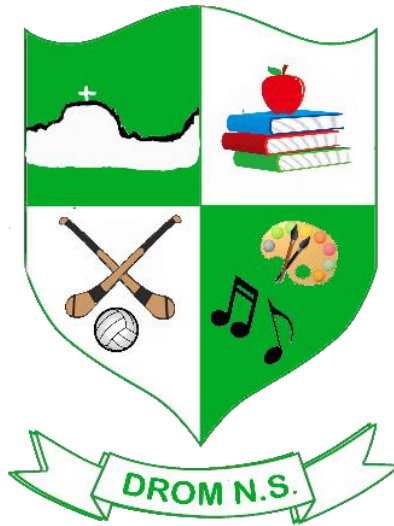


DROM NATIONAL SCHOOL
SCHOOL POLICY PLANNING



BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY

A POLICY TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

BÍ CINEÁLTA POLICY TO PREVENT AND ADDRESS BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

The Board of Management of Drom National School 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.

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 each person 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.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures.

Each school is required to develop and implement a *Bí Cineálta* policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

BEHAVIOUR THAT IS NOT BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

The BÍ Cineálta procedures clarify that not all negative interactions between pupils are bullying. In order to be classed as bullying, behaviour must be:

- Targeted at an individual or group,
- Intended to cause harm (physical, emotional or social),
- Repeated, and
- Involve a power imbalance between those involved.

The following are examples of behaviour that are not bullying:

- One-off incidents such as a single instance of teasing, an argument, or name-calling.
- Mutual conflict where both students are equally involved in a disagreement or falling out, with no imbalance of power.
- Rough play where there is no intent to harm and all parties are willingly engaged.
- Developmentally typical behaviour in younger children who may not yet have the ability to understand social boundaries or the impact of their actions.

These behaviours may still be inappropriate and require attention under the school's Code of Behaviour, but they do not meet the definition of bullying under the anti-bullying policy unless they are sustained, targeted, and harmful over time.

Note on Special Educational Needs (SEN):

In cases involving students with special educational needs, behaviours that may initially appear as bullying will be carefully assessed. Some behaviours may arise from difficulties with social communication, understanding personal space, or impulse control. These do not automatically constitute bullying unless they are targeted, harmful, repeated, and involve a power imbalance. In such cases, interventions will focus on education, support, and understanding, consistent with each pupil's learning profile and needs.

BULLYING BEHAVIOUR OCCURRING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL SETTING

In accordance with BÍ Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour (2024), the Board of Management of Drom National School recognises that bullying behaviour may originate or take place wholly outside of the school environment and outside of school time — including in community settings or online platforms.

The school is not responsible for investigating or managing incidents of bullying that occur entirely outside of school grounds and outside of school-supervised activities.

However, where it is evident that bullying behaviour occurring outside the school is having a negative impact on a student's wellbeing or participation in school life, the school will take appropriate steps to support the student concerned. These steps may include:

- Providing emotional or pastoral support within the school,
- Communicating with the student's parents or guardians, and
- Implementing school-based interventions where necessary to safeguard the student's school experience.

Where bullying behaviour that originates outside of school continues into the school environment — for example, through in-school exclusion, intimidation, verbal abuse or digital messages accessed during school time — the school has a clear responsibility to respond in accordance with this policy.

In such cases, the behaviour will be treated as bullying within the school context, and all procedures for

investigation, recording and response will apply as outlined in this policy.

The school's primary concern is to uphold a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. Actions taken by the school will be proportionate, appropriate to its duty of care, and in line with national policy and legal obligations.

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	30th May 2025	On 30th May 2025, Drom National School held a dedicated staff consultation session to support engagement with the Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour (2024). This session was facilitated in line with the Department of Education's provision for a half-day school closure during the 2024/2025 academic year to allow staff time to review and engage with the updated national procedures. gov.ie – Resources to Support Engagement with School Staff <u>Purpose of the Session</u> The purpose of this structured engagement was to: ▪ Ensure that all school staff understand the key principles of the Bí Cineálta procedures, ▪ Clarify staff responsibilities in the prevention and intervention of bullying behaviour, ▪ Reflect on current practices and how they align with the revised national expectations. <u>Structure and Resources Used</u> The session was guided by the Department's recommended materials, covering: ▪ Understanding bullying behaviour – definitions, indicators, and types of bullying, ▪ Creating a positive school culture – prevention strategies, student voice, and school climate, ▪ Addressing bullying – intervention steps, recording, and oversight mechanisms. Staff worked through these areas using the published Departmental slides and facilitator notes to ensure clarity and shared understanding across all roles in the school. <u>Outcomes</u> Staff used this opportunity to: ▪ Identify effective existing practices in the school, ▪ Discuss areas requiring refinement or reinforcement, ▪ Review the school's draft anti-bullying policy to ensure it reflects both the procedures and the lived experience within our school.
Students	April 2025	In April 2025, pupils from Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Class at Drom National School participated in an anonymous online survey to give feedback on their experiences of school life and bullying behaviour. The survey was completed during class time under staff supervision, using school devices.

		The survey was structured around the Bí Cineálta framework and covered the following themes: ▪ Feelings of safety and happiness in school ▪ Understanding of bullying behaviour ▪ Personal experiences or observations of bullying ▪ Awareness of school support structures ▪ Identification of any areas in school where pupils feel unsafe A total of 18 valid responses were collected. <u>Summary of Key Findings</u> ▪ School Climate: The majority of pupils indicated that they feel happy and safe in school and in their classrooms. ▪ Bullying Awareness: Nearly all pupils reported that they know what bullying is and have learned about it in school, particularly through SPHE and other classroom-based discussions. ▪ Incidents of Bullying: Most students reported that they are not currently experiencing bullying. A small number mentioned instances of being left out, though these were not described as repeated or targeted. ▪ Witnessing Bullying: The majority of students stated that they had not witnessed bullying recently. No major concerns were raised in open responses. ▪ Feeling Unsafe: Very few students reported feeling unsafe in any specific area of the school. Where responses were given, they were vague (e.g. "nowhere" or "I don't"), suggesting that most pupils feel secure on the school premises and when travelling to and from school. ▪ Support Structures: Almost all respondents said they would feel comfortable talking to a trusted adult in the school if they were worried or experiencing bullying. <u>Learning and Action Points</u> ▪ Positive School Culture: The responses reflect a strong culture of safety, trust, and respect among pupils and staff. ▪ Continued Reinforcement: Some pupils mentioned occasional unkind behaviour or exclusion, highlighting the need for continued attention to inclusive play and respectful interactions, especially during unstructured times like break and lunchtime. ▪ SPHE Curriculum: The school's structured approach to teaching about bullying through the SPHE curriculum is effective and well-received by pupils. ▪ Supervision Review: These findings will help inform any adjustments to supervision practices to ensure visibility and support in all areas of the school.
Parents	April 2025	In April 2025, all parents and guardians of students enrolled at Drom National School were invited to participate in an anonymous online survey. The survey link was distributed via the school's digital communication platform and remained open for responses for one week. The survey was aligned with the Bí Cineálta framework and focused on: ▪ Perceptions of student safety and wellbeing ▪ Awareness of the school's anti-bullying policy ▪ Confidence in school procedures and response ▪ Experience of bullying (direct or observed) ▪ Communication and access to support A total of 19 responses were received. <u>Summary of Key Findings</u> ▪ Student Safety and Support: 100% of respondents said that their child feels

		safe in school. All respondents also indicated that their child would feel comfortable talking to a member of staff if they had a concern about bullying. ▪ Policy Awareness: The majority of parents reported that they have seen the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and know how to access it. A small number indicated a lack of familiarity, suggesting scope for greater visibility of the policy on school platforms. ▪ Experience of Bullying: A very small number of respondents (1 out of 19) reported that their child had experienced bullying behaviour in school. In that instance, the parent indicated they were satisfied with how the issue was dealt with by the school. ▪ Confidence in School Response: All parents expressed confidence that the school is committed to preventing and responding to bullying behaviour. <u>Additional Comments</u> ▪ Qualitative responses suggested: ▪ The importance of maintaining strong teacher-pupil relationships. ▪ Support for the school's mobile phone restrictions. ▪ A desire for continued attention to pupil voice and inclusive play. <u>Learning and Next Steps</u> ▪ Policy Visibility: Ensure the school's Anti-Bullying Policy is regularly promoted via newsletters and the school website to increase parent familiarity. ▪ Communication and Reassurance: Continue to emphasise to parents that concerns are always welcome and will be responded to in line with the school's procedures. ▪ Reinforce Positive Practices: The survey confirms strong parental confidence in the school's culture and approach. This will be maintained through ongoing staff awareness, supervision, and respectful communication.
Board of Management	June 2025	<u>Board of Management Engagement and Policy Ratification</u> The Board of Management of Drom National School was formally briefed on the Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour during its scheduled meeting on _____ At this meeting: ▪ The revised Anti-Bullying Policy, updated to reflect the requirements of the new procedures, was presented and reviewed. ▪ The Board discussed the consultation process undertaken with students, parents, and staff. ▪ The policy was formally ratified in line with the Board's governance responsibilities. This policy now forms part of the school's core policies and will be reviewed annually or as required.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	Not applicable	Not applicable
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed: Not applicable		

SECTION B: PREVENTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

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 which this school will use to prevent all forms of bullying behaviour, we come from the context of our Catholic ethos where inclusivity permeates the school in a real way.

This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a 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 the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian response. This 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, this school will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies.

Drom National School recognises that promoting wellbeing is central to the prevention of bullying. Guided by our commitment to each child's inherent dignity and formed by our Catholic ethos, we take a whole-school approach to fostering an environment where all members of the community feel safe, valued, and respected.

As outlined in the *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice*, our strategy spans four key areas:

- **Culture and Environment**
- **Curriculum**
- **Policy and Planning**
- **Relationships and Partnerships**

Culture and Environment

- A whole-school commitment to promoting kindness, empathy and inclusion is embedded in all aspects of school life. These values are consistently modelled by staff and explicitly taught and reinforced through daily practice.
- Friendship Week provides a dedicated opportunity to promote inclusive peer relationships, cooperation, and mutual respect across the school community.
- As part of the school's peer support initiatives, pupils in Third to Sixth Class are paired with pupils in Junior Infants to Second Class through a structured friendship programme designed to nurture positive cross-age relationships and a sense of belonging.
- Pupils in Fifth and Sixth Class facilitate the teaching of cooperative playground games to their younger peers during friendship sessions, supporting inclusive play and modelling pro-social behaviour.
- Visual displays, including posters and classroom materials promoting friendship, anti-bullying messages, and the school's core values, are prominently displayed throughout the school during Friendship Week and periodically throughout the year.
- A yard zoning system is in place to ensure that each class has clearly designated play areas. Age-appropriate play equipment is provided to promote engagement in a wide variety of inclusive, safe, and active play opportunities.
- Staff implement a consistent and clearly communicated reward and sanction system, aligned with the school's Code of Behaviour, to promote fairness and reinforce positive behavioural expectations.
- Classroom behaviour agreements are co-constructed with pupils, displayed prominently in each room,

and revisited regularly to reinforce understanding and ownership.

- 'Worry Boxes' are available in each classroom as a confidential means for pupils to report concerns. These are monitored weekly by the class teacher, with appropriate follow-up conducted in line with school procedures.
- All staff take responsibility for maintaining a respectful school environment by actively challenging inappropriate language, discriminatory remarks, or disrespectful interactions, and by consistently modelling respectful and inclusive behaviour.

Curriculum

The primary means through which Drom National School promotes pro-social behaviour and prevents bullying is through the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum. This is implemented on a whole-school basis and includes structured, progressive teaching of key wellbeing and relationship topics across all class levels.

- The SPHE (Social, Personal & Health Education) curriculum is used to deliver age-appropriate and explicit instruction on respect, empathy, inclusion, friendship, emotional regulation, and recognising and responding to bullying behaviour.
- Core national programmes such as Stay Safe, Walk Tall, and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) are embedded in classroom practice to support pupils in understanding personal safety, assertiveness, decision-making, and respectful relationships.
- Digital citizenship education is integrated into SPHE using evidence-informed resources from Webwise, Digiduck, and similar platforms to equip pupils with the skills needed to navigate online spaces respectfully and safely.
- The school participates in the Microsoft DreamSpace Ambassador Programme, which empowers senior pupils to become digital leaders and mentors. As part of this initiative, pupils receive training in digital safety and responsible technology use, and subsequently deliver peer-led digital citizenship lessons to younger classes.
- The school marks Safer Internet Day annually through whole-school lessons, poster competitions, class-based discussions, and activities facilitated by the DreamSpace Ambassadors.
- A variety of creative methodologies are used to deepen engagement and reinforce anti-bullying messages, including role-play, storytelling, visual arts, cooperative learning, and group discussion.
- Structured wellbeing programmes such as Weaving Wellbeing are used to support emotional literacy, resilience, and positive mental health within the classroom setting.
- Key anti-bullying and inclusion messages are reinforced through cross-curricular integration, particularly in English, Visual Arts, Drama, and SESE, where themes of respect, identity, and community are explored.

Policy and Planning

Drom National School ensures that the prevention of bullying is embedded within the wider context of school policies, planning, and review processes. A whole-school approach is maintained through consistent implementation of key policies and procedures that reinforce respectful behaviour, inclusion, and pupil wellbeing.

- The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is developed in accordance with the BÍ Cineálta: Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, and is reviewed annually by the Board of Management.
- A clear Code of Behaviour, in line with national guidelines, promotes positive conduct and respectful relationships across the school community.
- The Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment address bullying as a child protection concern and outline school-wide measures to prevent harm to pupils.
- A robust Supervision Policy ensures that pupils are appropriately monitored during yard time, transitions, and other unstructured periods, reducing the risk of undetected bullying behaviour.
- The school operates a Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy to limit opportunities for cyberbullying and minimise distractions to learning.
- The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) establishes clear expectations for the safe and respectful use of digital

technologies and is reviewed regularly with input from pupils and parents.

- The SPHE Plan outlines how curricular provision—through Stay Safe, Walk Tall, RSE, and wellbeing programmes—is used to build pupils' personal and social skills and resilience.
- The Communication Policy ensures structured and timely engagement with parents and guardians on pupil wellbeing, behavioural concerns, and school initiatives.
- A Data Protection Policy ensures all records, including bullying reports and follow-up documentation, are maintained confidentially and in compliance with GDPR.
- The Critical Incident Management Plan supports the school in responding effectively to serious incidents, including cases of bullying that escalate or cause trauma.
- The Attendance Strategy is designed to promote consistent pupil engagement and includes monitoring for patterns that may indicate bullying-related school avoidance.
- The Special Educational Needs Policy ensures that pupils with additional needs are supported and protected from vulnerability to bullying through inclusive planning and staff collaboration.

Relationships and Partnerships

Drom National School recognises that strong relationships and collaborative partnerships are essential in fostering a safe and inclusive school environment. The following strategies support the development of positive relationships among pupils, staff, families, and the wider community:

- The Friendship Buddy system supports meaningful cross-age relationships, promoting inclusion and a strong sense of belonging among younger pupils.
- The school maintains regular communication with parents and guardians, including through termly newsletters, the Databiz platform, and periodic information sessions.
- Parent and pupil surveys are conducted to gather feedback on school climate, relationships, and bullying prevention practices. These findings inform ongoing school planning and review.
- Teachers maintain proactive and supportive relationships with parents, enabling early identification and response to social, emotional, or behavioural concerns.
- The Special Education Teacher (SET) works in collaboration with class teachers to support pupils with additional needs, promoting inclusion and reducing any risk of marginalisation or social isolation.
- The school engages with the Garda Schools Programme and invites guest speakers to deliver online safety talks every two years. These are held either within the school or in collaboration with other parish schools, and may be extended as community-wide events involving pupils, parents, staff, and local residents.
- Pupil voice is encouraged through classroom dialogue, feedback from buddy activities, and opportunities to contribute to themed weeks and wellbeing initiatives.
- A strong culture of pastoral care underpins all relationships in the school, ensuring that pupils feel known, safe, and supported by trusted adults.
- The school implements a variety of themed weeks (e.g. Friendship Week, Internet Safety Week) to reinforce messages of inclusion, respect, and empathy in a focused and engaging way.
- Where additional support is required, the school liaises with external agencies, such as NEPS, HSE, and NCSE, to provide appropriate interventions that support pupils' wellbeing and positive peer interactions.

Preventing and Addressing Specific Types of Bullying Behaviour

Drom National School is committed to preventing and addressing all forms of bullying behaviour. The school actively promotes inclusion, empathy, and mutual respect across all areas of school life. In line with the Bí Cineálta procedures, the school implements the following strategies to respond to and prevent specific types of bullying:

Cyberbullying

- Pupils receive regular, age-appropriate digital citizenship education through the SPHE curriculum using resources such as Webwise and Digiduck.
- The school marks Safer Internet Day with activities including lessons, poster competitions, and peer-led learning by pupils involved in the Microsoft DreamSpace Ambassador Programme.

- A Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy and an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) are in place to guide responsible use of digital technologies in school.
- Online safety is reinforced through biennial guest speaker sessions, sometimes in collaboration with other parish schools, and through home-school communication.
- Pupils are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult about any online issues, and cyberbullying concerns that affect school life are addressed in accordance with school policy.

Homophobic Bullying

- Pupils are taught to respect individual identity and family diversity through inclusive approaches in the SPHE and RSE curriculum.
- Staff model and reinforce inclusive language and behaviour at all times and challenge any use of derogatory terms related to gender or sexual identity.
- Anti-bullying and inclusion lessons explicitly promote respect for all people, regardless of perceived difference.
- The school fosters an atmosphere where every pupil feels safe, respected, and included.

Racist Bullying

- Respect for cultural diversity and difference is promoted through the SPHE curriculum and supported by inclusive resources and literature across subjects.
- Discriminatory language or behaviour is not tolerated, and all incidents are addressed promptly and appropriately.
- Pupils are taught about the importance of equality, human rights, and empathy, fostering a culture of mutual respect and fairness.

Sexist Bullying

- Staff actively promote gender equality and ensure that all pupils are given equal encouragement and access to learning opportunities, leadership roles, and participation in sport and other school activities.
- Stereotypes and gender-based assumptions are challenged in teaching and classroom discussion.
- School celebrations and reward systems are inclusive of both boys and girls, recognising all forms of achievement and effort.

Sexual Harassment

- Respectful behaviour and personal boundaries are explicitly taught through Stay Safe, RSE, and SPHE lessons.
- Staff consistently challenge any inappropriate comments or behaviours and respond in a clear, age-appropriate manner.
- Pupils are encouraged to report anything that makes them feel uncomfortable. They are regularly reminded that their concerns will be taken seriously and handled sensitively.
- Respectful physical interactions and body autonomy are key messages integrated into everyday school practice.

These targeted strategies are implemented alongside the school's whole-school anti-bullying measures and are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective, age-appropriate, and in line with current best practice.

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):

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):

- Drom National School implements structured supervision and monitoring strategies to actively prevent and address bullying behaviour. These measures support a safe, inclusive and well-managed learning environment:
- Supervision Rota: A clearly defined supervision rota ensures active staff presence during all unstructured times, including yard breaks, arrival, dismissal and transitions. Supervision responsibilities are communicated to all staff and reviewed regularly.
- Zoned Yard Areas: The school yard is divided into distinct zones for each class group to support structured, inclusive play and minimise conflict or overcrowding. Zones are timetabled and reviewed termly.
- Teacher-Led Transitions: Pupils are accompanied to and from the yard by their class teacher, ensuring safe and orderly movement and reducing unsupervised interaction.
- Active Staff Engagement: Supervising teachers maintain high visibility and actively engage with pupils to encourage positive behaviour and discourage exclusion or negative interactions.
- Medical and Emergency Protocols: In the event of an injury or emergency during yard time, a senior pupil is sent to the staffroom to request immediate assistance. This ensures uninterrupted supervision of all children. The school has a clear medical emergency plan to ensure that no child is ever left unsupervised.
- 'Worry Boxes': Each classroom includes a worry or concern box, checked weekly by the class teacher, allowing pupils to confidentially report concerns that may otherwise go unnoticed.
- Monitoring of Online Activity: School computers are protected by a high-level internet filtering system, which blocks access to inappropriate websites, social media platforms, and unsafe online content. This filtering is managed centrally in line with Department of Education guidelines.
- Acceptable Use and Mobile Phone Policies: The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and Mobile Phone Policy ensure that all digital devices are used responsibly. These policies are communicated clearly to pupils and parents.
- Staff Communication: Regular informal and formal staff discussions ensure that supervision observations and any concerns are shared promptly to allow early intervention.
- Posters and Visual Messaging: Anti-bullying, kindness, and friendship-themed posters are displayed in classrooms and communal areas to reinforce key values and behavioural expectations.
- Digital Citizenship Education: Lessons on responsible online behaviour are delivered through the SPHE curriculum, further supported by participation in Safer Internet Day and peer-led initiatives.
- Supervised Transitions: Arrival, dismissal, and class-to-class movement are supervised to maintain pupil safety and minimise the opportunity for unmonitored behaviour.

These structured and proactive measures support the school's overall strategy to ensure that 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:

- Mainstream class teachers and Special Education Teacher (where appropriate).

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured
- seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- consider the age and ability of those involved
- listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- take action in a timely manner
- inform parents of those involved

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):

Drom National School is committed to a restorative, supportive, and structured approach when addressing bullying behaviour. The primary aim is to stop the bullying and restore, as far as practicable, relationships between the pupils involved. The following three-stage process is implemented in line with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools:

Stage 1: Determining Whether Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

Definition

Bullying is defined in Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and the 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 may be physical, social, or emotional. Bullying behaviour is typically repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships. A full definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Initial Reporting

Where bullying behaviour is suspected, the concern should be reported to the class teacher. All reports are taken seriously and followed up in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

Assessing the Report

To determine whether the behaviour constitutes bullying, the following questions are considered:

- Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group?
- Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social, or emotional harm?
- Is the behaviour repeated, or likely to be repeated?

If the answer to all three is yes, the behaviour is considered bullying and the school's anti-bullying procedures will be applied.

Note: A single incident (e.g. an online post) may constitute bullying behaviour if it is likely to be widely or repeatedly shared.

If any answer is no, the behaviour will be addressed under the school's Code of Behaviour.

Investigation Process

The school's aim in investigating a report of suspected bullying behaviour is to establish the facts in a fair, sensitive, and supportive manner, ensuring that the wellbeing of all pupils remains central to the process.

The following investigative steps will be taken, in accordance with Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures:

- The student reported to be experiencing bullying behaviour will be met individually by the class teacher or designated staff member. This meeting provides an opportunity to:
 - Listen to the pupil's account of what has occurred
 - Reassure the pupil that their concern is being taken seriously
 - Understand the pupil's preferences or concerns in relation to next steps
- Any student(s) alleged to have engaged in bullying behaviour will also be met individually. These conversations are conducted with care and respect, allowing all pupils the opportunity to share their perspective.
- If a group of pupils is reported to be involved in bullying behaviour, each pupil will first be spoken to individually by the investigating teacher. Following these individual conversations, the pupils displaying the alleged bullying behaviour will be met as a group, in line with Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

This group meeting enables pupils to clarify their accounts, hear one another's perspectives, and reflect on the impact of their actions.

The student who experienced the bullying behaviour is not required to be present at this group meeting. Any subsequent joint or restorative meeting involving this student will only take place if it is deemed appropriate and with the pupil's full agreement.

Where appropriate, pupils may be invited to write an account of what happened to support the accuracy and clarity of the investigation.

The teacher will consider:

- What occurred
- Where and when the behaviour happened
- Why it may have occurred
- The developmental age, emotional readiness, and individual needs of each pupil involved.

Each pupil involved in the investigation will be offered appropriate support in the days and weeks that follow, regardless of the outcome of the assessment.

Stage 2: Addressing Confirmed Bullying Behaviour

Where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the school's response is guided by the principles and actions outlined in Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.

The goal of this stage is to:

- Stop the bullying behaviour
- Support all students involved

- Restore relationships where possible
- Record the actions taken to address the behaviour

The following steps are taken:

1. **Parental Engagement:** Parents/guardians of both the student who experienced the bullying behaviour and the student(s) who engaged in the behaviour are contacted and consulted at an early stage. While students may request that no action be taken or that their parents not be informed, the school has a duty of care to act in the best interest of all pupils.
Therefore: The school cannot agree to withhold action in cases where bullying has occurred. Parents will be informed with discretion and sensitivity, and students will be reassured that they will be supported throughout the process.
2. **Listening to the Student Affected:** The views of the student experiencing the bullying behaviour are sought in determining the most appropriate response. This includes identifying the kind of support they feel would be helpful and whether they would be open to restorative approaches, if appropriate.
3. **Recording the Behaviour:** In accordance with the Bí Cineálta procedures: A written record is maintained which includes:
 - The form and type of bullying behaviour, using the categorisations outlined in Section 2.5 and 2.7 of the procedures (see pages 20–24).
 - The location and timing of incidents, including whether they occurred online or offline.
 - The dates of meetings with pupils and parents, and the actions and supports agreed.
 This record is shared with the school Principal.
4. **Child Protection:** If the bullying behaviour gives rise to a child protection concern, the matter will be dealt with without delay, in line with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. The school's Designated Liaison Person (DLP) will be informed and take appropriate steps in accordance with the Department of Education's guidelines.

This structured, partnership-based approach ensures that bullying is addressed promptly and appropriately while protecting the rights and wellbeing of all pupils involved.

Stage 3: Reviewing Progress and Follow-Up

Following the initial intervention, a follow-up engagement will take place no later than 20 school days after the determination that bullying behaviour has occurred. This is to assess whether the issue has been resolved and to ensure continued support for all students involved.

The teacher responsible for managing the case will:

- Meet with the student(s) involved and their parents/guardians
- Review whether the bullying behaviour has ceased
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the actions and supports implemented
- Document the views of the students and their parents/guardians regarding progress and any remaining concerns
- Identify and note any ongoing supports or supervision needed to maintain positive relationships and wellbeing

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased:

- The teacher will review and adapt the response strategies, in consultation with the students and their parents/guardians
- A new timeframe for further follow-up will be agreed
- The case will continue to be monitored, and supports will remain in place

If a student continues to engage in bullying behaviour, and all support-based interventions have been exhausted, the matter may be escalated and addressed through the school's Code of Behaviour. Where appropriate, this may include disciplinary sanctions, consistent with the school's behaviour policy.

Where external agencies such as NEPS (National Educational Psychological Service) or NCSE (National Council for Special Education) have been engaged to support the student(s), this involvement is noted and maintained as part of the case record.

If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with the school's handling of the bullying case, they may raise their concern through the school's Complaints Procedure, available on the school website or from the school office.

If a parent/guardian remains dissatisfied after this process, they may contact the Ombudsman for Children, who can review whether the school's actions have negatively affected the student.

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):

Supporting Students Who Experience, Witness or Display Bullying Behaviour

(In line with Chapter 6.5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures)

From National School is committed to supporting the wellbeing and development of all pupils affected by bullying, whether they have experienced, witnessed, or engaged in such behaviour. Our approach is restorative, solution-focused, and adapted to the needs of each individual case.

While every situation is addressed on a case-by-case basis, the school may use the following approaches:

1. **Support for Students Who Experience Bullying Behaviour:** Students who report or are identified as experiencing bullying will be checked in with regularly by their class teacher or a designated support teacher. Teachers will take time to listen carefully to the student's concerns and ensure that they feel safe and supported. Ongoing monitoring of relationships and interactions will take place discreetly in the classroom and yard.

Where appropriate, resources such as those from NEPS, Oide, or programmes like FUSE (from DCU Anti-Bullying Centre) and Webwise will be used to support emotional wellbeing, build confidence, and foster resilience.

If needed, additional curricular support through SPHE, Weaving Wellbeing, or Stay Safe will be provided to reinforce personal safety and self-esteem.

Parents/guardians will be engaged, as appropriate, to promote a partnership approach and maintain consistent support between home and school.

2. **Support for Students Who Witness Bullying:** Students who witness bullying behaviour are supported

to understand their role as active bystanders and are encouraged to speak up safely and seek help when needed.

SPHE lessons and school-wide initiatives (e.g. Friendship Week) reinforce how bystanders can make a positive difference.

The importance of reporting concerns and showing empathy is discussed in class and through school campaigns (e.g. Safer Internet Day).

Where appropriate, individual check-ins or classroom discussions may be used to help pupils process what they observed.

3. **Support for Students Who Display Bullying Behaviour:** Students who engage in bullying behaviour are supported to reflect on their actions and the impact on others.

Teachers work with these students to promote empathy, responsibility, and positive behavioural change, rather than simply applying consequences.

Structured conversations using restorative practices (e.g. 'how did your actions affect others?') may be used where appropriate and with agreement from all parties.

Social and emotional learning strategies, including resources from Walk Tall, Weaving Wellbeing, and NEPS materials, may be used to promote self-awareness and self-regulation.

Parents/guardians will be informed and engaged in a constructive dialogue to promote change and consistency between school and home.

4. **Staff and School-Level Supports:** Teachers will be encouraged to participate in Oide training on:

- Restorative Practices
- Anti-Bullying Strategies
- Supporting Students with Emotional and Behavioural Needs

School policies are reviewed in light of new training, case outcomes, and evolving pupil needs.

The school's SEN teacher may assist in developing tailored supports for students with additional learning or emotional needs.

Resources to guide this work are drawn from:

- Oide.ie – Behaviour, Wellbeing and Inclusion resources
- NEPS – Supporting students affected by bullying
- Webwise – Anti-cyberbullying and Digital Citizenship
- FUSE Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme (DCU)

This approach ensures that the needs of all students are addressed in a supportive, educational, and non-judgemental manner, and that every opportunity is used to promote empathy, understanding, and positive peer relationships.

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: Fr. Martin Murphy

(Chairperson of board of management)

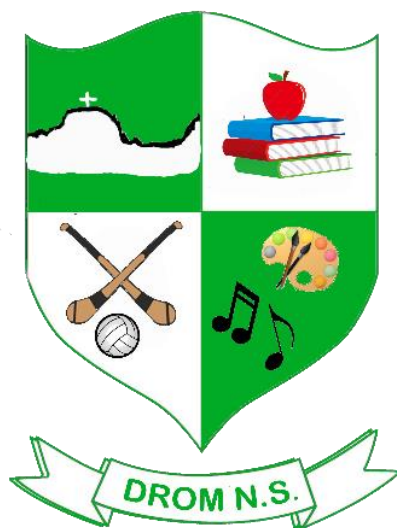
Date: 19th June 2025

Signed: Amadean Moore-Walsh

(Principal)

Date: 19th June 2025

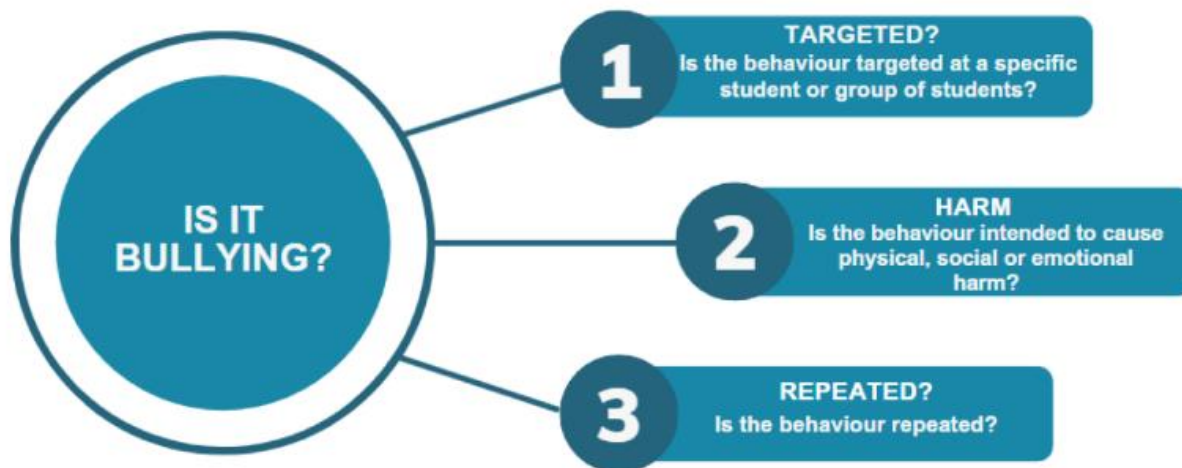
DROM NATIONAL SCHOOL
SCHOOL POLICY PLANNING



BÍ CINEÁLTA

POLICY

APPENDICES



If the answer to each of the questions is **Yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

If the answer to any of the questions is **No**, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

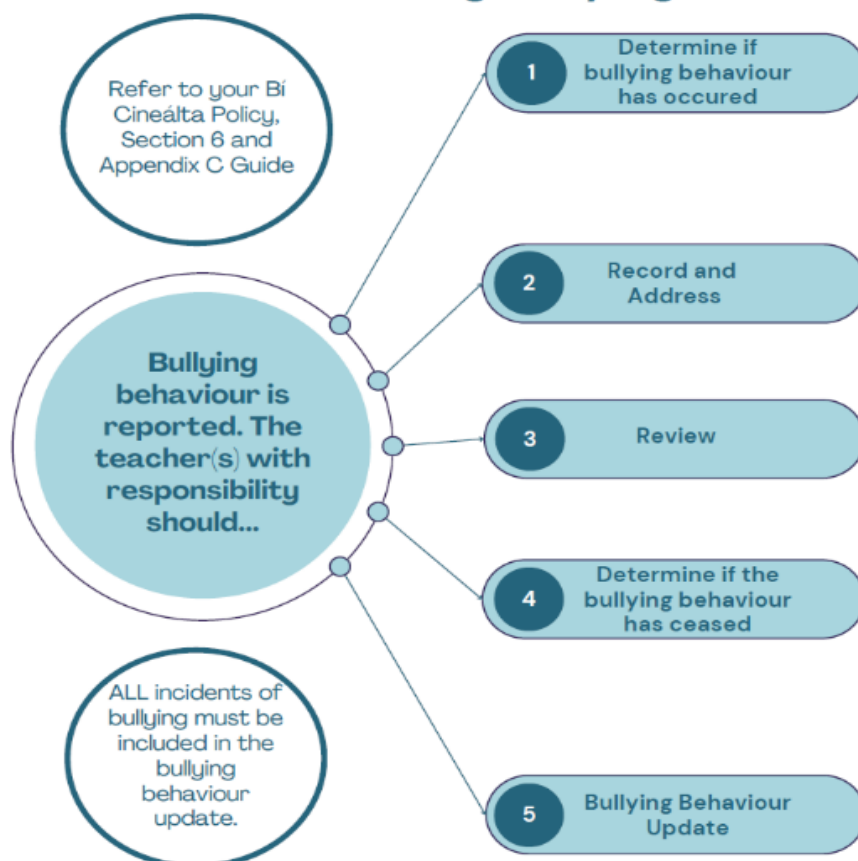


Oide

Tús leas an tScoil
Glacannail i measc Ceannair
Scolaire agus Múinteoirí

Supporting the Professional
Learning of School Leaders
and Teachers

Bí Cineálta: Addressing Bullying Behaviour



Teacher(s) investigate as per school policy. Record as per Section 6.5.

If the behaviour **IS NOT** bullying, deal with in line with your Code of Behaviour.

If the behaviour **IS BULLYING**, proceed to Step 2.

Record as per Bí Cineálta policy and Section 6.5, Bí Cineálta.

Inform parent(s) of parties involved at an early stage.

Complete agreed actions, as per your Bí Cineálta policy, monitor and evaluate.

No more than **20 school days after initial engagement**, review with student(s) and parent(s).

If bullying has ceased, continue to monitor.

If bullying has **not ceased**, review strategies, seek external support, if appropriate, and review within the agreed timeframe.

Principal must include all bullying behaviour in their update to the board.

Principal provides verbal update to the board.

Review policy, if needed.



Oide

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DROM NATIONAL SCHOOL
TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR



This template is only to be used when bullying behaviour has been identified, in line with the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

1. Date of initial engagement with pupil(s) and parent(s): _____

2. Initials of pupil who has experienced bullying behaviour and class group:

Initials: _____ Class: _____

3. Initials and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour:

Initials: _____ Class(es): _____

4. Source of Bullying Concern / Report (Tick relevant box(es))		5. Location of Incidents (Tick relevant box(es))	
Pupil concerned		Yard	
Other Pupil		Classroom	
Parent		Corridor	
Teacher		Toilets	
Other		Other (specify)	

6. Initials of person(s) who reported the bullying concern and/or relationship to the pupil(s):

7. Dates of when the bullying behaviour occurred:

8. Form of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box/boxes):

Physical Bullying Behaviour		Exclusion Bullying Behaviour	
Verbal Bullying Behaviour		Relational Bullying Behaviour	
Written Bullying Behaviour		Online Bullying Behaviour	
Extortion		Other (specify)	

9. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box/boxes):

Disablist Bullying Behaviour		Homophobic/Transphobic (LGBTQ+) Bullying Behaviour	
Exceptional Ability Bullying		Physical Appearance / Sexual Harassment	
Gender Identity Bullying		Racist Bullying Behaviour	
Sexist Bullying Behaviour / Sexual Harassment		Religious Identity Bullying Behaviour	
Poverty Bullying Behaviour		Other (specify)	

10. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact:

11. Views of pupil(s) and parent(s) regarding the actions to be taken:

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Date of review with pupil(s) and parent(s) (within 20 days)	
Has bullying behaviour ceased?	
Views of pupil(s) and parents in relation to this:	
If bullying behaviour has not ceased, set an agreed timeframe to meet again and review strategies:	
Engagement with external services or supports (if any):	

If bullying behaviour continues beyond the review timeframes, the school's Code of Behaviour is to be used.

Signed (Relevant Teacher):	
Date:	
Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal:	
Signed (Principal):	
Date:	



DROM NATIONAL SCHOOL

TEMPLATE FOR THE REPORT TO THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEETING ON BULLYING BEHAVIOUR



This form is to be completed by the Principal and presented at each ordinary meeting of the Board of Management, in accordance with Appendix D of the BÍ Cineálta Procedures. It contains anonymised information regarding bullying incidents and the school's actions to address and prevent bullying behaviour.

SUMMARY STATISTICS

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:	
Date of this report:	

1. Trends and patterns identified (e.g. form, type, location, time of bullying behaviour):

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2. Strategies used to address specific incidents:

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3. Whole-school strategies used to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

4. Any serious incidents that had a significant adverse impact on a student:

5. Any reports from parents that a student has left the school due to bullying:

6. Any additional support required from the Board of Management:

7. Whether the anti-bullying policy requires urgent review prior to the annual review:

Signed: _____ (Principal)

Date: _____