

# Scoil Naomh Pío

## Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Pío 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. Ireland ratified the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>1</sup> in September 1992. In doing this we committed to promote, protect and fulfil the rights of children. Bullying is a children's rights issue. Bullying interferes with the following rights of the child:

- The right to freedom of expression (Article 13)
- The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)
- The right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 15)
- The right to privacy (Article 16)
- The right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect (Article 19)
- The right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health (Article 24)
- The right to education (Article 28)
- The right to enjoy their own culture, religion or language (Article 30)

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 targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm.
- The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature and can have lasting effects on the the child experiencing the behaviour.
- Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.
- It is behaviour which is deliberate in nature and is unwanted. It is not accidental or reckless behaviour .

The harm can be :

- Physical ( eg: personal injury, damage to or loss of property)
  - Social: ( eg: withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion)
  - Emotional: (eg: low self esteem, depression, anxiety)
- A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:

- If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour, but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying, but , importantly, must be addressed under the school 's code of behaviour.
- Some students with special educational needs, may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned, but in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they cannot control.
- Disagreement between students is not considered bullying **unless** it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

## **Types of Bullying:**

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include directing bullying at someone focused on the following: disability, exceptional ability, gender identity, LGBTQ+ , physical appearance, racism, poverty status, religious identity, sexism and sexual harassment. This is not an exhaustive list.

Bullying can be : Direct:

- Physical: pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. Physical assault. Destruction of personal property.
- Verbal: continual name calling which insults, humiliates the student – this may refer to physical appearance, size, clothes, gender, accent, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.
- Written: Writing insulting remarks in public places, passing notes or drawings about the student.
- Extortion: where something is obtained through force or threats

Bullying can be :Indirect:

- Exclusion: where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.
- Relational: Where a student's attempts to form friendships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined, threats, non-verbal gesturing, malicious gossip, spreading rumours, silent treatment and manipulation of friend groups etc can all form relational bullying for a student.

## **Online bullying behaviour:**

Cyber bullying is carried out via text, direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, e-mail, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This can include:

- Sending or sharing of insulting and offensive or intimidating messages or images via online means as mentioned above.
- Posting information which is personal, private or sensitive without consent.
- Making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students.
- Exclude/disrupt access to a student on purpose on online chat groups/access to accounts/from an online game.

## 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	August 2024	Stage 1: Staff Meeting – We did Kiva training as part of thinking of Bí Cineálta procedures. We created a Kiva team who did a training day separately. Kiva lessons would be completed over the school year. We completed our half day closure as a staff for Bí Cineálta. In March we created a child friendly policy of Bí Cineálta.
	February/March 2025	Sharing of draft policy with staff to discuss / consult and make any amendments
Students	October 2024	In October :Students were given a questionnaire by Kiva to share their thoughts on bullying and in May 2025 they will repeat the survey and we can compare the results after teaching the Kiva program.
	March 2025	In March 2025 the pupils did a poster competition to help create a child friendly Bí Cineálta policy.
Parents	August 2024	Kiva was launched and booklets were handed out to parents.
	October - February 2024	Parents were sent an email outlining the Bí Cineálta and the work being done by staff.
	March 2025	Feedback sought from parents and children in formation of a Child Friendly Anti Bullying policy. Policy created with this information and sent out to parents/children to review together with information on same in terms of how to contact the school if needed. Attention drawn to our policy and Child Friendly policy, resources and initiative of Kiva. Bi Cinealta policy draft shared with parent body and parent association for feedback.
Board of Management	November to January 2024/ 2025	Review new policy draft – leading to consultation and final ratification after amendments made where necessary.
Date policy was approved:		

Date policy was last reviewed:



## Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate

### **Culture and Environment:** We strive to :

- Create a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and a consistent approach to addressing bullying behaviour.
- Involve parents as active partners in fostering an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated.
- Support the idea that our school is a telling environment.
- Promote the concept of a trusted adult – stay safe linkage – who to tell.
- Create safe spaces in our school building and yards – visibility
- Incorporate artwork and signs to promote our school values – creation of a school charter promoting rights – equality, inclusion and respect.
- Encourage a sense of belonging with ownership over their own space through art and creativity.
- Create a positive school culture and climate which-
  - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
  - encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
  - promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

### Ways in which we work to achieve these goals are as follows:

- Staff are briefed on the uniform approach we must take to handle all reports of bullying – this is distributed to staff and a copy is displayed on the Staff Room notice board for ease of access also.
- Anti Bullying week activities such as Random acts of Kindness homework, Poster making, slogan making, etc
- Playground helpers – students in higher classes volunteer to support younger classes on yard to help with games and positive interactions. Minders at lunchtime also.
- Child Friendly Cinealtas Policy was formed with pupil and parent input and is distributed to parents, children and staff to discuss. This policy outlines various ways to tell.
- Parents receive information at times regarding useful information on Anti Bullying.
- Kiva lessons focusing on positive behaviour form part of curricular content in all classes.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils.
- Class and School Charter development as well as notice board to promote kindness and build responsibility amongst pupils.

[This school uses the KiVa Anti Bullying Programme as its primary mechanism for](#)

preventing bullying. KiVa is an anti-bullying programme that has been developed in the University of Turku, Finland, with funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture. This school has been trained in the KiVa anti bullying programme by Archways, who are licenced to deliver the KiVa programme to schools in Ireland. As a KiVa school, we use several universal actions as part of a whole school, participatory approach, with a focus on preventing bullying . All school staff (including admin and auxiliary staff) have been trained in the KiVa Anti Bullying Programme and the KiVa screening process for bullying. KiVa utilises a variety of strategies to prevent bullying behaviour, listed below.

#### 1. Staff meeting:

Each year, a staff meeting is held at the beginning of the school year to ensure that everyone working at the school knows that we are a KiVa school. At the staff meeting, we reiterate what this means in practice:

- ✓ Delivering KiVa lessons to specific classes
- ✓ Having a KiVa team to deal with cases of bullying
- ✓ Hanging posters on walls and wearing high-visibility vests

#### 2. KiVa Kick Off event:

The KiVa kick-off event at the start of the school year is a whole school event (often during assembly) whereby the message that 'we are a KiVa school' is reiterated. It helps to create a participatory culture as students are involved through displays of art, music, poetry with an anti-bullying message.

#### 3. Posters and High Vis vests:

KiVa posters are displayed in a prominent place in the school (for example at the entrance and on corridors) to remind students that we are a KiVa school and do not tolerate bullying. School staff wear the high-visibility vests during yard duty to have visibility of the KiVa logo during break times. The logo is recognisable to all children and reminds them that school staff are there to ensure the safety of all students; along with reducing opportunities for bullying.

#### 4. Guide for Parents and Parents' meeting:

All parents are provided with a copy of the KiVa Parents' Guide (in electronic or printed format). The guide provides basic information about bullying and how parents can help to prevent it. The materials inform parents about how to discuss bullying at home and how

to deal with situations where they find out that their child has taken part in bullying. We also offer a parents' meeting to tell parents about the programme. At this meeting, parents also hear about how we approach instances of bullying when they occur.

#### 5. Delivery of KiVa lessons in classrooms:

We deliver KiVa lessons throughout the year to students. The lessons are a key part of the universal actions of the KiVa anti-bullying programme. Unit 1 Lessons are for students from 1<sup>st</sup>

to 3<sup>rd</sup> class and Unit 2 lessons are for students from 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class. The aim is to increase socio-emotional skills and to promote the children's awareness of the importance of the group and bystanders in bullying and stopping bullying. The lessons strive to inspire empathy towards bullied students and provide safe ways to help and support the students who are treated badly. Within the lessons, bullying prevention is based on inspiring a shared sense of responsibility and changes in the norms of the whole group.

Kiva lessons are delivered approximately once a month and involve discussions, group assignments and videos, as well as active exercises, involving games and assignments. See below the themes of each lesson.

##### **Unit 1**

1. Let's get to know each other!
2. Emotions
3. Our class – everyone is included
4. Difference is richness
5. We say NO to bullying
6. We will not join in on bullying
7. The bullied child needs your support
8. I will not be bullied
9. Literature lesson
10. The KiVa contract

##### **Unit 2**

1. Respect is for everyone
2. In a group
3. Recognise bullying
4. Hidden forms of bullying
5. Responsibly online
6. Consequences of bullying
7. The group and bullying
8. Communicating support
9. Stick up for yourself
10. KiVa school – let's do it together!

#### 6. KiVa Online Games:

Students play online games which allow them to practice and revise what has been learned in KiVa lessons.

## 7. Student and Staff Surveys:

Each year, students complete a KiVa survey online, which provides information to us about the prevalence of bullying in the school and what students feel the school is like. There is a separate survey for staff members with questions about implementing the programme. We use the survey responses to monitor the implementation of the programme and its impact.

All staff in the school have been trained in the Kiva anti-bullying programme, including the screening process for bullying . This means that all staff members can screen for potential bullying before passing suspected cases to the KiVa team. The KiVa Team are a group of 3-4 school staff who investigate cases of bullying. The KiVa programme includes documentation for each part of the screening and investigation process, which ensures clear documentation of suspected bullying cases.

## **Curriculum ( teaching and learning)**

### We strive to :

- Provide teaching and promote learning which is collaborative and respectful, fostering inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Display a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.

### Ways in which we work to achieve this:

- Teach SPHE and RSE content which fosters student's well-being and self confidence as well as promoting personal responsibility for their own behaviours and actions.
- Model respectful behaviour towards colleagues, pupils and visitors in our school environment.
- Curricular and Extra-curricular activities can help to develop a sense of self worth, working together, inclusion and respect.
- Students are given regular opportunities to work in small groups with peers, which can help build a sense of connection, belonging and empathy.
- Acknowledgment of our diverse school population – celebrating diversity and culture in our school through art, displays, photographs, international events.
- Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-
  - build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
  - explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Supports for staff;
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies); and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

## **Policy and planning**

The aim of Scoil Naomh Pío School's Bi Cinealta policy is

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with school management, teachers, pupils, parents/guardians.
- To promote a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To ensure appropriate supervision and monitoring measures through which all areas of school activity are kept under observation.
- To develop procedures for noting, investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
- To implement a programme of support for those affected by bullying behaviour and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
- To work with appropriate agencies in countering all forms of bullying and promoting anti bullying behaviour.



- The Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision policy, Special Education Policy and Code of Behaviour all support the implementation of the Bi Cinealta policy.
- Effective leadership is a key component with Principal, Deputy Principal, DLP, DDLP, and all middle management focused on supporting the implementation of this policy.

### **Relationships and Partnerships**

- Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such as our parents' association, our walking bus, our cycling bus, our various and multiple student committees and groups.
- Age and stage appropriate awareness initiatives that engage the student body in looking at their own behaviour – promoting acts of kindness and friendship, being an active help to others and looking at the causes of and impact of bullying during SPHE lessons.
- Conducting workshops and seminars for students, staff and parents to raise awareness of the impact of bullying.
- Encouraging peer mentoring and peer support
- Supporting active participation of students in school life and active participation of parents in school life also.
- Engaging parents and students in actively contributing to the formation of a Child Friendly Anti Bullying Policy to make them active participants in promotion of and discussion of useful ways to identify and reduce bullying behaviour and highlight procedure and how to deal with it if it does occur.



- Ensuring the library has material which reflects our diverse school population from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- Modelling of respectful behaviour by staff of all irrespective of sex.
- Ensuring all students have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of sex.
- Making clear that our school has a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment of any kind with enforceable policy - See Code of Behaviour.

## Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- The class teacher will oversee recording of bullying reports for students in their class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form on Aladdin
- The DDLP will follow up after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased.
- All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.
- Principal will inform Board of Management of incidences of Bullying.
- Deputy principal /SENCO
- Kiva Team is available to provide up to date information and supports if needed to assist class teacher in addressing concern

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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

The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established in

As we use the KiVa anti-bullying programme, members of the KiVa team address cases of bullying in cooperation

The KiVa programme materials include a specific form for each step of the process for documenting the cases. The

#### 1. Screening: Is this bullying?

All school staff have been trained in the KiVa programme and can screen for cases of bullying. Incidents that meet

#### 2. Discussion with the bullied student

One or two KiVa team members tackle each case of bullying. One KiVa team member meets with the bullied student to discuss what happened, how long the bullying has continued, and which students have taken part in the bullying. The conversation with the bullied student is also asked to identify classmates who may support them.

It is agreed that there will be a follow-up discussion to ensure that the bullying has stopped. After the discussion the

#### 3. Individual discussions with students who have taken part in bullying

Next, two KiVa team members have separate individual discussions with the students who have taken part in the bullying. They speak with each other between the discussions. The individual discussions are short (5–10 minutes). The focus of the discussions is confronting.

- The confronting method is direct and lets the student know that school staff are aware of the bullying and that they are expected to stop.
- The non confronting method involves creating a shared concern for the child who has been bullied. Students are encouraged to support the bullied student.

#### 4. Group discussion with the students who have taken part in bullying

A group meeting takes place with all the students who have taken part in the bullying as soon as possible after the initial discussion with the KiVa team. In this group discussion:

- What each student has committed to do is reviewed
- The date and time of a follow-up discussion with the same group is agreed on

#### 5. Discussion between the class teacher and a few classmates

Where bullying is investigated by the KiVa team, the class teacher arranges a situation where they can calmly discuss the bullying with the bullied student, or if none have been identified the teacher picks prosocial students with good social skills. The

#### 6. Follow up discussion with the bullied student

The follow-up discussion is held at the time and date agreed during the initial discussion. The purpose is to ensure

7. Follow up discussion with the student/ students who have taken part in bullying

Finally, there is a group meeting with the students who have taken part in bullying to check if they have done what

8. Informing parents

As recommend by the KiVa programme, cases of bullying are first tackled in discussions between the KiVa team and the students involved in bullying. We have informed all parents of the procedure for cases of bullying in advance, both through the parent's

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.

- Supporting Bullied pupils:
  - Ending the bullying behaviour,
  - Fostering respect for bullied pupils and all pupils,
  - Fostering greater empathy towards and support for bullied pupils,
  - Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes,
  - Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of bullying situations,
  - Making adequate counselling facilities available to pupils who need it in a timely manner (subject to available funding)
  - Helping bullied pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

Supporting Bullying pupils:

- Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet,'
  - Making it clear that bullying pupils who reform are doing the right and honorable thing and giving them praise for this,
  - Making adequate counseling facilities available to help those who need it learn other ways of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others,
  - Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school),
  - Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth,
  - In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child,
  - In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.





**Preventing Cyber Bullying, Homophobic/Transphobic bullying, Racist bullying, Preventing sexual harassment**

**In addition to above mentioned strategies, the school has the following in place to prevent and address**

- Staff at all times endeavour to encourage pupils to show respect for each other.
- Implementation of the SPHE curriculum.
- Positive self-esteem is fostered among the pupils by celebrating individual differences, by acknowledging opportunities for success.
- Digital Media Policy includes learning about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship. AUP a
- The school's BÍ Cinéalta is discussed regularly with the pupils.
- Staff are particularly vigilant in monitoring pupils who are considered at risk of bullying/ being bullied.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct p this.
- School wide awareness raising on all aspects of bullying, supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extracurricular acti
- Involvement of pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Kindness/ anti-bullying week, respect and support
- Ensuring that pupils know who to tell and how to tell.
- Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking p
- Refer to appropriate online behaviour when using devices and in SPHE/Kiva lessons
- Promote online safety events or material for parents
- The listing of supports currently being used in the school and the identification of other supports availa [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)
- Shared folder of resources for teaching of bullying including lessons from above websites – shared Go
- Challenge gender- stereotypes – equal participation of all. Equal recognition.
- Raise awareness of the impact of homophobic bullying behaviour and encourage students to speak up
- Foster a culture where diversity is celebrated and students “see themselves” in the school environment

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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: *Jim Brady* Date: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 (Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: *Marie Taaffe* Date: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 (Principal)

