



Scoil Mhuire

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

1. Statement of Commitment

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 2024.

Scoil Mhuire is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful learning environment where bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. Bullying behaviour undermines the rights of children to learn and thrive in a supportive environment.

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.

We confirm that we will take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated.

Catholic schools have a distinctive understanding of the human person, recognising that every person is created in God's image and likeness and has inherent dignity as a child of God. This is the basis for ensuring that everybody in our school is treated with respect and care, in accordance with the Catholic Schedule.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to respecting the dignity of every individual. No human person is to be devalued and all have an indispensable part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

2. Definition of Bullying Behaviour

Bullying is targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm—physical, social, or emotional. It is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power.

Examples include: Physical, Verbal, Relational, Cyberbullying, and Identity-based bullying.

3. Development of the Policy

This policy was developed in consultation with the entire school community, including staff, students, parents and the Board of Management. Feedback was collected through meetings, focus groups and surveys.

4. Review of the Policy

The policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if required. Input from the school community will be sought during each review process to ensure the policy remains effective and relevant.

5. Preventative Measures

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by this school to address all forms of bullying behaviour, in whatever form and however motivated, including online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment.

In developing preventative strategies, Scoil Mhuire comes from the context of our Catholic ethos where inclusivity permeates the school in a real way. We take positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at Board of Management and staff meetings.

The dignity and wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. The school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence. In continuing to develop prevention strategies, the school will listen to young people and parents to help establish their particular context and needs.

6. Supports for Students

Supports will be provided both for students experiencing bullying behaviour and those engaging in it.

7. Reporting Bullying Behaviour

Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to report bullying behaviour. Reports can be made to class teachers, Deputy Principal or Principal.

A 'telling environment' will be promoted to ensure students feel safe reporting bullying without fear.

8. Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Incidents will be investigated promptly, parents will be notified early, and restorative approaches will be applied where suitable.

9. Oversight and Monitoring

The Board of Management will oversee implementation, and regular reports on bullying incidents will be reviewed.

10. Communication of the Policy

This policy will be published on the school website, displayed in student-friendly formats, and communicated to staff and parents.

11. Key Contact Persons

Class teachers will address incidents of bullying behaviour using the school's agreed template (Appendix A).

12. Complaints Procedure

If a parent or student is dissatisfied with how bullying is addressed, they may raise the issue through the school's Complaints Procedure.

13. Policy Review Date

This policy was adopted on [Insert Date] and will be reviewed again on [Insert Review Date].

Signed: Paul O'Donoghue Chairperson, Board of Management
Date: 23.9.2025

Signed: Garth Leahy Principal
Date: 23/9/25

Appendix A: Recording Bullying Behaviour

[Template with sections for names, forms of bullying, type, location, dates, views of students/parents, outcome, etc.]

Appendix B: Telling Environment Characteristics and Strategies

[Key characteristics: trust, empathy, non-judgment, clear processes, encouragement to speak up. Strategies: designate trusted adults, anonymous reporting, awareness campaigns, reinforcement, addressing barriers.]

Appendix A

Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Names of Children Involved

Student(s) Experiencing Bullying _____

Student(s) Engaging in Bullying Behaviour: _____

Other Witnesses (if any) _____

2. Form of Bullying (Refer to Section 2.5 – Tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical (e.g., hitting, kicking, pushing) | <input type="checkbox"/> Relational (e.g. exclusion, spreading rumours) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal (e.g., name-calling, teasing, insults) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Psychological (e.g., intimidation, manipulation) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cyberbullying (e.g., harmful messages, social media misuse) | |

3. Type of Bullying (Refer to Section 2.7 – Tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peer-to-Peer | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Bullying (e.g., inappropriate comments, harassment) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher-to-Student | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student-to-Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group Bullying | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prejudicial Bullying (e.g., based on race, religion, gender) | |

4. Where and When (If known)

Location: _____

Date/Time: _____

5. Date of Initial Engagement

With Student(s): _____ With Parent(s): _____

6. Views of Student(s)/Parent(s) (Regarding the actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour)

7. Date of Review (To determine if bullying behaviour has ceased)

Review Date: _____

Outcome: _____

Views of Student(s): _____

Views of Parent(s): _____

8. Engagement with External Services/Supports (If any)

Services Contacted: _____

Details of Engagement: _____

9. Recording Teacher

Name: _____

Date Recorded: _____

Telling Environment Characteristics and Strategies

Key Characteristics of a Telling Environment:

1. **Trust and Safety:** Students believe their concerns will be taken seriously and handled discreetly.
2. **Empathy and Understanding:** Staff members respond to reports with sensitivity, care and reassurance.
3. **Non-Judgmental Approach:** Students feel they will not be blamed, shamed, or ostracized for coming forward.
4. **Clear Reporting Processes:** Students know how, where and to whom they can report incidents of bullying.
5. **Encouragement to Speak Up:** The school community promotes the idea that reporting is a positive action to help peers and improve the school environment.

Strategies to Create a Telling Environment:

- **Designate Trusted Adults:** Ensure students know they can approach specific staff members (e.g., class teachers, year heads, school counsellors).
- **Anonymous Reporting Options:** Provide systems like suggestion boxes or online forms to allow for discreet reporting.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Educate students on the importance of speaking up through workshops, assemblies and classroom discussions.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Highlight and reward acts of bravery when students report bullying to inspire others to do the same.
- **Address Barriers to Reporting:** Regularly discuss reasons students may hesitate to report, such as fear of retaliation, and implement solutions (e.g., follow-up support).

Bí Cineálta – Be Kind Policy

Scoil Mhuire wants everyone to feel happy, safe, and respected at school.

What does it mean to be kind?

Being kind means using kind words, helping others, including everyone, and treating people the way you'd like to be treated. When we are kind, school becomes a fun, friendly place for everyone.

What is bullying?

Bullying is when someone hurts another person on purpose and more than once. It can make others feel sad, scared, or left out.

Here are some examples:

- Hurting someone by hitting or pushing.
- Calling names or making fun of someone.
- Leaving someone out on purpose.
- Spreading rumours or secrets.
- Sending mean messages online or in games.

No one deserves to be treated this way, and it's never okay.

What do we do in Scoil Mhuire to stop bullying?

- We learn about kindness and respect in SPHE and Wellbeing classes.
- We have fun kindness days and special workshops.
- We talk about how to treat others fairly.
- We practice speaking up and listening kindly.

What should you do if someone is being unkind or bullying?

Tell a trusted adult. This could be:

- Your class teacher
- The principal or deputy principal
- Any grown-up in school you trust

You can also write a note or ask someone to help you tell. We will listen and help you.

Our School is a "Telling School"

That means we don't keep bullying a secret.

Telling isn't "telling tales" — it's being brave and protecting others. When you speak up, you help make our school safe and kind for everyone.

What happens when someone is unkind?

- The teachers will talk to everyone involved.
- They will help sort things out kindly and fairly.
- We try to make things better and help everyone learn from it.

Let's remember:

- Everyone is different and special.
- Being kind makes the school a better place.
- If you see something unkind – tell someone.
- Let's look out for each other every day.

Bí Cineálta. Be Kind. Always. ♥