

Holy Rosary College

Bí Cineálta Policy



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Introduction

The Board of Management of Holy Rosary College has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

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.

When This Policy Applies

This Policy Applies

- In class, between classes and while on the school premises
- While in school uniform
- On the way to and from school
- On school based activity, school tours etc.
- To anything done in the school name
- To any behaviour that adversely affects the school reputation or the education of any student in the school

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.

The core elements of the definition are further described below:

Targeted behaviour

Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the student displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example, personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example, withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and longterm negative impact on the student experiencing the 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 still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour.

Repeated behaviour

Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under the school's code of behaviour. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online, and which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

Imbalance of power

In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour

A one off instance of negative behaviour towards another 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.

Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups.

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 can't control.

Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying. These behaviours, while not defined as bullying can be distressing. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

How bullying behaviour occurs

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

Direct bullying behaviour:

Physical bullying behaviour:

- Physical bullying behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, poking and tripping students. It may also take the form of severe physical assault. While students can often engage in "mess fights" they can sometimes be used as a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain.
- Personal property can be a focus of attention for bullying behaviour. This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phone or other devices, schoolbooks and other learning material or interference with a student's locker or bicycle. The contents of school bags and pencil cases may be scattered on the floor. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Verbal bullying behaviour:

- Continual namecalling directed at a student which hurts, insults or humiliates the student should be regarded as a form of bullying behaviour. Often namecalling of this type refers to physical appearance; for example, size or clothes worn or gender identity. It can also refer to a student's accent, distinctive voice characteristics, academic ability, race or ethnic origin.

Written bullying behaviour:

- Written bullying behaviour includes writing insulting remarks about a student in public places, passing around notes about or drawings of a student.

Extortion

- Bullying behaviour can involve extortion. Extortion is where something is obtained through force or threats.

Indirect bullying behaviour:

Exclusion

- Exclusion bullying behaviour occurs where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.

Relational

- Relational bullying behaviour occurs when a student's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. Common forms include

control: “Do this or I won’t be your friend anymore”; a group of students ganging up against one student; nonverbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a student; giving a student the “silent treatment”; and the deliberate manipulation of friendship groups to make someone unpopular.

Online bullying behaviour:

Online bullying behaviour (cyberbullying) is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging/instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chatrooms and other online technologies.

This form of bullying behaviour can include:

- sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive, and/or intimidating messages or images via text messages, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps
- posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent
- making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students
- excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game

Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.

As online bullying uses technology to carry out bullying behaviour and does not require face to face contact it can occur at any time. Many types of bullying behaviour can be facilitated through online bullying. In many cases online bullying can relate to an “offline” experience with someone known to the student. This type of bullying may involve forms of sexual exploitation including but not limited to, sextortion and the nonconsensual sharing of intimate images. The sharing or threatened sharing of images without consent is a criminal offence.

Types of bullying behaviour

There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include the following which is not an exhaustive list:

- **disablist bullying behaviour:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of a perceived or actual disability or additional need
- **exceptionally able bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their high academic ability or outstanding talents
- **gender identity bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual gender identity
- **homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual membership of the LGBTQ+ community

- **physical appearance bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their physical appearance. Students who “look different” can be mocked or criticised about the shape, size or appearance of their body
- **racist bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their race or ethnic origin which includes membership of the Traveller or Roma community. Racism is defined in the National Action Plan Against Racism as “a form of domination which manifests through those power dynamics present in structural and institutional arrangements, practices, policies and cultural norms, which have the effect of excluding or discriminating against individuals or groups, based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin”
- **poverty bullying:** behaviour that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources
- **religious identity bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity
- **sexist bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex
- **sexual harassment:** any form of unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of the student

Section A: Development/review of our Bi 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	28/04/2026	Meeting
Students	12/03/2026	Student council Meeting
Parents	11/05/2026	Parent Association
Board of management	13/05/2026	Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	11/06/2025	Meeting with bus drivers
Date policy was approved: 26/06/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 13/05/2026		

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):

Culture and environment

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

How we create this culture and environment

Standards and expectations in relation to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour set by all school staff through whole school assemblies, in classrooms and all interactions with students when and where appropriate

Consistent approaches taken to addressing Bullying behaviour

Students promoting kindness, respect and inclusion through their daily interactions.

Parents helping to foster an environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated by promoting empathy and respect. We support parents in this by running parents evenings.

By creating a "Telling Environment", we try to achieve this through our:

CARA system for 1st and 2nd years

Supporting student who observe bullying with strategies to report and encouraging them to report, through wellbeing boxes, to the guidance counsellors or any adult in the school or outside

By creating safe physical spaces through out the school: Supervision at break and lunch times, cameras installed in locations without a clear line of sight.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- The Board of Management of Holy Rosary College raises awareness of the school's anti-bullying policy among staff, parents and students. This is done at staff meetings, parent association meetings, at class and year assemblies and at class teacher time.
- Initiatives and programmes (Friendship Week, Class Teacher time, Guest Speakers, LGBTQI+ posters on notice boards) focus on developing student, staff and parent awareness and understanding of all forms of bullying, its causes and effects. Issues of identity-based bullying and in particular homophobic and transphobic bullying are dealt with regularly throughout the school year.
- The school will educate students on appropriate online behaviour and how to stay safe online. They are encouraged to report any concerns they may have about cyber bullying. While cyberbullying takes place usually outside normal school time, the Board of Management reserves the right to deal with it under the school's anti-bullying policy if the well-being of students in the school is affected or if it adversely affects the day to day operation of the school. Students of Holy Rosary College are representatives and ambassadors of the school and off site and/or after school behaviour which reflects badly on the school will not be tolerated and may be subject to sanction.
- All classes have class teacher time where issues of student concern including bullying are raised.
- The wellbeing boxes into which students can place their concerns is checked weekly and any reports are dealt with.
- Students have the opportunity to discuss any concerns re bullying with members of the students council, with their prefects or Cairde and also with their class teacher.
- SEN students are included in all aspects of school life. **This inclusion assisted by SNA's and teachers ensures that these students feel safe in school and are enabled to participate in the life of the school.**
- The SPHE programme in all junior classes and in Transition Year makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships.
- The Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) programme provides opportunities to explore and discuss areas such as human sexuality and relationships, which has particular relevance to identity-based bullying.

- All teachers in all subjects foster an attitude of respect for all, promote the value of diversity, address prejudice and stereotyping and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- The school provides a wide range of extra- curricular activities, sporting and non-sporting that are open to all students. These activities develop self- esteem, assertiveness and self-confidence in students.

Policy and Planning

There are a range of other policies such as the school's acceptable use policy, , special education teaching policy and Code of Behaviour that can support implementation of a school's Bí Cineálta policy.

Relationships and Partnerships

Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. These interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures and activities such as

Student Council

We have an opt in and nominated student council which ensures those students who are most interested in developing the student voice in the school feel supported and can connect and engage with our school community.

Extra Curricular

We aim to develop and enhance the number of school clubs and extra-curricular activities clubs in the school to ensure that all students can feel and connection and belonging in our school

Parents Association

Our parents' association plays an active role in the development of our school. All of our Parents Association meetings are open to all parents to attend. Every parent/guardian become members of the Parents Association when their child is enrolled

Student Support Teams

We have a variety of student support teams in the school.

This includes the Pastoral care team consisting of the Principal, a Deputy Principal, Year Head, Guidance Counsellor. They meet on a weekly basis.

We also have a SEN anchor for each year group who works with a Deputy Principal to support students.

Open door Policy and Positive relationships with staff

Our Principal, Deputy Principals lead an open door policy for all students in the school. We aim to develop positive relationships with all students and try to develop a culture where students can

approach any member of staff to discuss any issue which is affecting them in school, including any bullying behaviours

Awareness Initiatives

Wellbeing/Friendship/Anti-bullying Week, which takes place on an annual basis and covers many topics throughout the week and leading up to and proceeding it Strong interpersonal connections are a vital part of effectively preventing and addressing 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):

Supervision on Yard and Corridors and in class

- A weekly schedule of student supervision on corridors and yard is developed to monitor student behaviour and wellbeing. Any causes for concern are dealt with and reported to school management.
- All staff are watchful and observe relationships between students in class, note absence patterns and let it be known that high standards of behaviour are expected at all time

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Year Heads

Deputy Principals

Principal

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):

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be reported to the principal. In that way students will gain confidence in 'telling'. This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all students that when they report incidents of bullying they are not considered to be "telling tales" but are behaving responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers and cleaners are expected to report to the principal any incidents of bullying witnessed by them or of which they become aware.
- Parents and students are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- A problem-solving approach will be taken when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by students, staff or parents. It may be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).
- All interviews will be conducted with due regard to the rights of all students concerned. Students who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information.
- If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved will be met as a group as far as is practicable.
- In cases where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved will be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. Parents will be given an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can support the actions being taken by the school and the way in which they can support their sons/daughters.
- Where it has been determined that a student has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it will be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti-bullying policy. Efforts will be made to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied.
- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged with a view to bringing them together at a later date if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect.
- Sanctions for bullying may include the writing of letters of apology to subject and parent(s), issuing of a yellow card, lunchtime or evening detention, suspension, exclusion, referral to NEPS, HSE and /or Gardaí.

Requests to take no action

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than "look out" for them. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them. Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff shows empathy to the

student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this request in writing to the school or be facilitated to do so where there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour

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):

Students who experience Bullying or Witness Bullying

The student who has been bullied will be offered consistent support by the school counsellor, chaplain or other staff members whom the student trusts. In some cases the student may be encouraged to

- ✓ talk to as many people as possible -friends, parents, teachers
- ✓ make friends and stay with friends
- ✓ become assertive and to develop a positive assertive response to incidents of bullying.

Those Engaging in Bullying Behaviour

Interventions will be offered to the student involved in bullying behaviour so that the necessary attitudinal and behavioural changes can be made.

Counselling will be offered to get the bully to understand

- ✓ why he/she is involved in bullying behaviour ,
- ✓ that his/her behaviour is unacceptable and is causing distress,
- ✓ that his /her behaviour is in violation of the school's Code of Behaviour, the Mission Statement and the Anti-bullying policy
- ✓ that bullying is not tolerated in the school

The school in certain circumstances may also seek the support and advice of TUSLA, EWO, NEPS, NCSE, second level school support services, HSE and any other agency deemed appropriate to support the school in dealing with incidents of bullying.

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: Lil Bruen Date: 13/05/2026

(Chairperson of board of management)


Signed: A. Coen Date: 13/05/2026

(Principal)

Bí Cineálta!

We want everyone at our school to feel safe and happy.

If you think that you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied, you need to tell a teacher or another adult that you trust. They will know what to do to help.



Get help!

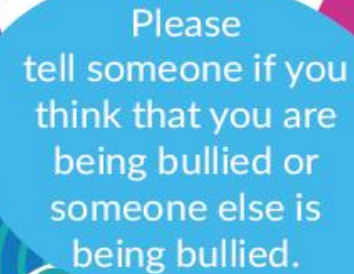


Tell someone!

If a student tells a staff member that they think they are being bullied, we will:

- > talk with the student
- > ask the student what they want to happen
- > work out a plan together
- > talk to their parents
- > talk to the other student(s) involved
- > talk with the other student's parents

Bullying behaviour is when someone keeps being mean or hurtful to others on purpose over and over again.



Please tell someone if you think that you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied.



Our school has a Bí Cineálta policy to try to stop bullying behaviour.

We look at this policy every year to see what is working well or what could work better.

We will ask you what you think.

When it happens a lot.
Not just once.



