

Scariff Community College



Bí Cineálta Policy

to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scariff Community 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 are 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 provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	Jan-May 2025	• SLT Review of New Policy requirements and existing policy provision • Care Team meeting • Staff Meeting
Students	May 2025	• MS Teams Survey • Assistant Psychologist on staff & Talkabout – small groups
Parents	May 2025	• Information & survey shared via link to parents
Board of Management	25/06/25	• Presentation of Policy Information • Board review and Consultation
Wider school community as appropriate	27/06/25	• Policy Information shared on school website.
Date policy was approved: 25/06/25		
Date policy was last reviewed: n/a		

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):

General Prevention Strategies

- Implement the four key areas of Wellbeing Promotion: Culture and Environment; Curriculum (Teaching and Learning); Policy and Planning; and Relationships and Partnerships
- Foster a "telling environment" where students and parents feel comfortable reporting bullying
- Promote the concept of a "trusted adult" whom students can approach
- Foster an inclusive school environment
- Create safe physical spaces by improving visibility, lighting, and supervision
- Whole Staff Professional Development (CPD)
- Display murals, artwork and signage that promote school values
- Provide appropriate supervision during breaks and activities
- Implement collaborative teaching and learning approaches
- Commitment to monitor bullying through regular assemblies and surveys
- Deliver the SPHE/RSE curriculum effectively
- Engage students in developing and implementing policies
- Strengthen relationships through student councils, clubs, and parent associations

Preventing Cyberbullying Behaviour

- Implement the SPHE curriculum with focus on online safety
- Implement Digital Media Literacy curriculum on responsible online behaviour
- Have regular conversations with students about respectful online relationships
- Develop and communicate an acceptable use policy for technology
- Include appropriate online behaviour standards in the Code of Behaviour
- Promote/host online safety events for parents
- Hold Internet safety events to reinforce awareness
- Educate about digital age of consent (16 in Ireland)

Preventing Homophobic/Transphobic Bullying Behaviour

- Maintain an inclusive physical environment (displaying relevant posters)
- Encourage peer support and mentoring
- Challenge gender stereotypes
- Conduct awareness workshops for students, staff and parents

- Ensure that RSE/SPHE is delivered in the Hub
- Encourage bystanders to speak up when witnessing homophobic/transphobic behaviour

Preventing Racist Bullying Behaviour

- Foster a school culture where diversity is celebrated
- Display the cultural diversity of the school visibly
- Conduct workshops on racism awareness
- Encourage peer support and empathy building
- Encourage bystanders to report racist behaviour
- Provide supports for staff to respond to students for whom English is an additional language
- Support staff to work with ethnic minority students including Traveller and Roma students
- Invite speakers from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- Ensure library materials represent diverse experiences

Preventing Sexist Bullying Behaviour

- Ensure staff model respectful behavior and treat students equally regardless of gender
- Ensure all students have equal opportunities in school activities
- Celebrate diversity and acknowledge contributions of all students
- Organize campaigns and workshops on gender equality
- Encourage parents to reinforce respect values at home

Preventing Sexual Harassment (Section 5.9)

- Establish zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment
- Use SPHE specifications to teach about healthy relationships
- Promote positive role models within the school community
- Challenge gender stereotypes that contribute to sexual harassment

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

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

- Appropriate supervision is maintained throughout the school day, with particular attention to transition periods between classes and break times.
- All staff follow a structured duty rota to ensure adequate coverage of inside and outdoor areas.
- Corridors, bathrooms and other common areas receive enhanced monitoring through strategically placed supervision points.
- Digital activity on school networks is monitored through our acceptable use policy, with appropriate filtering software in place.
- The school building layout has been reviewed to inform our Supervision schedule, ensuring all areas are adequately monitored.
- Staff are trained to recognise early warning signs of bullying behaviour and to intervene promptly when concerning interactions are observed.
- Students are encouraged to report any concerns to staff, who are clearly identified to all pupils through regular reminders and visible displays throughout the school.
- The school building and campus is equipped with an extensive CCTV system to ensure student safety and assist with investigation of any reported incidents.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Angela McNamara, Jack O'Connell, Darina Sheridan, Olwin Kelly, Rachel Akers, Dearbhla Hassett, Joseph White, Sean McNamara

All staff are responsible to act to prevent and to refer as appropriate.

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
- Act as appropriate in accordance with our Code of Behaviour

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 :

- When bullying behaviour is reported, our primary aim will be to stop the bullying behaviour and restore relationships between the parties involved using restorative practice approaches.
- Our teachers will consider what, where, when and why the behaviour occurred. If a group of students is involved, each student will initially be engaged with individually before meeting as a group where necessary. During these conversations, each student will be asked for their account to ensure clarity about different perspectives.
- Students may be asked to write down their account of incidents. To determine if bullying has occurred, we will assess: (1) if the behaviour is targeted at a specific student or group; (2) if it is intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm; and (3) if the behaviour is repeated.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and consult on actions to be taken.
- The teacher will engage with the students and parents again within 20 school days to review progress and determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If bullying behaviour persists, strategies will be reviewed in consultation with all parties.
- All incidents will be recorded, documenting the form and type of bullying, location, timing and all engagements with students and parents.

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

- For students experiencing bullying behaviour, our approach centres on listening attentively to their concerns, ensuring they feel heard and reassured, while respecting their privacy and involving them in decisions about how best to address the situation.
- A trusted adult will be identified to provide ongoing support throughout the process.
- For witnesses to bullying behaviour, we acknowledge they may also be impacted and will encourage them to report incidents while reassuring them they've done the right thing.
- Group discussions, when appropriate, will help rebuild positive peer relationships.
- For students displaying bullying behaviour, we'll engage in a restorative approach that helps them understand the impact of their actions while addressing any underlying issues contributing to their behavior.
- We recognise that all parties require support and will utilise appropriate interventions including individual counselling, social skills development, empathy-building activities and where beneficial, mediation sessions facilitated by trained staff.
- Parents will be actively involved in supporting all students affected, with clear communication channels maintained throughout.
- Follow-up monitoring will continue beyond the immediate resolution to ensure positive relationships are maintained and any potential recurrence is promptly addressed.

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: *Mr Pat Hayes* Date: 25/06/25

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: *Angela McNamara* Date: 25/06/25 (Principal)

(Policy with real signatures on file.)