



Scoil Mhuire, Ballincollig, Cork. Roll no. 17755B. Tel. 021 4870809
Email: principal@scoilmhuireballincollig.ie Website: www.scoilmhuireballincollig.ie

Scoil Mhuire Bí Cineálta Policy 2025

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire 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 2025***.

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 pupils who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our pupils is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our pupils 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 pupils 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.

Culture and Environment

A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The school environment should be a space where pupils and school staff experience a sense of belonging and

feel safe, connected and supported. Relationships between all members of the school community should be based on respect, care, integrity and trust. Open communication between the patron, boards of management, school staff, pupils and their parents help to 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 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. Pupils can shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all. Parents, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.

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	May 2025	Staff Survey and training during the half day closure Draft policy & procedures reviewed by all staff
Pupils	May 2025	Pupil Council surveyed with pupil survey
Parents	June 2025	Parent surveyed with parent's survey (sent online) Representatives of PA Draft reading
Board of Management	June 2025	Initial email with draft policy & procedures
Date policy was approved: 18 th June 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 18 th June 2025		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by Scoil Mhuire. 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:

Prevention Strategies

To foster an inclusive and respectful school culture, Scoil Mhuire implements a range of proactive strategies to prevent bullying behaviour. These strategies include, but are not limited to:

- **Inclusive Use of Physical Spaces**
The school promotes positive interactions through inclusive environments such as the *Sensory Garden*, which provides a calm, welcoming space for all pupils to feel safe and respected.
- **Positive Environment ("Telling Environment")**
The school environment reflects core values of respect, diversity, and inclusion through posters, artwork, and messaging that promote kindness, highlight cultural diversity, and make clear that bullying of any kind is unacceptable.
- **Nurture Breaks**
Structured nurture breaks are offered to support pupils who may benefit from additional emotional or social support during the school day. These breaks help create a more empathetic and understanding school climate.
- **Active Supervision**
Staff ensure consistent and visible presence during break times and transitions by moving around playgrounds, corridors, and shared spaces. This proactive supervision discourages inappropriate behaviour and enables early intervention.

- **Curriculum Integration**
Anti-racism, inclusion, and diversity are embedded across the curriculum through age-appropriate lessons in SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education), religion/ethics, history, and other subject areas.
- **Restorative Practice**
All staff have been trained in *Restorative Practice* and use it as a whole-school approach to build relationships, resolve conflict, and foster a culture of mutual respect and accountability.
- **Friends for Life Programme**
Several staff members are trained in this evidence-based mental health and resilience programme, which promotes emotional literacy, empathy, and respectful peer relationships.
- **Trusted Adult System**
Every child is supported to identify at least one *trusted adult* in the school whom they feel comfortable approaching if they are worried or upset. This strengthens emotional safety and communication.
- **Internet Safety Education**
The school provides ongoing education on digital citizenship and internet safety, helping pupils recognise, avoid, and report racist or harmful online behaviour.
- **Wellbeing February**
An annual initiative focused on mental health, kindness, inclusion, and diversity. Activities during this month highlight positive behaviour and reinforce a sense of belonging for all.
- **Morning Meetings**
Daily or weekly morning meetings provide structured opportunities for pupils to connect, express themselves, and build classroom community, which supports early identification of issues and strengthens peer relationships.
- **Pupil Council – Pupil Voice**
The Pupil Council gives pupils a platform to express their views and take part in decision-making. This helps foster a respectful and inclusive school environment where pupil concerns are heard and addressed.

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

Scoil Mhuire has the following policies in place which deal directly with the supervision and monitoring in school and during school activities. These are in place to address bullying behaviour and are available to view in school or on the school website.

- Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment
- Code of Behaviour Policy
- Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved, rather than to apportion blame. All staff, Board of Management, parents and pupils in a school have responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour. Class teachers in consultation with relevant teachers (if applicable) are responsible for addressing bullying behaviour which concerns pupils in their classes. If the class teacher is absent, the other teacher of that class level should be informed. This is conducted under the direction, support and advice of the school principal/deputy principal.

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- ensure that the pupil 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 pupil 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:

The initial step for the teacher on receiving a report of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred. Bullying is defined in *“Bí 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”.

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour teachers will consider the following questions:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?
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 above is **yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Policy.

Note: 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.

If the answer to **any** of these questions is **no**, then the behaviour is **not** bullying behaviour.

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

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers will consider what, where, when and why?

- If a group of pupils is involved, each pupil should be engaged with individually at first thereafter, all pupils involved may be met as a group.
- At the group meeting, each pupil may be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views.
- Each pupil will be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting.
- Pupils involved may be asked to write down/draw their account of the incident(s).
- Views of the children involved in the behaviour will be listened to and their thoughts on how to best address the behaviour recorded.

A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when pupils 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 pupils involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, Scoil Mhuire will deal with it in accordance with our Bí Cineálta policy.

Where the pupil displaying the bullying behaviour is not a pupil in the school, but the pupil who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a pupil in the school, the school will support the pupil who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken. An appropriate support plan for this pupil will be put in place involving, pupil, teacher and home.

Where the teacher has reached the conclusion that bullying behaviour has occurred

The school's Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour and the pupil friendly policy of Scoil Mhuire clearly explains what actions will be taken when bullying behaviour is reported. The steps are as follows;

- The parents of all the pupils involved will be contacted at this stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour.
- At this meeting, parents will be informed of the report of bullying behaviour against or from their child(ren), the type of bullying behaviour and that the teacher has found the report to be substantiated (based on the definition of bullying behaviour in Bí Cineálta).
- Parents will be supplied with a copy of the Scoil Mhuire Bí Cineálta Policy.
- A record will be kept of the engagement with all involved. 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 pupils involved and their parents. This record and all records of this incident will be made in the Scoil Mhuire Bullying Behaviour Reporting Template.
- The record will include the views of the pupils and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address and supports which will be put in place to address the bullying behaviour.
- Restorative practice and mediation strategies will be employed by staff at this stage.

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

The teacher must engage with the pupils involved and their parents no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement. 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 pupils involved.

The teacher will document the review with pupils and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of pupils and their parents in relation to this. The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased will also be recorded along with any engagement with external services/supports should also be noted.

Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the pupils involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased. If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher will review the strategies used in consultation with the pupils involved and their parents. A timeframe will be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

If it becomes clear that the pupil who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school consideration will be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this will be a matter between the relevant pupil, their parents and the school.

Complaint Process

If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, they will be referred to the school's complaints procedures.

If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the pupil.

Requests to take no action

Parents who make Scoil Mhuire aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action they **must** put this request in writing to the school. If there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers they will be facilitated to do so by signing a school template to this effect. While acknowledging the parent's

request the teacher/the school may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

The school may seek the support of any of the following when working with pupils affected by bullying behaviour:

- Educational Programmes: We incorporate lessons on empathy, respect and diversity within the SPHE framework to educate pupils about the impact of bullying and the importance of positive relationships both in and outside of school.
- Building self-esteem and developing social skills
- Use of restorative practices to re-build and maintain relationships
- Co-operation with parents
- National Educational Psychological Services (NEPS)
- Oide
- Webwise
- National Parents Council
- Tusla
- This list will grow and adapt as resources become available and known to the school.

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

All bullying behaviour will be recorded on the 'Bullying Behaviour Reporting Form'. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place and the date of the engagement with pupils 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.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy in the office. A pupil friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on our website.

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: Gerald C' Sullivan Date: 18/06/25
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Liz Uí Bheineid Date: 18/6/25
(Principal)

Appendix 1



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Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management

Date of Meeting: _____

Date of last Meeting: _____

Oversight provided by: _____

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.	

Was a verbal report given where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported in Scoil Mhuire since the last meeting? _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Principal

Appendix 2



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Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

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.

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

Has the Board formally adopted the Bí Cineálta policy that fully complies with the requirements of the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?	
Has the Board published the policy on the school website and provided a copy to the parents' association?	
Has the Board ensured that the policy has been made available to school staff (including new staff)?	
Is the Board satisfied that school staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to effectively and consistently apply the policy and procedures in their day-to-day work?	
Has a pupil friendly policy been communicated to the pupils?	
Has the policy been communicated to the parents?	
Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the school applies?	
Have all of the prevention and education strategies been implemented?	
Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined?	

Is the Board satisfied that all teachers are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy?	
Has the Board received and minuted the periodic summary reports of the Principal?	
Has the Board discussed how well the school is handling all reports of bullying including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the Principal's periodic report to the Board?	
Has the Board received any complaints from parents regarding the school's handling of bullying incidents?	
Have any parents withdrawn their child from the school citing dissatisfaction with the school's handling of a bullying situation?	
Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the school's handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed?	
Has the data available from cases reported to the Principal (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour?	
Has the Board identified any aspects of the school's policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement?	
Has the Board put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement?	

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Principal

Appendix 3



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Notification regarding the Board of Management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Primary School 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: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Principal

Date of next review: _____

Appendix 4



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Scoil Mhuire Bullying Behaviour Reporting Template (Copy to be given to Principal)

Is it Bullying?	
If the answer to each of these questions is Yes , then the behaviour is bullying behaviour.	
Targeted Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils?	
Harm Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?	
Repeated Is the behaviour repeated?	

Date: _____

1.Name of pupil experiencing bullying behaviour: _____ Class: _____ 2.Name(s)
and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour: _____

3.Source of bullying concern/report
(please tick relevant box(es)):

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil/pupils	
Teacher	
Other Staff member	
Parent	

4.Location where bullying behaviour took place (please tick)

Classroom	
Playground	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other (Please specify)	

5.Names of person/people who reported bullying concern: _____

Date reported: _____

6.Form and type of bullying behaviour (please tick all relevant) :

Physical		Exclusion	
Verbal		Relational	
Written		Disablist bullying	

Cyberbullying		Exceptionally able bullying	
Extortion		Homophobic/transphobic	
Racist bullying		Physical appearance bullying	
Gender identity bullying		Poverty bullying	
Religious identity bullying		Sexist bullying	
Sexual harassment		Other	

7. Brief description of bullying behaviour reported:

8. Log of Actions taken:

(Including contact with parents and strategies/programmes used)

Date	Action

9. Report of views of pupil experiencing the bullying behaviour:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Views of witnesses:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Views of pupil exhibiting bullying behaviour:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Views of pupil and their parent regarding the action to be taken to address the bullying behaviour in relation to their own child only:

Names of parents: _____ Date: _____

Review with parents-completion date: _____

Is it the parent's view that bullying behaviour has ceased? _____

Is it the child's view that bullying behaviour has ceased? _____

Appendix 5



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Scoil Mhuire Bullying Behaviour Checklist for Staff

Teacher Actions	Tick when completed
Determine if bullying has occurred. (3 questions) Is the behaviour targeted at a specific pupil or group of pupils? Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm? Is the behaviour repeated?	
Record and Address	
Speak to all pupils involved (Record)	
Speak to parents of both parties at an early stage. (Keep record and Log on Aladdin)	
Update School Support Plan (if relevant)	
Complete agreed actions as per policy - Monitor and Evaluate	
Review	
Contact parents of all parties no more than 20 school days after initial engagement. Review with pupils involved.	
Determine if bullying has ceased	
If bullying has not ceased , review strategies and seek external support, if appropriate, add review with an agreed time-frame.	
Is this bullying behaviour a child protection concern? Speak to DLP or DDLP	Yes/No
Does this bullying behaviour need to be reported as a criminal offence? If yes contact principal.	Yes/No
If bullying has ceased, please sign and return all relevant document to office.	
Principal must include all bullying behaviour in their update to the board.	

Signed by teacher: _____ Date: _____

Signed by principal: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 6



Scoil Mhuire, Ballincollig, Cork. Roll no. 17755B. Tel. 021 4870809
Email: principal@scoilmhuireballincollig.ie Website: www.scoilmhuireballincollig.ie

Letter for Parent/Guardian Disclosure of Bullying Incident Requesting to not take action

Date:

RE: Request to take no action regarding the disclosure of bullying incident

Dear _____,

I/We, the undersigned, am/are the parent(s)/guardian(s) of _____, a pupil in ____ class at

Scoil Mhuire I write following our discussion with _____ (Staff Member's name) on

_____ (date) in relation to an incident of bullying behaviour.

At this time, I/we are requesting that the school does not take immediate action in response to this disclosure.

I acknowledge that the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures and the Bí Cineálta Policy, may decide it is necessary to follow up on this disclosure based on the context and implications of the reported behavior. I understand and support the school's responsibility to ensure a safe and respectful environment for all pupils.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Instructions for Use:

1. Parents/guardians must fill in the relevant details (child's name, year/class, etc.).
2. Once signed, the letter must be returned to the school for record purposes.
3. If parents/guardians have any questions or need further support, they are encouraged to reach out to the school staff directly.