Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of St Cronan's N.S. Rosemount, Roll No 13867P 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* 2023.

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 Bí Cineálta 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.

(https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/b%c3%ad-cine%c3%a1lta-resources-for-primary-schools-post-primary-schools-and-parents/)

This policy sets out how the school community at St. Cronan's N.S. Rosemount prevents and addresses bullying behaviour, in accordance with the requirements of the Bí Cineálta procedures. Strategies for responding to inappropriate behaviour that does not constitute bullying are outlined in 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.

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	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	22nd January 15th February 2025 28th March 2025	OIDE Staff Training Day Questionnaire Patron's Principal's Training ½ Day closure to discuss document as Whole School Staff
Students	29th March 9th May	Questionnaire Whole School Circle Time Scenarios with OIDE Advisor Bí Cineálta Poster Competition
Parents	26th February	Questionnaire
Board of Management	May 2025 22nd May 2025 12th June	Draft policy sent to all members in advance of the meeting 22/5/2025 to invite feedback and suggestions Discuss and agree final draft at BOM meeting on 12/06/2025 Ratify on 12/6/2025 and monitor implementation and effectiveness of the policy through feedback from the principal at each meeting and its annual review
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		Questionnaire to Joe Fitzpatrick

Date policy was approved: 12th June 2025

Date policy was last reviewed: 12th June 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):

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A positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The school environment should be a space where students and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.

Relationships between all members of the school community should be based on respect, care, integrity and trust. Open communication between the patron, boards of management, school staff, students and their parents helps to foster a collaborative approach and shared responsibilities in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

The school leadership team influences the school culture and set the standards and expectations for the school community when preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. Each member of school staff has a responsibility to develop and maintain a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.

Students can shape the school culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintain a positive and supportive school environment for all.

Parents, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.

We are committed to creating and maintaining a positive school climate that promotes respectful relationships across the school community. Our prevention strategies are guided by the *Bí Cineálta* procedures and focus on fostering a culture where bullying is never acceptable. We implement the following prevention strategies:

1. **Whole-School Approach**
   - We promote a positive school culture through regular whole-school initiatives that reinforce respectful behaviour, kindness, inclusion, and empathy (e.g. Wellbeing Activities, 70 Acts of Kindness, Assemblies).
   - Our Code of Behaviour explicitly outlines expectations for respectful behaviour and the consequences of engaging in bullying.

2. **Prevention through Education**
   - Anti-bullying education is embedded in the SPHE curriculum across all class levels, with particular emphasis on topics such as self-esteem, empathy, conflict resolution, respect for diversity, and the impact of bullying.
   - We use the Stay Safe and Walk Tall programmes to support pupils in identifying bullying behaviour and knowing how to respond appropriately.

3. **Digital Citizenship and Online Safety**
   - Online safety and digital citizenship are taught explicitly to all classes, using materials from Web wise and other age-appropriate resources.
   - Pupils are educated about the impact of online behaviour and how to be responsible, respectful internet users. This includes guidance on managing privacy settings, reporting abuse, and understanding the consequences of cyberbullying.
   - We are concerned about the level of screen time the children are accessing and are asking parents to place limits and parental controls on their devices and apps.

4. **Addressing Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying**
   - We promote respect for all individuals regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
   - Lessons and school discussions affirm that homophobic and transphobic language or actions are unacceptable.
   - Staff are supported in confidently addressing these forms of bullying and modelling inclusive language and attitudes.

5. **Addressing Racist and Sexist Bullying and Sexual Harassment**
   - Through SPHE, History, and intercultural activities, we foster an appreciation of diversity and educate pupils about the harmful effects of racism and sexism.
   - We explicitly teach that discrimination or harassment based on race, culture, nationality, gender, or perceived gender roles is unacceptable.
   - Age-appropriate lessons help pupils understand the meaning of consent, personal boundaries, and respectful interactions.

6. **Staff Training and Supervision**
   - Staff receive training, CPD and guidance on identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying behaviour, including specific types such as online, racist, homophobic, and sexist bullying.
   - Effective supervision of pupils occurs during all transitions and break times. Staff remain vigilant for early signs of bullying and respond immediately in line with school procedures.
   - Teachers to receive training in Restorative Practice Summer Term 2025

7. **Pupil Voice and Participation**
   - Pupil input is encouraged through class discussions, circle time, suggestion boxes, focus groups 4/5 (pupils) and notes to ensure the school is a safe and inclusive space for all.

    o Children are empowered to report bullying and to support peers in doing the same, knowing they will be heard and supported.

8. **Parent and Community Involvement**
    o Parents are informed of the school's anti-bullying procedures and are encouraged to reinforce positive, respectful behaviours at home.
    o We foster open communication with families and the wider community to promote a consistent approach to preventing and addressing bullying

We recognise the critical role that supervision and monitoring play in preventing and responding to bullying behaviour. 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): See Supervision Policy In line with *Bí Cineálta* procedures, the following measures are in place:

- **Supervision of Pupils:**
  All pupils are actively supervised during arrival, break times, transitions, and dismissal. Staff are present in key areas such as classrooms, corridors, yards, and toilets to ensure safe and respectful interactions.
- **Monitoring of Behaviour:**
  Teachers use observation and informal monitoring during class time and yard duty to identify early signs of bullying behaviour. Staff are alert to changes in behaviour or social dynamics that may indicate bullying.
- **Communication Among Staff:**
  Regular staff meetings and informal check-ins allow for the sharing of concerns regarding pupil wellbeing or suspected bullying behaviour. This ensures a coordinated and timely response.
- **Classroom Management:**
  Class teachers implement proactive strategies to foster positive behaviour, such as clear rules, cooperative learning, seating plans, and promoting kindness and inclusion.
- **Record-Keeping and Reporting:**
  Incidents of bullying or suspected bullying are recorded in line with school policy and the *Bí Cineálta* reporting procedures. Patterns are monitored over time to ensure appropriate follow-up and support.

- **Supervision Policy:**
  The school's supervision policy is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect good practice and to ensure it effectively supports the prevention and early identification of bullying behaviour.
- **School Environment:**
  Efforts are made to ensure that all school spaces are welcoming and inclusive, with visual reminders (e.g. posters, displays) reinforcing anti-bullying messages and positive behaviour.

These strategies support a proactive approach to preventing bullying and ensures all pupils feel safe, respected, and supported throughout the school day.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

At **St. Cronan's N.S. Rosemount**, all members of staff have a shared responsibility to respond to bullying behaviour. However, specific roles are assigned to ensure a consistent and effective response:

- **Class Teacher:**
  The class teacher is the first point of contact for addressing any concerns related to bullying behaviour involving pupils in their care. They investigate reports, support the pupils involved, and communicate with parents where appropriate.
- **Principal / Deputy Principal:**
  The Principal (and Deputy Principal, where applicable) oversees the implementation of the anti-bullying policy and ensures that all reports of bullying are dealt with in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta* procedures. They manage cases requiring further intervention, support staff in their roles, and liaise with parents and outside agencies when necessary.

St. Cronan's N.S. follows the *Bí Cineálta* six-stage approach to effectively investigate and resolve bullying incidents. This approach ensures that all cases are managed with fairness, sensitivity, and a focus on positive outcomes. The stages include:

1. Preliminary Assessment: Early identification of potential bullying behaviours through observation, reports from pupils, parents, or staff.
2. Information Gathering: Collecting information from all parties involved to understand the nature and context of the incident(s).
3. Planning the Response: Deciding on appropriate interventions, prioritizing early intervention to prevent escalation.

4. Implementing Interventions: Carrying out strategies such as mediation, restorative practices, or tailored supports for both the target and the person engaging in the bullying.
5. Monitoring and Review: Regularly checking the effectiveness of interventions and the well-being of all pupils involved.
6. Follow-up and Support: Providing ongoing support, including counselling or referrals if needed, to ensure sustained positive relationships and a safe school environment.

Throughout these stages, the school emphasises:

- Early intervention to address issues before they escalate.
- Support for all pupils involved, ensuring their safety and emotional well-being.
- Restorative practices, where appropriate, to repair harm and restore respectful relationships.

Supporting Students When Bullying Occurs

When bullying behaviour occurs, St. Cronan's N.S. is committed to ensuring that the response is compassionate, respectful, and effective. The school will:

- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying is heard and reassured.
- Seek to ensure the privacy and dignity of all involved.
- Conduct all conversations with sensitivity and care.
- Consider the age, ability, and needs of those involved in addressing the situation.
- Listen carefully to the views of the student experiencing bullying regarding how best to resolve the issue.
- Take timely and appropriate action to address the behaviour.
- Keep parents of all parties informed throughout the process to foster cooperation and support.

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):
At St. Cronan's N.S. Rosemount, all reports and concerns of bullying are taken seriously. We follow the staged approach outlined in *Chapter 6* of the **Bí Cineálta** procedures:

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1. Determining if Bullying Behaviour has Occurred

- **Initial Concern Raised:**
  A staff member, usually the class teacher, will listen carefully to the concern raised by a pupil, parent, or colleague.
- **Gathering Information:**
  The teacher will gather relevant information by speaking sensitively with the pupil(s) involved, witnesses (if any), and reviewing any written accounts or observations. Pupils are supported and reassured throughout.
- **Assessing the Behaviour:**
  The teacher assesses the behaviour against the definition of bullying as repeated, intentional behaviour causing hurt or distress. The *Checklist for Determining if Bullying Has Occurred* (from Bí Cineálta) may be used to support this step.

2. Addressing Bullying Behaviour

- **Stage 1 – Resolving Informally:**
  Where appropriate, the behaviour is addressed through supportive interventions, including:
    - Restorative conversations
    - Clarifying expectations and school rules
    - Mediation between pupils
    - Encouraging empathy and understanding
- **Stage 2 – Formal Investigation and Recording:**
  If the behaviour persists or is serious in nature:
    - A formal investigation is conducted by the class teacher and/or Principal.
    - The behaviour is recorded using the *Bí Cineálta* template.
    - Parents/guardians of all parties are informed.
    - Support is put in place for both the pupil experiencing bullying and the pupil engaging in the behaviour.
- **Stage 3 – Ongoing Monitoring and Support:**
    - Individual behaviour support plans may be used.
    - Counselling or pastoral care supports may be accessed (internal or external).

○ The school works in partnership with parents/guardians to monitor progress and prevent recurrence.

3. Reviewing Progress

- **Follow-up Meetings:**
  Follow-up meetings are held with pupils and parents to ensure the bullying behaviour has stopped and that relationships are improving.
- **Monitoring for Recurrence:**
  Staff continue to monitor the situation over time, particularly during unstructured times (e.g., yard, group work).
- **Review by Leadership Team:**
  Patterns of behaviour or repeat incidents are reviewed by the Principal and staff to ensure appropriate measures are in place school-wide.
- **Restorative and Preventative Actions:**
  Restorative practices and further prevention strategies are implemented to rebuild trust, support relationships, and reinforce a positive school culture.

Bullying Outside of School

While the primary responsibility of St. Cronan's N.S. Rosemount relates to incidents that occur on school grounds or during school-related activities, the school acknowledges that bullying behaviour taking place outside of school—such as online or within the wider community—can significantly affect a pupil's wellbeing and engagement in school life. When such incidents are reported to school staff and are found to impact a pupil, the school will, insofar as is practicable and within its remit, respond in accordance with this policy. This may involve collaboration with parents and, where appropriate, referral to relevant external agencies.

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):

At St. Cronan's N.S. Rosemount, we are committed to supporting every pupil affected by bullying - whether they have experienced, witnessed, or engaged in bullying behaviour. Our supports are tailored to the needs of each individual, as outlined below:

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1. Supporting Pupils Who Experience Bullying Behaviour

- **Listening and Reassurance:**
  Pupils are listened to with empathy and their concerns are taken seriously. They are reassured that they are not to blame and that steps will be taken to keep them safe.
- **Restoring a Sense of Safety and Confidence:**
  Pupils are supported to rebuild their self-esteem and sense of belonging in the school through positive relationships, encouragement, and inclusion in group activities.
- **Ongoing Check-ins:**
  Designated staff (usually the class teacher) will follow up regularly with the pupil to monitor their wellbeing and ensure the bullying has stopped.
- **Access to Pastoral Supports:**
  Where appropriate, additional supports such as school-based wellbeing programmes, informal mentoring, or external counselling services may be offered.

2. Supporting Pupils Who Witness Bullying Behaviour

- **Encouragement to Speak Up:**
  Pupils are encouraged and praised for reporting concerns or supporting a peer who may be experiencing bullying.
- **Empowering Bystanders:**
  Class discussions and SPHE lessons help pupils understand how to safely and effectively intervene, report bullying, and support inclusion.
- **Ensuring Their Wellbeing:**
  Pupils who witness bullying are also given the opportunity to speak about their feelings and receive reassurance or support as needed.

3. Supporting Pupils Who Display Bullying Behaviour

- **Understanding the Behaviour:**
  Pupils are helped to understand the impact of their behaviour on others and to take responsibility for their actions in a non-shaming, supportive manner.
- **Restorative Practices:**
  Where appropriate, restorative conversations or activities are used to repair harm, promote empathy, and rebuild relationships.
- **Behaviour Support and Re-education:**
  Targeted behaviour plans, social skills teaching, and self-regulation strategies may be put in place to support positive behaviour change.

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- **Parental Involvement:**
  Parents/guardians are actively involved in supporting their child's behaviour change through positive reinforcement and consistent messaging.

These approaches reflect our school's commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all pupils, as guided by the **Bí Cineálta** procedures

Group	Supports Provided	Led by
Pupils Experiencing Bullying	Listening, reassurance, restorative support, counselling	Class Teacher, Principal
Witnesses	Bystander empowerment, check-ins	Class Teacher, SPHE Lessons
Pupils Engaging in Bullying	Behaviour plans, restorative conversations, re-education	Class Teacher, SET Coordinator, Parents

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

Supporting Students at Greater Risk

At St. Cronan's N.S. Rosemount, we recognise that some pupils may be more vulnerable to bullying behaviour, including students with special educational needs (SEN), those from minority or marginalised backgrounds, and those experiencing other forms of disadvantage. We are committed to providing additional tailored supports to these pupils to ensure their safety and wellbeing. This includes differentiated pastoral care, individualised behaviour support plans where needed, collaboration with SEN and inclusion staff, and close communication with families. Our staff receive ongoing training to understand the unique challenges faced by these pupils and to foster an inclusive environment that actively counters discrimination and promotes respect for diversity, in line with Chapter 3 of the Bí Cineálta procedures. Supports will be informed by the NCSE Guidelines for Supporting Students with SEN and the school's Wellbeing and Inclusion policies. Where necessary, advice from NEPS and external professionals will be sought.

Recording 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. In line with the **Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (DES,**

2023), where there is a concern that a child is being, or at risk of being, bullied and such bullying is regarded as **child abuse**, the matter will be referred to the **Designated Liaison Person (DLP), Ms. Sharon Talbot**, without delay. The DLP will then follow the correct reporting procedures as outlined in the school's **Child Safeguarding Statement** and national guidelines.

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.

For transparency and ease of reference, the following documents are attached as appendices to this policy:

1. **Appendix A – School Bí Cineálta Policy Template**
   A mandatory template that every school must use as the foundation for developing its own Bí Cineálta policy.
2. **Appendix B – Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy**
   A simplified version of the policy, written in accessible language for students and parents. Schools are required to create and display this version prominently.
3. **Appendix C – Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour**
   A practical guide for school staff on identifying, responding to, and managing incidents of bullying behaviour.
4. **Appendix D – Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Updates to the Board of Management**
   Assists principals in preparing updates for the board of management, including trends, actions taken, and policy effectiveness.

5. **Appendix E - Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy**
   A template for conducting the required annual review of the school's policy, involving input from the entire school community.
6. **Appendix F – Notification Regarding the Board of Management's Annual Review**
   A sample notification form to inform the school community that the annual review of the Bí Cineálta policy has been completed.
7. **Appendix G – Overview of the Bí Cineálta Procedures**
   A summary document highlighting the key elements and changes in the updated procedures compared to the previous 2013 guidelines.

Supports available to help prevent and address bullying include the following:

- NEPS- providing advice on best practice to prevent and address bullying when issues arise in schools and/or training in preventative initiatives pg.46
- Oide – providing TPL pg.47
- Webwise – online safety awareness raising and education initiative for pupils and parents pg.47
- National Parents Council – online and in person courses to support parents to prevent and address bullying pg. 48
- DCU Anti bullying centre- FUSE programme that can be used to promote a positive school culture and assist in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours. Pg.48
- Tusla – for cases where it is considered that bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern. Pg.48
- Cyberbullying and Internet Safety Facilitators

This anti-bullying policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure its continued effectiveness and compliance with current legislation and guidelines. The review process will include consultation with all members of the school community, including staff, students, parents, and the Board of Management. Following this consultation, the Board of Management will formally discuss and approve the policy, with documented minutes reflecting the review and any amendments made. This process aligns with the requirements set out in Section 9 of the Bí Cineálta procedures. This policy will be reviewed annually or as required

Signed: _____ kann Jane Gallraith _____   Date: 17-6-2025

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____ Ann Powell _____   Date: 17. 6 2025

Principal)

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Section 3: Review & Follow-Up
- Review Date(s): _____
- Has the Bullying Behaviour Ceased? (Yes/No) _____
- Student's Views on Outcome:

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  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

- Parent's Views on Outcome:

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

- Date Bullying Behaviour Ceased (if applicable): _____

Section 4: Additional Actions & Support
- Engagement with External Services/Supports (if applicable):

  _____

- If a SSF (Student Support File) exists for a pupil involved, has a copy of this record been placed in their support file? (Yes/No) _____

If a SSP (Student Support Plan) exists has it been updated to incorporate response strategies and associated supports? (Yes/No)
_____Recorded by: _____

Date: _____

Reviewed by: _____Date: _____