



etb
Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúnaíochta na nGall
Donegal Education and
Training Board

Errigal College Letterkenny

Bí Cineálta (Anti-Bullying) Policy

May 2025

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| Proposer: | Joanne Donaghy |
| Seconder: | Cherry McMenaghen |
| Chairperson of the Board of Management: | Donal Coyle |
| Principal: | Danny McFadden |
| Date of Approval: | 21/05/2025 |

1. Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement:

To enable each student to achieve their educational potential, in partnership with parents, based on the principles of caring, dignity, mutual respect and equality.

We are an ETB school, state, co-educational and multi-denominational, underpinned by the core values of:

- Excellence in Education
- Care
- Equality
- Community
- Respect



2. Consultation

School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Errigal 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 two 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 were provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

| | Date consulted | Method of consultation |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| School Staff | 11th April 2025 | In person forum and questionnaire. |
| Students | Week of 29th April - 6th of May 2025. | Questionnaire and focus group. |
| Parents | Week of 29th April - 6th of May 2025. | Questionnaire. |
| Board of Management | Week of 6th of May 2025. | Questionnaire. |
| Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers | Week of 6th of May 2025. | Questionnaire. |
| Date policy was approved: | | |
| Date policy was last reviewed: 6th of November 2024. | | |

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 five of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Cyberbullying:

- Themed weeks e.g. internet safety week and safer internet day
- No phone policy
- Sites blocked on the school wifi e.g. facebook, instagram and snapchat
- Net support - software for teacher oversight of computers
- SPHE and CSPE curricula
- Wellbeing short course
- Acceptable use policy
- Guest speakers

Homophobic bullying:

- LGBTQIA+ lunchtime club
- Stand up awareness week
- LGBTQIA+ noticeboard
- SPHE and Wellbeing curricula
- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment
- Encouraging peer support
- Empathy building activities
- Challenging gender-stereotypes
- Encourage students to speak up when they witness homophobic behavior

Racist bullying:

- Culture day
- Multilingual library
- School displays
- European day of languages
- Show racism the red card programme
- Peer support
- EAL teachers and SNA's
- Guest speakers

Sexist bullying:

- Modelling behaviour by staff
- Equal opportunities for all students
- Non-gender based bias in subject areas
- Awareness days e.g. International Women's Day
- LGBTQIA+ lunchtime club
- Stand up awareness week
- LGBTQIA+ noticeboard
- SPHE curriculum
- Culture Day
- Partnership with others e.g. STEM Passport for Inclusion (ATU), Cyber for Girls (PGIM) and Women and Girls in STEM Forum (JAI)

Sexual harassment:

- SPHE curriculum
- Positive role models within the school community
- Challenge gender stereo-types
- Mentoring
- Safe and inclusive environment

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):

Policies:

- Acceptable use policy
- Supervision policy
- Special Education Teaching policy

Supervision:

- Supervision on the corridors
- Supervision in the canteen
- Supervision in the toilets
- Supervision in the classrooms
- Supervision outside
- Supervision when on trips
- Supervision at the school gate
- Lunch time clubs are offered
- Extra-curricular activities are offered

In the classroom:

- Vsware
- Classroom Management
- Seating Plan

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher(s) with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is (are) as follows: Senior Leadership Team, Student Support Team, Guidance Counsellors, Year Heads and Behaviour for Learning Staff.

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 involve

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):

Determining if bullying behaviour has occurred:

Teachers should consider the key questions:

- What happened?
- Where did it occur?
- When did it occur?
- Why did it happen?

Teachers should also consider:

- Is the behaviour targeted?
- Is it repeated behaviour?
- Is it harmful?
- Is there an imbalance of power e.g. differences through size, strength or age.

Approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour:

Individual:

In cases where one individual is responsible for the bullying behaviour, it is important to begin by speaking separately with both the student who experienced the bullying and the student alleged to have engaged in the behaviour. These individual conversations should focus on understanding what occurred, where and when it took place, and the context or motivations behind the behaviour.

Each student should be given a chance to share their perspective in a respectful and non-confrontational setting. To gain a more comprehensive understanding, it can be helpful to ask each student to write down their account of the incident.

Multiple students:

If multiple students are involved, it is important to first speak with each student individually. After individual discussions, a group meeting should be held with all involved students.

During this group meeting, each student should be given the opportunity to share their version of events to ensure a shared understanding of what occurred. Following this, appropriate support should be provided to each student as needed. Asking students to provide written accounts of the incident can also be useful in gaining a clearer picture.

How to review progress:

Following these discussions, appropriate support should be provided to the students involved. Support for the targeted student(s) may include emotional reassurance or practical interventions, while the student responsible for the behaviour may require guidance, reflection activities, or disciplinary measures, as appropriate.

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):

- Student Support Team
- Restorative Practices
- A Telling School
- Code of Positive Behaviour
- Ladder of Referral
- Guidance Counsellor
- Behaviour for Learning
- Form Tutors
- Year Heads
- Vsware

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and PostPrimary Schools

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:

Donal Coyle

(Chairperson of the Board of Management)

Signed:

Danny McFadden

(Principal)

