



Coláiste Thulach Sheasta Bí Cineálta Policy



Newport College Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour



Policy Area	Schools
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Our Core Values

Excellence

Excellence means striving for the highest standards in education, training, and support. It is underpinned by the values of care, respect, community, and equality, and reflects the quality of outcomes, the richness of experiences, and the ambition of expectations for all members of our school community. *By actively preventing and addressing bullying behaviour, we uphold excellence by creating a safe and supportive environment where every student can thrive.*

Care

Care is about the wellbeing, safety, and overall welfare of everyone in our school community. It is shown through empathy, meaningful relationships, a strong sense of connection, and a culture of support and solidarity. *By addressing bullying behaviour with sensitivity and urgency, we demonstrate care by protecting the emotional and physical wellbeing of all students.*

Respect

Respect involves recognising the dignity, identity, and rights of every individual. It is reflected in the quality of our relationships and in decision-making that values the feelings, aspirations, and diverse backgrounds of our school community. *By challenging bullying behaviour in all its forms, we promote respect by ensuring every student feels valued, heard, and safe.*

Equality

Equality means treating everyone fairly while recognising and celebrating the diversity of our school community. It involves creating inclusive spaces, targeting supports where they are most needed, and ensuring that every voice has value. *By preventing and addressing bullying behaviour, we uphold equality by protecting the rights of all students to learn and grow in an inclusive, respectful environment.*

Community

Community is built on shared values, connection, and collaboration among students, staff, families, and the wider school environment. It thrives when everyone feels they belong, can contribute meaningfully, and are listened to. *By working together to prevent and respond to bullying behaviour, we strengthen our community and foster a culture of safety, trust, and mutual support.*

Introduction

The Board of Management of **Newport 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 Traveler community.

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**.

Section A: Development 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	14/01/2025; 15/04/2026 07/05/2025 12/05/2026	Staff Survey ½ Day Closure Staff Meeting
Students	14/01/2025 21/02/2025; 16/04/2026 11/03/2025 04/04/2025	Survey of Whole School Learner Voice Group
Parents	14/01/2025; 15/04/2026	Survey
Board of Management	03/04/2025 04/06/2025 26/05/2026	Meeting
Wider school community GAA/Camogie/Rugby/Local Business Personnel	19/05/2025 17/04/2026	Meeting with personnel, discussion and feedback
Date policy was approved: 04/06/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 07/05/2026		

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*):

- We adopt a **school-wide approach** to nurturing and developing a culture of **respect** for all members of our school community (Appendix 1).
- It is clearly **communicated** to all members of the school community that bullying of any kind is unacceptable, irrespective of whether it is a student, a staff member or any other person that is the subject of such behaviour.
- The focus of the colleges' **prevention strategy** will be to build empathy, respect and resilience in students.
- The College will devote a staff development session (for teaching and non-teaching staff – as appropriate) each school year towards:
 - Building an understanding of what bullying is
 - Providing guidance on how it is best combated – prevented, detected, investigated, documented (as appropriate) and resolved.
 - A clear focus of all staff development around combating bullying will be the enablement of all staff to implement this policy and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024* consistently and effectively.
- The College will adopt a school-wide approach to prevent and combat bullying. In this context, the College is committed to engaging with parents.
 - Firstly, to involve parents in the development of policies and practices to combat bullying.
 - Secondly the College will hold an **annual information evening for parents** to ensure that they understand the ways of the Helping Hands programme in dealing with bullying, and to provide them with reliable information on how they may contribute towards combating bullying. It is important that parents realise that anyone can be a bully, and anyone can be a target of bullying and therefore we need education and guidance on the impact of our behaviours. It is important to realise that disagreements between young people are part and parcel of negotiating the road to adulthood. It is important that parents realise the difference between perceived bullying and actual bullying.
 - In combating bullying, the College will take particular account of the needs of students with AEN. This will involve improving inclusion, focusing on developing social skills, paying particular attention to student induction and cultivating a school culture that respects everyone.

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- The prevention and awareness of bullying is integral to this policy and students will, through both their **curricular** and **extra-curricular** programmes and initiatives, be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth. In line with the ethos of our college, we strive to promote a sense of pride in our school jersey, while making our activities accessible to all.
 - There is potential within the teaching of all subjects and within **extracurricular** activities
 - to foster an **attitude of respect** for all
 - to promote the **value of diversity**
 - to address **prejudice and stereotyping**
 - to highlight the **unacceptability of bullying behaviour**
 - Through the promotion of active learning methodologies teachers will seek to develop relationships in their classroom with a strong emphasis on mutual respect and inclusion
 - **Initiatives include:**
 - Helping Hands Wellbeing and Anti-Bullying Programme
 - Wellbeing Week
 - Active School Week
 - Stand up Awareness Week
 - Safer Internet Day
 - Raising Rainbow Flag
 - Guest Speakers
 - The College's RSE and SPHE programme will specifically address the issue of bullying with each year group, each school year.
 - The SPHE curriculum 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.
 - The College will make every reasonable effort to ensure that the full potential of both these programmes to combat bullying is exploited.

Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of students or staff or the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified:

- Gender including transgender
- Civil status
- Family status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Membership of the Traveller Community

About the Helping Hands Programme

The problem with hidden bullying.

Schools take their responsibilities towards the students in their care very seriously and most have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying. This approach can prevent visible but often not invisible behaviours. Teachers rarely have access to the world of student relationships outside of the formal setting of the classroom. This includes time spent during school lunch breaks, unsupervised time between classes, travel to and from school, sporting and leisure events outside of school and time spent on social media. Bullying is typically hidden in the peer group. Bullied students are not able to defend themselves and they are frequently unable to tell.

The Helping Hands programme has been developed through rigorous research and is based on international best practice and leading thinking.

- It provides cutting edge knowledge, skills and an easy-to-use diagnostic tool to help teachers access relationship dynamics hidden in the peer group.
- The programme combines online professional development with access to the software instrument for school leaders and teachers
- This approach means that vulnerable students can be identified before problems escalate or complaints are made, permitting appropriate supports to be put in place
- The focus is on empowerment of the victims and keeping them psychologically safe
- Recognising that resolving bullying is a process and not an event, teachers are equipped with knowledge and skills to identify targeted students and support them through the process of empowerment

Our training is supported by best-in-class software. The software can be used to assign students to classwork teams, ensuring that all students are included and are in teams where they feel wanted and welcome

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 Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

- The implementation and effectiveness of the colleges Bí Cineálta policy will be an agenda item for **staff meetings** – so the concerns about the policy and/or the welfare of individual students can be shared and effectively addressed
- Data gathered will be collated and analysed in school and in advance of each Board of Management meeting with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying issues requiring attention.
- At every Board of Management Meeting, the principal will provide a report to the Board of Management setting out the following:
 - Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting.
 - Confirmation that all cases referred have been or are being dealt with in accordance with the school's *Bí Cineálta Policy: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

We actively encourage an ethos of openness, honesty and transparency. All members of the school community have a responsibility and duty to report alleged bullying incidents. A student, parent, guardian or other member of the school community may report bullying concerns verbally or in writing.

- As part of the Helping Hands Programme, the school has a designated team to investigate, follow up and record incidents of bullying that has been reported to them.

The team consists of: Principal, Deputy Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, Assistant Principal

- All members of the school community have a duty to bring to the attention of the anti-bullying team any incident of alleged bullying, cyberbullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.
- Any student or their parent/guardian may report a bullying incident to any teacher in the school.
- 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 College will, in all its communications with students and their parents, commencing with the induction of the student into the College, make every effort to highlight the importance of students reporting incidents of or concerns about bullying to a member of the teaching staff on the clear understanding that these matters are being reported in confidence.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff including secretary, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners, sport's coaches, those involved in extracurricular activities and those driving school buses are encouraged report any incidents of alleged bullying witnessed by them or mentioned to a member of the anti-bullying team.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of alleged bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the anti-bullying team.

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:

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour we will 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 questions above is **Yes**, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour, and the behaviour will be addressed using the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

- **Note:** *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.*

If the answer to any of these 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.

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)

Where bullying behaviour has occurred

- Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved will 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. Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour.
- A record will be kept of the engagement with all involved

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred:

- The school will engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement
- The school will document
 - the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased
 - the views of students and their parents in relation to this

Section D: Oversight

Report to the BOM	The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each Board of Management meeting including: • Number of reported incidents. • Ongoing and resolved cases. • Trends and patterns. • Preventative and responsive strategies
Availability	Bí Cineálta Policy and a student-friendly version are on the school website and in hard copy.
Annual Review	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. The most recent review took place on 07/05/2026.
Signed	
Position	Chairperson of Board of Management
Date	
Signed	
Position	Principal
Date	

Appendix 1: Practical Tips for Building a positive school culture and climate



Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to help build a positive school culture and climate and to help prevent and tackle bullying behaviour.

- Always model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community.
- Explicitly teach students what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school.
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve students in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good - notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – this includes homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of students with a disability or SEN.
- Give constructive feedback to students when respectful behaviour and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach students about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage students to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use.
- Follow up and follow through with students who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parents' Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media.
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in student friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff can actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.
- School staff can get students to help them to identify bullying “hot spots” and “hot times” for bullying in the school.
- Hot spots tend to be in the playground/school yard/outdoor areas, changing rooms, corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision.
- Hot times again tend to be times where there is less structured supervision such as when students are in the playground/school yard or moving classrooms.
- Support the establishment and work of student councils.

Summary of Appendices – Department Documentation

Based on the official documentation from the Department of Education, the table below provides a summary of the appendices included along with an outline of what each document is for in the

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

	Title	Purpose
Appendix A	School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour	Provides a template to develop our own policy in alignment with the <i>Bí Cineálta</i> procedures.
Appendix B	Student-Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy	A simplified version of the policy to ensure students understand the school's approach to preventing and addressing bullying.
Appendix C	Guide to Addressing Bullying Behaviour	Serves as a practical guide for school staff on how to effectively address incidents of bullying behaviour.
Appendix D	Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update	Used in reporting to the Board of Management
Appendix E	Review of Bí Cineálta Policy	A template for completing an annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta policy.
Appendix F	Notification Regarding the Board of Management's Annual Review of the School Bí Cineálta Policy	A template to notify the school community that the annual review of the Bí Cineálta policy has been completed.
Appendix G	Overview of the Bí Cineálta Procedures for Preventing and Addressing Bullying Behaviour	Summary of the key areas of change from the 2013 anti-bullying procedures highlighting updates and new approaches.

Appendix E

Bí Cineálta Policy Review



The Board of Management of Newport College must undertake an annual (calendar) review of the school's *Bí Cineálta policy* and its implementation in consultation with the school community. As part of the review, this document must be completed.

1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the <i>Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ?	____/____/____
2. Where in the school is the student friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?	
3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student friendly policy on the school website?	
4. How has the student friendly policy been communicated to students?	
5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student-friendly policy been communicated to parents?	
6. Have all school staff been made aware of the, school's Bí Cineálta policy and the <i>Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post- Primary Schools</i> ?	☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Does the Bí Cineálta policy document the strategies that the school uses to prevent bullying behaviour?	☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Has the Board received and minuted the Bullying Behaviour Update presented by the principal at every ordinary board meeting over the last calendar year?	☐ Yes ☐ No
9. Has the Board discussed how the school is addressing all reports of bullying behaviour?	☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Is the Board satisfied that all incidents of bullying behaviour are addressed in accordance with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy?	☐ Yes ☐ No
11. Have the prevention strategies in the Bí Cineálta policy been implemented?	☐ Yes ☐ No
12. Has the Board discussed the effectiveness of the strategies used to prevent bullying behaviour?	☐ Yes ☐ No
13. How have (a) parents, (b) students and (c) school staff been consulted with as part of the review of the Bí Cineálta Policy?	
14. Outline any aspects of the school's Bí Cineálta policy and/or its implementation that have been identified as requiring further improvement as part of this review:	
15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed:	
16. Does the student-friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so, why?	☐ Yes ☐ No
17. Does the school refer parents to the complaints procedures if they have a complaint about how the school has addressed bullying behaviour?	☐ Yes ☐ No
18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?	☐ Yes ☐ No
19. Has the Office of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour?	☐ Yes ☐ No

Signed	
Position	Chairperson of Board of Management
Date	
Signed	
Position	Principal
Date	

Appendix F

Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's *Bí Cineálta* Policy

TO:	Parents/Guardians, Staff of Newport College and TETB (Patron)
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The Board of Management of **Newport College** confirms that:

- The board of management's annual review of the school's *Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour* and its implementation was completed at the board of management meeting of **dd/mm/yyyy**.
- This review was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Education's *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed	
Position	Chairperson of Board of Management
Date	
Signed	
Position	Principal
Date	