



Taney Parish Primary School

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Taney Parish Primary 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.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineálta: 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.

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 | 14 th March 2025 | Staff Training and School Closure |
| Students | 29 th May 2025 | Consultation with Student Council |
| Parents | 4 th June 2025 | Consultation at PTA AGM |
| Board of Management | 10 th June 2025 | Review of new policy draft – discussion at BOM Meeting, final ratification after amendments made where necessary. |
| Date policy was approved: 10 th June 2025 | | |
| 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 (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Section 5.1 Bí Cineálta Procedures – Culture and Environment

- Positive reinforcement of Code of Behaviour.
- Student Voice is respected and heard, Student Council is established and active.
- Buddy System in place between younger and older children.
- Communication between all stakeholders in our school is based on mutual respect.
- Collaborative art projects.
- Whole school initiatives eg curricular committees and wellbeing committees.
- School assembly.
- Star of the Week programme.
- Planning teaching and learning with partner teachers.

Section 5.2 Bí Cineálta Procedures – Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- Teaching and learning in SPHE:
Stay Safe

- Stay Safe (for children with additional needs)
- Mindfulness Matters
- Weaving Wellbeing
- Zippy's Friends
- Patron's Programme – Follow Me.
- RSE curriculum.
- Promoting inclusion and diversity.
- Groupwork/Collaborative methodologies.
- Regular social surveys, eg "My Thoughts About School".

Section 5.3 Bí Cineálta Procedures – Policy and Planning

- Taney Parish Primary School endeavours to have wellbeing of the school community at the heart of all school policies and plans.
- The school's Acceptable Internet Usage Policy, Supervision Policy, Special Education Policy, Understanding Behaviours of Concern and Responding to Crisis Situations Policy and Code of Behaviour support the implementation of the Bí Cineálta Policy.
- Staff engagement in appropriate teacher professional learning courses supports the school staff in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

Section 5.4 Bí Cineálta Procedures – Relationships and Partnerships

- In Taney Parish Primary School we encourage open and respectful communication between students, staff and parents/guardians.
- We strive to build positive relationships with our students and their families, based on mutual respect and empathy.
- We collaborate with external agencies to provide additional support and resources
- Promoting acts of kindness

Section 5.5 Bí Cineálta Procedures – Preventing cyberbullying behaviour

- We explicitly teach the issues surrounding cyberbullying and the importance of using technology safely.
- We utilise the Webwise programme and hold an annual internet safety day.
- We have a Cyber Agreement in place, in conjunction with the PTA. This discourages smartphone ownership and use of social media whilst in primary school.

Section 5.6 Bí Cineálta Procedures – Preventing homophobic/transphobic bullying behaviour

- We strive to create a safe and inclusive environment for all members of our school community, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- We endeavour to educate students about the importance of respecting all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- We use age appropriate and Department of Education approved LGBTQ+ inclusive teaching resources.

Section 5.7 Bí Cineálta Procedures – Preventing racist bullying behaviour

- We strive to promote diversity and inclusion in the classroom.

- Ensure that library reading material represents appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Section 5.8 Bí Cineálta Procedures – Preventing sexist bullying behaviour

- Celebrating International Women’s Day.
- We strive to challenge gender stereotypes.
- Ensure that library reading material and lesson topics represent appropriate lived experiences of both male and female role models.

Section 5.9 Bí Cineálta Procedures – Preventing sexual harassment

- We teach the RSE curriculum in line with our RSE policy.
- Explicit teaching of inappropriate behaviours and consent (Stay Safe Programme).

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):

- Classes are supervised by a member of staff at all times.
- Staff are present and visible in the playground at breaktimes.
- A member of the ISM team has responsibility for drawing up a yard supervision roster which is in place for all breaktimes including wet breaks.
- Classes operate a “Friendly Fours” strategy to ensure groups of children mix and play in a structured way when needed.
- All disclosed incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and consistently by following the correct procedure as outlined to staff. These records are stored in line with school procedures.
- Involvement of pupils in contributing to a safe school environment – eg Wellness Week/Diversity Week and other activities that can help encourage a culture of peer respect and support.
- Ensure that pupils know who to tell and how to tell if bullying behaviours occur.
- Ensure bystanders know the importance of becoming upstanders by telling if they witness or know that bullying behaviours are taking place.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

All teachers have responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour, however class teachers are usually the best placed to investigate reports of bullying behaviour.

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 school's procedures for investigation, follow up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies that may be used by the school for cases of bullying behaviour are based on Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures and are as follows:

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred:

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour we shall consider the following questions:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
3. Is the behaviour repeated?

If the answer to each of the above 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 such inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the Taney Parish Primary School Code of Behaviour.

- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- Incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- When analysing incidents of alleged bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher should seek answers to questions of what, where, when and why. This should be done in a calm and logical manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s).

Taney Parish Primary School notes that one-off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

Where bullying behaviour has occurred:

- The primary aim for the relevant teacher 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 (rather than to apportion blame).
- Parents and pupils 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.
- Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour.
- It is important to listen and take account of the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.
- A record should be kept of the engagement with all involved. This record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents. (See Appendix A)
- The record should include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.
- A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school. However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with this behaviour in accordance with the Bí Cineálta policy.
- In the event of a parent or pupil requesting no action be taken to address bullying behaviour, we refer to and follow Section 6.3 of the Bí Cineálta procedures. This will inform the school's response.

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred:

- The teacher must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 days after the initial engagement.
- Important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
- The teacher should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this.
- The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.
- Any engagement with outside agencies should also be noted.

- if the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased

Review Progress

- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.
- If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures
- If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on 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):

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.

- Support regulation strategies.
- 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.
- Self-esteem building activities.
- Conferences with class teacher / Principal / Deputy Principal as appropriate.
- Time out in other classrooms if required by pupil.
- Small group work to assist in building social skills.
- Buddy work to assist in self-esteem, self-confidence and social skills.
- In dealing with negative behaviour in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge, and correct the behaviour while supporting the child.
- Referral to NEPS.
- Referral to external agencies such as School Completion Programme, NEPS, HSE, NEWB etc.

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: _____ Date: 10th June 2025 _____
(Chairperson of board of management)



Signed: _____ Date: 10th June 2025 _____
(Principal)

Bí Cineálta - Template for recording bullying behaviour

(Section 6.5 Bí Cineálta Procedures)

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

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3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

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| Pupil concerned | |
| Other pupil | |
| Parent | |
| Teacher | |
| Other | |

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

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| Playground | |
| Classroom | |
| Corridor | |
| Toilets | |
| School Bus | |
| Other | |

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern

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6. Form of Bullying Behaviour based on Section 2.5 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures (tick the relevant box(es))*

| Direct Bullying Behaviour | | Indirect Bullying Behaviour | |
|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| • Physical bullying behaviour | | • Exclusion | |
| • Damage to personal property | | • Relational | |
| • Written bullying behaviour | | | |
| • Extortion | | Online Bullying Behaviour | |
| • Verbal Bullying Behaviour | | | |

7. Type of bullying - based on Section 2.7 of the Bí Cineálta Procedures and is not an exhaustive list:

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|--|--|--|--|
| Disabilist bullying behaviour | | Poverty bullying behaviour | |
| Exceptionally able bullying behaviour | | Religious identity bullying behaviour | |
| Gender identity bullying behaviour | | Sexist bullying behaviour | |
| Racist bullying behaviour | | Sexual harrassment | |
| Physical appearance bullying behaviour | | Homophobic/Transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying behaviour | |

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions and supports agreed to address the bullying behaviour reported - to include the views of the pupils and their parents:

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10. Review meeting with pupils and parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased – to include the views of the pupils and their parents in relation to this.

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| Date of initial engagement with pupils: | |
| Date of initial engagement with parents: | |
| Date submitted to principal/deputy principal: | |
| Note engagement with outside agencies: | |

Signed: _____ (Relevant Teacher) Date: _____