School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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The Board of Management of Terenure College 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 provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

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	17th November 2025 18th November 2025	Online surveys - Whole Staff and focused survey for Pastoral Care and Counsellors
Wider school community as appropriate	17th November 2025	Survey of admin, canteen and grounds staff.
Students	21st November 2025 25th November 2025	Survey of all students. Student Council Meeting
Parents	25th November 2025	Parents' Association Meeting
Board of Management	8th December 2025	Board of Management meeting
Date policy was approved: 26th May 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 8th December 2025		

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):

Curricular

- SPHE classes (Junior Cycle)
- CSPE classes (Junior Cycle)
- Wellbeing Healthy Relationships and Children's Rights Modules:
    - 1st Year: Friendships, Positive Relationships and Staying Safe
    - 2nd Year: Identity and Affirmations
    - 3rd Year: Anti-Bullying /Coco's Law
- TY SPHE – Staying Safe Talk given by the Pastoral Care Team
- TY SPHE – Communication Skills for Healthy Relationships Module
- Senior Cycle SPHE – RSE Healthy Relationships Module
- Lessons across all subjects that either explicitly address bullying or that implicitly foster an attitude of respect for all.

Co – Curricular

- 1st and 2nd Year Tutor Time
- Various anti-bullying, internet safety and relationship building programmes conducted by outside agencies:
    - First Year:
        - Sticks and Stones Anti- Bullying Programme (October)
        - Motus Learning – Mental Health/Resilience/ Anti - bullying Workshops
        - FRIENDS Programme – Targeted interventions
    - Transition Year: Soar Workshops

- Jigsaw's One Good School Initiative
- Stand Up Awareness Week
- Diversity Week
- Shout Out – TY workshop on LGBTQ+ bullying
- TY Personal Safety (PSA) Workshop – Alex Walsh – Personal Safety Ireland
- Ember Leaders Mentoring Programme by 5th Year students of 1st Year students
- 5th Year KAIROS retreat
- TY – 6th Year RSE: Bullying Mental Health Programmes
- Extracurricular activities to develop self-esteem, co-operation and positive attitudes

Training, Information and Discussion

- Training on Bí Cineálta Policy at initial staff meeting each academic year with refreshers throughout the year
- Bí Cineálta policy displayed on Staffroom screens
- Outlining our Bí Cineálta policy to each year group and to new students
- Annual class visits to all classes by a member of the Pastoral Care team informing students of school supports, how to develop right relationships and how to access supports
- Statement regarding bullying in the pupil's journal and in the Code of Behaviour
- The raising of awareness of bullying through the school app/posters/screens etc.
- Bí Cineálta Student Friendly Policy on School Diary Cover and in every classroom
- Additional Student Council Anti-Bullying Posters

- Bí Cineálta Policy accessible to parents and the wider school community via the school website
- Discussion of Bí Cineálta Policy at Parent Information meetings.

Supervision

- Class observation and classroom management
- Observation during extracurricular activities
- School Supervision Policy
- Weekly Pastoral Care Team meeting
- Half Term Anti-Bullying Surveys
- Sociograms twice yearly in every year group.

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):
Child Safe Guarding Statement Code of Behaviour Guidance Plan Information & Communications Technology Acceptable Usage Policy (AUP) Pastoral Care Policy SEN / Inclusion Policy School Excursions Policy School Supervision Policy Wellbeing Policy

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- Relevant Year Head,
- Deputy Principals
- Principal

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):
The co-operation of staff (teaching and non-teaching), management, pupils and parents is sought and expected during any investigation and in attempts to resolve any issues and in restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible. To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour one should 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 above is Yes, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures. Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. 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.

a. Procedures for reporting of incidents of bullying

Anyone who witnesses any action that is deemed to be of a bullying nature should report it as soon as possible.

- Students can report incidents to their tutor, any teacher, Year Head, chaplains, School Nurse, counsellors or any adult in the school. They can use 'letterboxes' or online link on Teams pages. This information is then passed as a matter of importance to the relevant Year Head using the school's Bullying Incident Report Form. Students may report anonymously in order that they gain confidence in 'telling'.
- Non-teaching members of staff report incidents to the relevant Year Head if known or the Principal, a Deputy Principal, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator or Pastoral Care Team using the school's Bullying Incident Report Form.
- Teachers report incidents to the relevant Year Head or the Principal, a Deputy Principal, Principal, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator or Pastoral Care Team using the school's Bullying Incident Report Form.
- Pastoral Care Team report incidents to the relevant Year Head or the Principal / a Deputy Principal using the school's Bullying Incident Report Form.
- Parents should notify the relevant Year Head or Principal, a Deputy Principal, Pastoral Care Co-ordinator or Pastoral Care Team.

b. Procedures for investigating and recording incidents of bullying

- When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred the teacher should consider the following: what, where, when and why?

- The relevant Year Head will be the primary investigator although he/she may seek the assistance of other member of management/staff. The primary aim for the relevant Year Head in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than apportion blame). The relevant Year Head will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept, the actions taken and any discussion with those involved regarding same. The relevant Year Head may consult the Principal or a Deputy Principal at any stage in relation to a case.

- In investigating, the relevant Year Head will seek witness accounts (no implication that they are involved will be inferred from this). They will question and investigate sensitively and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned the reported incident.

- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views. Each student should be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting. It may also be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident.

- Throughout this process the relevant Year Head will keep a record using the Bullying Incident tools on the Unique Schools App platform.

- As part of this process the involvement of parents may be necessary. This is to be welcomed and encouraged. This involvement should be positive and understanding in the context of the case being investigated.

- The rights of all parties are to be safe-guarded during and after the investigation process.

- A report of all incidents of bullying within a year group will be recorded by the relevant Year Head and / or Deputy Principal(s) using the Unique Schools App platform. This record will travel with each cohort through their life in the College.

- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account:
    - Whether the bullying behaviour has ceased;
    - Whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable;
    - Whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and
    - Any feedback received from the parties involved, their parents or the school Principal or Deputy Principals.

c. Intervention strategies for dealing with cases of bullying

- Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the 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.

- In instances where it has been determined by the relevant Year Head that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be informed of the matter and the actions being taken.

- Where a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him how he is in breach of the school's Bi Cinealtas policy and he will be encouraged to see the negative and detrimental nature of his actions and will be supported and encouraged to be more positive.

- In accordance with the Code of Behaviour appropriate sanctions may/will be applied. Decisions regarding sanctions will be made by the relevant Year Head in consultation with the Deputy Principal(s) and/or Principal.

- Additional sanctions not imposed by the relevant Year Head and / or not in accordance with the Code of Behaviour will not be applied by individual teachers or non-teaching staff.

- It will be made clear to the students involved and to the parents of the students involved that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the student involved, his parents and the school.

- Any retaliatory action during or after an investigation will be treated as a serious breach of behaviour and will be dealt with under the Code of Behaviour.
- The Pastoral Care team will be informed by the relevant Year Head of the incident and of the students involved.

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 relevant Year Head, Principal or Deputy Principal must engage with the students involved and their parents again 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 students involved
- The relevant Year Head, Principal or Deputy Principal(s) should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students 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 the bullying behaviour has not ceased the relevant Year Head, Principal and Deputy Principal should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased
- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school consideration should 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 is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school
- If a parent(s) is/are 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 should 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 student
- Students involved may be referred to the school's counselling services or to counselling by outside professionals with the objective of restoring confidence and self-esteem to the parties involved in the bullying. Students who engage in bullying may need counselling to help them to learn to modify their ways of behaving to prevent them from violating the rights of others.
- In cases where the school has serious concerns in relation to managing the behaviour of a student, the advice of the National Education Psychological Service will be sought.

- In cases where an incident is deemed 'serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive' as per Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011 and Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools the school will consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response. Where appropriate, in accordance with the guidance and procedures, Gardaí will be informed as a matter of urgency if and when required.

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying will be established on a case by case basis.

Steps in the programme will reflect appropriate actions which may consist of one or more of:

- Traditional disciplinary approach: The student involved in bullying behaviour is advised of his actions and the consequences of them.
- Strengthening the victim: The victim of bullying is provided with strategies to deal with bullying and methods of responding.
- Mediation: The two parties agree to have a mediator to help resolve the issue.
- Restorative Practice: The student involved in bullying behaviour acknowledges the hurt and wrong he has caused and offers to apologise to the victim.
- The Support Group Method: The student who has been bullied and student involved in bullying behaviour are brought together in a group of peers where they discuss and share and resolve the situation under the guidance of a skilled practitioner.
- The Method of Shared Concern: The student involved in bullying behaviour is met with to listen to expression of concern about the behaviour, leading to a meeting with the student who has been bullied whereby a resolution can be worked out that is acceptable.
- The No Blame Approach: The parties involved are encouraged to understand one another and resolve their difficulties. The 'no blame' approach puts the emphasis on resolution rather than blame. This needs to be explained correctly. Sanctions and punishments may still apply.
- Further work with the victim of bullying: The target of bullying will be given supports and help as required.
- Further work with the student(s) involved in bullying behaviour to help him/them to understand and realise the effect of his/their actions.
- Working with the bystanders and positive leaders: Friends, peers and those competent enough to understand should be informed of their support role and encouraged to show support in a positive way.
- Further monitoring: Relevant staff, teaching and non-teaching, could be informed of the need for continued monitoring of the situation.
- Using sanctions: some incidents will/may require sanctions being applied. These sanctions will be in line with the Code of Behaviour of the College.
- Using outside agencies: In some cases, as specified in Section 6(c) of this policy, the use of these may be required.

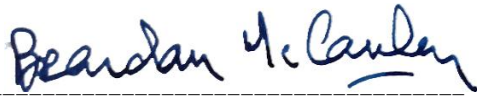
All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern 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:  _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 08.12.2025

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: 08.12.2025

Improvement Plan

Action	Responsibility	Timeframe
Dropboxes will be placed outside each Year Head's Office.	Senior Management Team	December 2025
A permanent link will be provided on each year group's Teams Page.	Year Heads	December 2025
Student Anti-Bullying Surveys every half-term.	Senior Management Team	Ongoing
Additional posters with practical information on how to report incidents.	Student Council	January 2026
Workshops in 2nd and 3rd Year to supplement existing workshops in 1st Year and TY.	Pastoral Care	September 2026
Staff refresher at next Staff Meeting.	Senior Management Team	January 2026
Display on Staffroom Information Screens	Senior Management Team	December 2026