



Respect - Justice - Integrity - Honesty - Saothar

# Coláiste na Mí

## Bí Cineálta Policy

September 2025

Kindness - Honour - Teamwork - Responsibility



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Coláiste na Mí (CNM) is a multi-denominational and co-educational post-primary school under the patronage of Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB). As such, it operates within the regulations laid down by the Department of Education and Skills and follows the curricular programmes prescribed.



The educational vision for Coláiste na Mí is surmised in the school's 9 values which underpin all we do; Respect, Justice, Integrity, Honesty, Saothar, Kindness, Honour, Teamwork, Responsibility. Our school is a child centred, supportive learning environment where each student is encouraged and facilitated in realising their full potential in a positive climate which is caring, respectful, fair and inclusive. The school community of Coláiste na Mí is a partnership of students, staff, parents and other agencies within the community. The promotion of personal development and learning through hard work, creativity and commitment is a priority in our school.

Coláiste na Mí believes that all members of the school community are entitled to a school environment, which is free from bullying and the fear of bullying. All members of the school community will be encouraged to support such an environment and will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to bullying.

### **Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour**

The Board of Management of Coláiste na Mí, 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 core elements of the definition are further described below:

### **Targeted behaviour**

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the student displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example, personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example, withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and longterm negative impact on the student experiencing the bullying behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying but, importantly, must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

### **Repeated behaviour**

Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online, and which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

### **Imbalance of power**

In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity, technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted student to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

### **Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour**

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour. Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups. Some students with special educational needs may have social

communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying. These behaviours, while not defined as bullying, can be distressing. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

### **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 1989<sup>11</sup>, 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: (this list is not exhaustive)**

General behaviours which apply to all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g., sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.</li> <li>• Physical aggression</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Slagging</li> <li>• The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person</li> <li>• Offensive graffiti</li> <li>• Extortion</li> <li>• Intimidation</li> <li>• Insulting or offensive gestures</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “look”</li> <li>• Invasion of personal space</li> <li>• A combination of any of the types listed.</li> <li>• Exclusion</li> <li>• No innocent bystander</li> </ul>
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denigration: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person’s reputation</li> <li>• Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual</li> <li>• Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person’s name</li> <li>• Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight</li> <li>• Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online</li> <li>• Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images</li> <li>• Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group</li> <li>• Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety</li> <li>• Silent telephone/mobile phone call</li> <li>• Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls</li> <li>• Abusive text messages</li> <li>• Abusive email</li> <li>• Abusive communication on social networks e.g., Facebook/Instagram/Tik Tok/Be Real/Twitter/You Tube etc. or on games consoles</li> <li>• Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures</li> <li>• Abusive posts on any form of communication technology</li> </ul>
Identity Based Behaviours	<p>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).</p>

Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation</li> <li>• Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation</li> <li>• Name calling e.g., gay, queer, lesbian ... used in a derogatory manner</li> <li>• Physical intimidation or attacks</li> <li>• Threats</li> </ul>
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background</li> <li>• Exclusion on the basis of any of the above</li> </ul>
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malicious gossip</li> <li>• Isolation &amp; exclusion</li> <li>• Ignoring</li> <li>• Excluding from the group</li> <li>• Taking someone's friends away</li> <li>• "Bitching"</li> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> <li>• Breaking confidence</li> <li>• Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear</li> <li>• The "look"</li> <li>• Use of terminology such as "nerd" in a derogatory way</li> </ul>
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching</li> <li>• Harassment</li> </ul>
Special Educational Needs, Disability – Learning Difficulties and Gifted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name calling</li> <li>• Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying</li> <li>• Taking advantage of some pupils'</li> </ul>

	vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mimicking a person's disability</li> <li>• Setting others up for ridicule</li> </ul>
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### **Indicators and Impact of bullying behaviour:**

#### **Indicators of Bullying**

While the indicators of bullying can vary for everyone, the following signs and symptoms *may* suggest that a pupil is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travelling to and from school e.g. requesting parents to drive or collect him/her, changing travel routes, avoiding regular times for travelling to and from school
- Unwillingness to go to school, refusal to attend, argumentative regarding attending school, truancy
- Unexplained bruising or cuts or damaged clothing.
- Deterioration in educational performance, loss of concentration and loss of enthusiasm and interest in school
- Pattern of physical illnesses e.g. headaches, stomach aches
- Unexplained changes either in mood or behaviour which may be particularly noticeable before returning to school after weekends or more especially after longer school holidays
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress e.g. stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting, self-harm
- Spontaneous out-of-character comments about either pupils or teachers
- Possessions missing or damaged
- Increased requests for money or stealing money
- Reluctance and/or refusal to say what is troubling him/her

There may be other signs depending on the individual and his/her circumstances. The above signs do NOT necessarily mean that a pupil is being bullied but if repeated or occurring in combination, these signs do warrant investigation in order to establish what is affecting the pupil.

#### **Impact of Bullying**

<b>Individuals involved</b>	<b>Potential impacts</b>
Students who are being bullied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May develop feelings of insecurity, humiliation and extreme anxiety and thus may become more vulnerable</li> <li>• Lowering of self-esteem</li> <li>• Changes in mood and behaviour</li> <li>• Extreme cases may result in self-harm</li> </ul>



Students who witness bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils who witness bullying may also be affected and may suffer in similar ways to those who are bullied.</li> <li>• Pupils may also feel guilt or distress at not being able to help the person being bullied.</li> </ul>
Students who engage in bullying behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be at higher risk of depression</li> <li>• Increased risk of developing an anti-social personality</li> <li>• Anxiety disorders</li> <li>• Likelihood of substance abuse, law-breaking behaviour in adulthood</li> <li>• Decreased educational attainment, decreased occupational attainment</li> </ul>

### **This Policy Applies:**

- In class, between classes and while on the school premises
- While in school uniform
- On the way to and from school
- On school-based activity, school tours etc.
- To anything done in the school's name
- To any behaviour that adversely affects the school reputation or the education of any student in the school

### **Rights and Responsibilities of Each Member of the School Community**

<b>Right</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have the right to be safe in school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have a responsibility to make our school a safe and secure place for others</li> </ul>

### **Rights and responsibilities of students and staff**

<b>I have a right to be:</b>	<b>I have the responsibility to ensure that:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treated with respect</li> <li>• Physically safe and to expect my property to be safe at school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Others are treated with respect</li> <li>• Others are physically safe, and the property of others is safe</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free from all forms of bullying</li> <li>• Able to learn &amp; teach without disruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Others are free from all forms of bullying</li> <li>• Others/students can learn without disruption</li> <li>• Bullying behaviour is acted upon as appropriate</li> </ul>
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### **Rights and responsibilities of parents**

<b>I have a right to:</b>	<b>I have the responsibility to ensure that:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect that my child is safe in school and can learn without disruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I report bullying behaviour to the school</li> <li>• Co-operate fully with the implementation of school policy</li> </ul>

### **Responsibilities of bystanders/witnesses**

<b>I should:</b>	<b>I should not:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say 'no' or 'stop' when you see or hear someone behaving unfairly - be assertive but not aggressive.</li> <li>• Seek help immediately from an adult, if the situation is dangerous.</li> <li>• Tell when you know a student is being bullied.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join in bullying behaviour for example, laughing at, sneering, 'slagging' or fighting etc.</li> <li>• Cheer on somebody who is bullying.</li> <li>• Stay in a dangerous situation, e.g. a fight.</li> <li>• Bully the 'bully'.</li> </ul>

**Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024, Chapter 2, 3 & 4 gives further details on;**

- When bullying becomes a child protection concern,
- How bullying behaviour occurs,
- Where bullying behaviour can occur.

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 were provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

	<b>Date consulted</b>	<b>Method of consultation</b>
School Staff	25 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2025	Staff meeting/workshop Survey Form (26 responses)
Students	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	Survey Form (321 responses)
Parents	22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2025	Survey Form (64 responses)
Board of Management	2 <sup>ND</sup> June 2025	Discussion on the Draft Policy sent to BOM Draft Policy Discussed at BOM Draft Policy 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):	
<b>Culture and Environment</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Open Door Policy</li> <li>•Whole school displays of CnM Expectation Boards -classrooms, corridors, canteen, Tionol, toilets and staffroom.</li> <li>•Active Student Support Team</li> <li>•Active Mentoring System</li> <li>•Seating Plans</li> <li>•Visible Displays around the school</li> <li>•Display of students' work</li> <li>•Designated area to report bullying issue</li> <li>•Active Student Leadership teams.</li> <li>•Separate toilets for junior and senior students.</li> <li>•Autism Suite</li> <li>•Random Acts of Kindness/Fun activities.</li> <li>•Culture and Diversity Committee</li> <li>•Themed Weeks- Friendship/anti-bullying week, Stand up week, Internet Safety week, Mental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Daily Pastoral Care Classes (12 Minutes)</li> <li>•SPHE Programme (includes material on cyber bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying)</li> <li>•RSE Programme</li> <li>•Subject Dept. Plans to include Wellbeing strand</li> <li>•TY Wellbeing Module</li> <li>•Wellbeing Committee - SSE/SIP.</li> <li>•DCU FUSE Programme</li> <li>•TPL for staff.</li> <li>•Guidance Service.</li> <li>•Dissemination of student information from primary schools to inform staff.</li> <li>•Induction Days for each year group.</li> <li>•Bí Cineálta Student friendly policy.</li> <li>•Student Dialann outlining Bí Cineálta policy, student contract and information for students on reporting of bullying incidents.</li> </ul>

<p>health week, Culture &amp; Equality week, wellness &amp; active school week, celebration week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•School events to create a positive culture (including student led events) eg: Art exhibition, Parent Coffee mornings, student assemblies, charity events, extra-curricular events, non-uniform days, school musical, award ceremony, Careers events, monthly student celebrations/awards, AR rewards, School trips and tours, dress up days-halloween, Christmas, Information events for students and parents, lunchtime activities.</li> <li>•Wall displays throughout the school such as student leaders, school ethos &amp; values displays, student artwork and murals.</li> <li>•Active teacher supervision and presence.</li> <li>•Promoting positive culture through new feeds, newsletters, social media platforms, Compass APP, merit system in student dialann, prospectus, Yearbook.</li> <li>•Graduations.</li> <li>•Zero Tolerance to bullying behaviours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Weekly AEN meetings. Core Team in place.</li> <li>•Weekly Care Team Meeting.</li> <li>•Weekly Student Support Team meeting.</li> <li>•Weekly AP 1 meeting.</li> <li>•SPHE Core Team created and Weekly meetings.</li> <li>•Staff Meetings to include Bi Cineálta.</li> <li>•Wellbeing surveys.</li> <li>•EAL Provision.</li> <li>•Inclusion Programme.</li> <li>•Rainbows Programme.</li> <li>•Behaviour Support Programme.</li> <li>•Webwise.</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships and Partnerships</b>	<b>Policy and Planning</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Senior Management Team</li> <li>•Assistant Principal I Team</li> <li>•Assistant Principal II Team</li> <li>•Year head Role.</li> <li>•Assistant Year head role.</li> <li>•Caomhnoir Role.</li> <li>•SNA Team.</li> <li>•Cinniri Team.</li> <li>•Student Council Team.</li> <li>•AEN Team.</li> <li>•Special Class Team.</li> <li>•Care Team.</li> <li>•Student Support Team</li> <li>•Wellbeing Team</li> <li>•Restorative Practice Approach with students.</li> <li>•Staff Wellbeing strategies &amp; initiatives.</li> <li>•Links with external agencies – NEPs, NCSE, SENO, Jigsaw, CAMHS, TUSLA, EWO, Gardai, Local Councillors, local clubs, LMETB</li> <li>•Parent teacher meetings</li> <li>•Parents Association</li> <li>•St. Mary's Special School Inclusion Programme.</li> <li>•Local Primary Schools.</li> <li>•<u>Local Businesses.</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Bi Cineálta Policy</li> <li>•Code of Behaviour Policy</li> <li>•Acceptable Usage Policy</li> <li>•Child Safeguarding Statement</li> <li>•Wellbeing Policy &amp; Plan</li> <li>•Data Protection Policy</li> <li>•Mobile Phone Policy</li> <li>•Special Class Policy</li> <li>•AEN Policy</li> <li>•Attendance Strategy</li> <li>•Health and Safety Statement</li> <li>•SPHE/RSE Policy</li> <li>•Guidance Plan</li> <li>•Accident and Injury Policy</li> <li>•Pastoral Care Annual Plan</li> <li>•Check &amp; Connect Approach</li> <li>•Lean in, Lean out Approach</li> <li>•Staff awareness of responsibilities as mandated persons</li> <li>•Principal &amp; Deputy Principal complete DLP/DDLP training</li> <li>•EAL Provision and Post of Responsibility.</li> <li>•SSE Process, including Wellbeing SIP.</li> <li>•Assistant Principal roles to include;ICT,</li> </ul>

•School Bus Companies.	Attendance, AEN, Health & Safety, Academic Tracking, Anti-bullying, Student Induction & Transfer, Student leadership & student awards.
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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):

- Yard and Corridors and in class - A schedule of supervision on corridors, tionol and yard is developed to monitor student behaviour and wellbeing. Any causes for concern are dealt with and reported to school management.
- All staff are watchful and observe relationships between students in class, note absence patterns and let it be known that high standards of behaviour are always expected
- Survey of Students - Students are surveyed through an online form during the year or when a year head deems it necessary to assess student wellbeing and concerns.
- Student Support Team – the student support team meet weekly to assess student supports and needs. A lean in, lean out list is devised which is shared with teachers to alert them to students who may need additional support and those to watch from a distance and modify support for.
- Student Cinniri team are tasked with monitoring and checking in with students, from incoming first years to the general school body at breaks and lunch. They are encouraged to engage with students who may seem to be on their own, to create links and have conversations with.

### **Section C: Reporting a bullying incident**

**A student, parent/guardian or other person may report an incident of bullying or suspected bullying.**

Reports of bullying incidents can be made to:

ANY teacher/A Trusted Adult	Caomhnóir/Form teacher
Year head	Principal
Deputy Principal	Guidance Counsellor
Special Needs Assistant (SNA)	Auxiliary Staff
Student friend/Cinnire	Parent/Guardian

**Reports of bullying incidents can be made via:**

- Verbal report
- Note to staff member
- E-mail colaistenami@lmetb.ie
- QR Code in the Dialann and displayed around the school.



### **Section D: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

- The School reserves the right to investigate allegations of bullying (and to take disciplinary action where necessary) where bullying is perpetrated by a member of the school community and it impinges on the work or well-being of a student in the school, even where the bullying acts are committed outside of the school.

- The school reserves the right, in accordance with Section 6 Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools to seek the assistance of agencies such as NEPS, the HSE, and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary to dealing effectively with bullying behaviour. In any case, where the School deems bullying behaviour to be potentially abusive (Section 2 Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools) it will consult with the HSE's Children and Family Services to assist it in drawing up an appropriate response or to obtain advice or to make a formal child protection report to the HSE or the Gardaí (as appropriate) in accordance with the DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary (revised 2023)

- Concerns about or allegations of bullying will be investigated and addressed in accordance with Section 6 Bi Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools. These are summarised as follows:

- ✓ ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to 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 teachers with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour are as follows:

- The relevant teacher.
  - Year head for each year group.
  - Principal and Deputy Principals.
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**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):**

- Where a member of the teaching staff has a concern about bullying, or a report has been made to them by a student being bullied, the relevant teacher must refer the matter to the Year Head without delay.
- The relevant teacher must fill in Appendix 1 of the Bullying Report Form when making this referral.
- When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred relevant teachers will consider: what, where, when and why?
- The student will be interviewed privately and consulted as to how they would like the situation to be resolved. A written statement will be taken to record the facts of the incident(s).
- The student against whom the allegations have been made will be interviewed separately and their side of the story listened to. A written statement will be taken to record the facts of the incident(s).
- Anyone else who may have witnessed the incident will also be interviewed in order to get a fuller understanding of the incident and written statements taken.
- The Year head will keep a written account of all interviews using Appendix 2 of the Bullying report Form.
- Once it has been established that a case of bullying has occurred parents or guardians will be contacted, informed and their support sought, except in a case where it is felt doing so could impact on student welfare.
- If the bullied student is agreeable, restorative practice “Circle” meetings with those involved will be arranged.

**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 or Witness Bullying:**

- Students may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed. In this regard the Student Support Team will work closely with the student to ensure they are actively supported in the school and to engage in school-based activities they enjoy. They may be placed on the school’s lean in/out list and/or engage in check and connect.
- If the bullied student is agreeable, restorative practice “Circle” meetings with those involved will be arranged.

**Students who display bullying Behaviour:**



- Students who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others. The Year Head in conjunction with the relevant Student Support Team will work closely with the student in this regard and to raise their awareness of the effects of their actions and to prevent such behaviour continuing.
- Outside agency support may be sought if deemed necessary. Such support and advice may be from TUSLA, EWO, NEPS, NCSE, second level school support services, HSE and any other agency deemed appropriate to support the school in dealing with incidents of bullying.

**See Appendix 1 for an overview of the Anti-bullying procedures.**

## **Section E: 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*.

**See Appendix 2: Bullying Report Form.**

## **Section F: 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)

## Appendix 1 – Anti-Bullying Procedures

CNM anti-bullying policy and procedures are to be read and followed within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour and within the context of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) child protection guidelines. The policy and procedures also meet the requirements of the DES *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Teachers should always be vigilant to the possibility of bullying occurring and should take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach when dealing with reported incidents of alleged bullying behaviour.

<b>LEVEL ONE (Teacher)    Adopt an informal approach to resolving the issue</b>
---

Log a bullying incident/report on the "Bullying Incident Report Form" (Appendix 2)

Speak to all parties in private. Useful questions...who - what - where - when - why.

Consult the student as to how s/he would like the situation to be resolved.

Get a written account from all parties.

If a group is involved interview each member individually.

Thereafter, if appropriate, interview the group together when each member should be asked for his/her account.

Contact parents of all involved at an early stage to inform them and explain actions being taken and to give parents an opportunity to discuss how they can help. If deemed appropriate, this may take the form of suggesting restorative approaches that the parents could take to support their son/daughter.

If it has been determined that bullying has happened the offence should be made clear to the student and efforts should be made to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied.

Record all steps on the bullying report form and give the report to the year head for a) filing b) further action.

If the bullied student is agreeable, an RP Circle meeting with those involved should be arranged.

<b>LEVEL TWO (Year head) A formal approach if the matter is unresolved/part of a pattern</b>
--

If the bullying forms part of a pattern or the initial efforts of the relevant teacher prove unsuccessful in restoring the relationship, the issue can be referred to the Year head who can:

Consult with staff members	Consult with form teachers
Collate all evidence	Lead a restorative circle
Maintain links with the bullied student	Monitor the student who has bullied

Contact parents/guardians	Refer to counsellor/counsellor/another agency as appropriate
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The Code of discipline remains available to be used as an intervention if it is deemed the best course of action.

<b>LEVEL THREE (Deputy Principal/Principal)</b>	<b>In the event of the problem persisting</b>
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If the bullying persists despite the interventions of the relevant teacher and/or the Year head, the issue can be referred to the Principal or Deputy Principal who can:

- Inform/meet with parents and students involved.
- Liaise with bullied student.
- Monitor student who has bullied.
- Liaise with SEN staff/NEPS/HSE Child & Family services/Tulsa/Social services/An Garda Síochána/other agencies as appropriate.

**N.B. IF THE RELEVANT TEACHER CONSIDERS THAT THE BULLYING INCIDENT HAS NOT BEEN ADEQUATELY AND APPROPRIATELY ADDRESSED WITHIN 20 SCHOOL DAYS AFTER IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT BULLYING HAS OCCURRED, FORM APPENDIX 3 MUST BE FILLED AND A COPY GIVEN TO THE PRINCIPAL/DEPUTY.**

<b>LEVEL FOUR (Principal)</b>	<b>To lodge a complaint with the principal</b>
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If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with the outcome of the bullying incident or the procedures that were followed, they can lodge a complaint in the first instance by writing to the principal and outlining the incident and the grounds for the complaint.

The principal will respond as soon as it is practicable.

<b>LEVEL FIVE (The Board of Management)</b>	<b>To lodge a complaint with the Board</b>
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If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with the response received from the principal, the option to write to the Chairperson of the Board of Management is available to them once all of the previous steps have been followed.

Correspondence can be delivered to the school office and marked for the attention of the "Chairperson of the Board of Management".

The Chairperson of the Board of Management will respond to the parents/guardians as soon as is practicable.

## Appendix 2 – Bullying Report Form

### Department of Education Definition of Bullying:

Repeated deliberate aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others.



### LEVEL ONE – STAFF MEMBER

☐

For Filing

For Further Action

☐

### Bullying Report Form

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour


3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))\*

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))\*

Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

--

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>
Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	Disability/SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact


Details of actions taken by the relevant teacher


Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_

## LEVEL TWO - ACTION TAKEN BY YEAR HEAD

Form received on: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Consult with Caomhnoir Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Interviews with witnesses

☐ Written account(s) from: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Parents/Guardians Informed Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Reported back to bullied student(s) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Monitoring of bully Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Supervised Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Refer to: Guidance & Counse ☐  
Other Agencies ☐ Specify \_\_\_\_\_

Account of Intervention

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Year Head Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Referral to Anti-Bullying Team ☐ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Code of Discipline ☐ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for using Code of Discipline

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## LEVEL THREE - ANTI-BULLYING TEAM/D.P./PRINCIPAL

Date of referral: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Team Members involved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Inform Parent(s)/Guardian(s)  
☐ Supervised Meeting  
☐ Report back to bullied student(s)  
☐ Monitoring of bully

☐ Guidance & Counselling  
☐ Other Agencies – Specify

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Give an account of intervention:

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-----  
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Referral to Deputy Principal or Principal re: Code of Behaviour ☐

Date: -----

Form returned to Year Head: -----

Filed on: ----- Filed by: -----



### Appendix 3 – Form for Reporting Bullying Behaviour to Principal or Deputy Principal

This form is to be forwarded to the principal if the relevant teacher considers the bullying incident *HAS NOT* been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after it has been determined that bullying has occurred.

Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))\*

Pupil concerned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Pupil	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))\*

	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please give further details/notes
Outdoor area	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Classroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Corridor/Common area	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>	
School Bus	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

--

Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es)) \*

Physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/>	Isolation/Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Damage to Property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Name Calling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cyber-bullying	<input type="checkbox"/>	Malicious Gossip	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

Homophobic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability/SEN related	<input type="checkbox"/>
Racist	<input type="checkbox"/>

Membership of Traveller community	
Other (specify)	

Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

Details of actions taken

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Relevant Teacher) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 4 – Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update to BOM**

### **Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management meeting of DD/MM/YYYY**

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous board of management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

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	

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which should include the following information where relevant:

- the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc
- the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- if a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the board of management
- if the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.

## **Appendix 5 – 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**

1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school. \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

2. Where in the school is the student friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?

3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the studentfriendly policy on the school website? \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

4. How has the student friendly policy been communicated to students?

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5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and studentfriendly policy been communicated to parents?

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6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools?

Yes [ ]      No [ ]

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7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour?

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8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

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9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

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10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

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11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

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12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

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13. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?

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14. Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:

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15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?

16. Does the student friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

17. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

19. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of board of management) (Principal)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of next review:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 6 - Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy**

The Board of Management of Coláiste na Mí 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:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Chairperson of board of management)

(Principal)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of next review:** \_\_\_\_\_



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### Anti-bullying Contract

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#### Aims

Coláiste na Mí (CNM) believes that all members of the school community are entitled to a school environment, which is free from bullying and the fear of bullying. All members of the school community will be encouraged to support such an environment and will be made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to bullying.

#### Definition

In accordance with the *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* (June 2024) bullying is defined 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.**

#### Strategies

To create the positive school environment in which an anti-bullying ethos and culture is maintained, it is important to ensure that all members of the school community are made aware and are prepared to meet the challenges and issues presented by bullying incidents. In this light, the following educational strategies form part of the CNM anti-bullying approach.

- All students to be informed of the anti-bullying (**Bí Cineálta**) policy and procedures. This will be done in student induction days and at other times during the year. A student friendly version will be presented and displayed around the school.
- The anti-bullying (**Bí Cineálta**) policy and procedures will be available to parents/guardians.
- SPHE programme (includes material on cyber bullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying).
- RSE programme (includes material on tolerance, understanding and identity).
- DCU FUSE anti-bullying programme.
- Themed weeks: Friendship week, Anti-bullying week, Stand up week, Culture and Diversity week, Internet Safety Week, Mental Health week, Human Rights Day, Global Citizenship week, Wellness Week. (See School Calendar for exact dates)
- Jigsaw School – implementing initiatives to support young people’s mental health.
- Acceptable use of the internet policy.
- Mobile phone policy.
- Subject dept. exploration of issues such as inclusion, diversity, and interdependence, where appropriate.
- Guest speakers for parents, students, and staff TPL.
- Restorative Practice approach to mending conflict.
- School clubs, teams etc highlight interdependence.
- Guidance Service.
- Behaviour Support Programme.
- Inclusion Programme.
- Wellbeing Surveys.

#### Reporting

A student, parent/guardian or other person may report an incident of bullying or suspected bullying. Reports of bullying incidents can be made to:

- |                    |                                 |         |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| • ANY teacher      | • Guidance Counsellor           | teacher |
| • Caomhnóir/Form   | • Special Needs Assistant (SNA) |         |
| • Year head        | • Auxiliary Staff               |         |
| • Principal        | • Student friend/mentor         |         |
| • Deputy Principal |                                 |         |

Reports of bullying incidents can

be made via:

- Verbal report
- Note to staff member
- E-mail [colaistenami@lmetb.ie](mailto:colaistenami@lmetb.ie)
- QR Code



### Procedures

Once it has been established that a case of bullying has occurred under the DES definition, parents or guardians will be contacted, informed and their support sought, except in a case where it is felt doing so could impact on student welfare.

Any student affected by the bullying will be supported and referred, if appropriate, to counselling or other support services available. Those found to be bullying will be supported in order to raise their awareness of the effects of their actions and to prevent such behaviour continuing. If the bullied student is agreeable, restorative practice "Circle" meetings with those involved will be arranged.

If the bullying behaviour continues and/or the situation is not resolved this form will be passed to the Year head for intervention or referral to D. Principal or Principal for further action. This may include seeking the assistance of outside agencies where appropriate and available.

### Anti-bullying agreement

I agree to uphold CNM's **Bí Cineálta** Policy. I agree to uphold CNM aim of creating an environment that is free from bullying by respecting all members of the school community and reporting any incident of bullying/suspected bullying I witness.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

