principal, Deputy Principal, Anti Bullying Coordinator

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):

Any member of the school community can report a bullying concern to Principal / Deputy Principal.

Where a staff member receives a bullying disclosure / has a concern about a student being bullied they should

- listen sensitively to the student without judgment,
- reassure the student that he /she was right to come forward,
- advise that the matter will be brought forward to the Principal / Deputy Principal,
- provide any further reassurance necessary to the student,
- complete the online referral form giving all details disclosed (Report Bullying on school website) **or** complete the paper copy in the staffroom giving all details disclosed and hand it to Principal / Deputy Principal.

Determining if bullying behaviour has occurred:

The Principal / Deputy Principal / Anti Bullying Coordinator will inform the student affected by the bullying behaviour that the matter has been referred to them.

The Principal / Deputy Principal / Anti Bullying Coordinator will interview all parties mentioned, outside the classroom, in a sensitive manner and keep a written record of all events, bearing in mind who, where, when, what, why and witnesses present.
A decision will be made if bullying behaviour has occurred.

Where a finding of bullying has been made, the Principal / Deputy Principal will automatically report it to all parents involved. Where a warning about future behaviour is given the Principal / Deputy Principal will decide if they need to report the matter to parents.

Addressing bullying behaviour:
For a first incident a Restorative Practice Approach will be employed to resolve the conflict with the intention of repairing the damaged relationship. This will involve a reflective discussion on what happened, what the person was thinking at the time, thoughts since, people affected by the behaviour/actions, what you would do differently and how to move forward.

The Principal / Deputy Principal / Anti Bullying Coordinator will bring all parties together and have a restorative discussion to repair the broken relationship.

The Student support team will discuss the incident, and referrals may be made for parties involved where necessary may require additional support. External assistance will be sought if necessary.

If a restorative practice approach does not work, the Code of Behaviour is engaged and a sanction deemed appropriate by senior management is given. Sanctions will be proportionate to the behaviour.

**Only bullying behaviours which occur in school / during school activities can be sanctioned. School will endeavor to support students needs arising from bullying behaviours.*

Recording, reviewing and reporting on bullying behaviour:
All matters recorded regarding the incident are placed in the bullying file stored in the Principal's office. For students with Student Support Plan , there will be a copy of the incident file placed on their student support file.

The Principal / Deputy Principal will follow up with all parties involved in the reported bullying incident and their parents 3-4 weeks from the incident, checking that matters are resolved.

The Principal informs the Board of Management of the bullying incident.

Once advised of the appropriate method, the Principal will report bullying incidents to the Department of Education.

**On occasion students / parents may not want bullying behaviour investigated / addressed. Where a parent requests that a school takes no action regarding a disclosed bullying behaviour, the parent must put this request in writing to the school Principal.
"However, while acknowledging the parents request, schools may decide that, based on circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour" (pg. 45 Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour in Primary and Post Primary Schools).

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):

Students who experience bullying:

Restorative Practice – aim to resolve the conflict and restore the relationship.

Guidance Counsellor – meeting to support the student who has experienced bullying in acknowledging the impact of the bullying behaviour for them and moving forward from it.

Check and Connect – teacher to check in with the student to offer additional support / guidance/ positive adult moving forward from the bullying incident.

Home Youth Liaison Service – engage with worker who can support the student in moving forward from bullying behaviour.

Brief Referral to School Completion – can receive a short-term referral for a student who requires additional support / encouragement in their attendance of and participation in school following incident.

Students who display bullying behaviours:

Restorative Practice – aim to resolve the conflict and restore the relationship.

Guidance Counsellor – meeting to support the student in learning from and moving forward form demonstrating bullying behaviour.

Check and Connect – teacher to check in with the student encouraging moving forward in a positive way and providing support / advice.
Sanctions if restorative approach does not resolve the bullying behaviour / a further incident happens.

Home Youth Liaison Service – engage with worker who can support the student in moving forward from bullying behaviour.

Brief Referral to School Completion – can receive a short-term referral for a student who requires additional support / encouragement in their attendance of and participation in school following incident.

Students who witness bullying:

Encourage disclosure / reporting – the school promotes an inclusive culture and encourages students to report any bullying behaviour.

Guidance Counsellor - support the students observing / disclosing bullying behaviour learning from and moving forward form observing/disclosing bullying behaviour.

Check and Connect – teacher to check in with the student ensure all is ok post disclosing / reporting bullying behaviour.

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and

supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern, the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Section D: Oversight

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year.

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. 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: _____

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Principal)