

# Clonown N.S. Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Clonown N.S. has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024. The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

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

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

We confirm that we will take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the bullying or harassment of our students in whatever form and however motivated.

Catholic schools have a distinctive understanding of the human person, recognising that every person is created in God's image and likeness and has inherent dignity as a child of God. This is the basis for ensuring that each person in our school is treated with respect and care, in accordance with the Catholic Schedule.

As a Catholic school, we are committed to respecting the dignity of every individual. No human person is to be devalued, and all have an indispensable part to play in the school community, regardless of difference.

## **Definition of Bullying**

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

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

## 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 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Discussion re Bi Cinealta Training
	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Reviewing our Care Plan
	15 <sup>th</sup> January 202	Development of Monthly Anti-Bullying Activities
Students	15 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	Development of Monthly Anti-Bullying Activities
	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	Questionnaire
Parents	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	Invitation to review our Care Plan Initiation to express thoughts on our monthly Anti-Bullying Initiatives
Board of Management	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	Review of our Care Plan
	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	Discussion re Bi Cinealta Training Development of Monthly Anti-Bullying Activities
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2025	Draft Policy was put on our website and community were invited to review it and to give us feedback.
	31 <sup>st</sup> May 2025	Input/advice provided by our Diocesan Office
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 (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

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

This school takes positive steps to ensure that the culture of the school is one which welcomes a respectful dialogue and encounter with diversity and difference, by ensuring that prevention and inclusivity strategies are given priority and discussed regularly at board of management and staff meetings.

The dignity and the wellbeing of the individual person is of paramount concern in our Christian

response. This school will listen closely to and dialogue with parents, thereby building a relationship of mutual understanding, respect, trust and confidence.

In continuing to develop prevention strategies, this school will listen to young people and parents, to help establish their particular context and needs. Frequent periods of reflection and engagement by the school, young people and parents, will be used to discern appropriate supports for young people in this school and to help inform future prevention strategies.

At the beginning of term all children must be inducted by their teacher into the Care Programme. It is advisable that training takes place in all classes at an agreed time at the same time. A good way of beginning the training session is to engage in an Anti-Bullying Lesson with the class helping children to understand the peer structure of bullying behaviour and how a group assumes roles within that structure. Students then learn how the Care Credit Card works. After induction each student signs a Care Promise and begins a Care Book – this is a diary/ scrap book in which entries are made at each Care Lesson. The Care Book is also used when the Care Procedure is invoked by the Class Teacher.

**CARE PROGRAMME LAUNCH OR CARE DAY** Care day is an agreed date for the launch of the Care programme. On this day the children are presented with their Care Credit Cards at a formal assembly or ceremony.

**THE CARE CORNER** In preparation for Care Day each class creates a Care Corner where all Anti-Bullying messages, creative images and any other materials relating to the issue are posted and regularly refreshed. Suggested material can be found in the Care Resources section of our Care Plan Handbook.

**CARE MODULES** Care modules are given on a monthly basis across all classes and simultaneously. Themes covered in these classes can reference all manifestations of bullying behaviour, mental health issues, empowerment & resilience building, friendship themes and any other relevant Care enhancing subject matter.

We will also hold monthly Anti-Bullying initiatives.

- September: Class Friendship banner: create a large banner with each student's hand-print and a friendship promise written inside it.
- October: Anti-Bullying Poster Competition
- November: Friendship Bracelet Exchange: Students make and exchange friendship bracelets to strength bonds.
- December: Gratitude Wall: set up a space for students to share messages and things that they are grateful for in their friendship.
- January: Buddy Reading Week. Pair older and younger students to read together, promoting positive relationships across age groups.
- February: Kindness Tree: Create a large tree display where students can add leaves with kind messages or notes of appreciation for classmates.
- March: Compliment Chain: Build a paper chain where each link contains a student-written compliment for another person in the school. Display in a common area.
- April: Secret Friend Week: Assign each student a “secret friend” for the week. They do small acts of kindness without revealing their identity until the end.
- May: Friendship Pledge Day: Class work together to create a Friendship Pledge and display it prominently in their rooms.
- June: Inclusive Games Day. Organise cooperative games where inclusion and teamwork are the focus.

**ANTI-BULLYING SURVEY** An Anti-Bullying class survey is given out to students once a term to measure the health of the class social climate and to help children to become accustomed to disclosing bullying issues which may be developing within their social groups

**CARE CERTIFICATE.** At the end of each academic year each student will be awarded with a Care Certificate in recognition of their caring behaviours throughout the year.

**FOR PARENTS** Information sheets are provided for teachers to give to parents on disclosure of bullying.

**LIGHT INTERVENTION RESOURCES** For use if teachers have a ‘hunch’ that there may be a bullying problem emerging within their class group, or if another teacher has mentioned to them that they have seen something, or if a child has mentioned that they have seen something.....

**DEEP INTERVENTION STRATEGY** For use if a teacher has received a formal complaint of bullying behaviour from a parent of a specific child.

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):

**In Summary:**

At the beginning of term one all children are inducted into the Care Programme by engaging in an Anti-Bullying Lesson across all classes.

- Each student signs a Care Promise and receives their Care Credit Card.
- Modules are given on a monthly basis across all classes and simultaneously.
- Each class creates a Care Corner where all Anti-Bullying messages, creative images and any other materials relating to the issue are posted and regularly refreshed.
- An Anti-Bullying class survey is rolled out to students once a term to measure the health of the class social climate.
- At the end of each academic year each student will be awarded with a Care Certificate in recognition of their caring behaviours throughout the year.
- Light intervention resources and methodology can be practiced in the event of a ‘hunch’ of bullying issues.
- Deep intervention strategy can be used only in the event of a formal complaint of bullying behaviour from a parent of a specific child.

**Deep Intervention Care Procedure**

The Care Procedure is a no-blame approach to dealing with formal disclosures, reports, complaints of bullying behaviour, class teachers work with their class group to support students to work together to resolve bullying issues and to help students to understand their roles in any bullying issues which may have developed amongst them. It is a stepped procedure for dealing with specific disclosures of bullying behaviour by teachers, parents and students. It is underpinned by the concept of Bullying Behaviour as a Social Group phenomenon rather than a Bully/Victim phenomenon. .

**STEP ONE – CARE FORM** For use in formal disclosures/complaints of a bullying nature by a parent towards a student by another student or group of students within the school to a class teacher a Care Form will be filled out by this person and the alleged victim of the bullying behaviour. As much detail as possible must be given, including dates, times and places where bullying behaviour may have taken place including names of any students who may have engaged in bullying behaviour.

**STEP TWO – AWARENESS RAISING LESSON & BULLYING BEHAVIOURS CLASS WORKSHEET** Subject to the completion of the Recording Form the class teacher engages in a simple awareness raising Anti-Bullying Lesson with the class and reminds the class what bullying is by going through the Checklist of Bullying Behaviours. The class teacher will then distribute the Bullying Behaviours Class Worksheet and begin to work with the students to help them understand what may be happening in their group and what role they may be playing. This worksheet can be pasted into the Care Book. Students are encouraged to write their feelings down in the Care Space. The teacher will judge how much time needs to be given to this step, the worksheet can be resumed over a period of days if necessary. The anticipated outcome of this step would be that the student or students engaging in the bullying behaviour will actually admit to doing it.

### **Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour**

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

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):

#### **STEP THREE – CARE DISCUSSION WORKSHEET**

Students who have been named as engaging in bullying behaviours or who have admitted that they have used bullying behaviour during the class workshop time will invited for discussion with the class teacher at an appropriate time. This worksheet is designed to support the student/s in question to recognise where they have used bullying behaviours, how this has affected the victim of the behaviours and how to begin to empathise with the discomfort of the victim. The student/s in question will then forfeit a care credit from their care credit card and will be encouraged to begin to earn this credit back by being as caring as they possibly can towards their peers.

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):

### **Bullying Behaviours Class Worksheet**

We have agreed that we care about each other and we have signed our Care promise, we have our Care Credit Cards. We have all been trained to understand and recognise what bullying is. We know the damage that bullying behaviour can do to people in our school community and we have all promised to keep our school environment as safe, happy and healthy as possible. We want to prevent bullying in our school. Person feeling bullied Person/s using bullying behaviour Persons seeing bullying behaviour We know that bullying mostly needs a group of people for it to happen and if it's happening in our class group we are the solution to working it out and making it right.

We know that we could be in any of the groups in the diagram on our worksheet and that this is very bad for all of us. We know that the better we work the problem out as a group that the better we will get along as a group. We know that this is NOT about blaming anyone, but that's it's about making sure that any unhealthy behaviour which is bad for our mental and physical health stops.

#### **Care Space Activity:**

Write about it, like a story, if you wish.

Draw something that might describe it...

#### **Care Discussion Sheet:**

We have worked together as a group on our Bullying Behaviour Worksheets because there was a problem with bullying and now you and I are going to work together on this

Do you know who is being bullied? ♦yes ♦ no ♦ no idea

As you know, we have all been trained to recognize bullying behaviour in our school. When we were being trained, we all promised that we would always be truthful and tell someone if we witnessed someone being bullied. This is because we all agreed that we want a school that is happy, healthy and safe for everyone. If you were being bullied, we would now be trying to discover from others what was being done to you, and we would be talking to anyone involved in treating you that way.

Do you understand this? Do you know which student we are talking about? ♦yes ♦ no ♦ no idea

Did you realize that other students felt that you were behaving in a bullying way towards this person? ♦ yes ♦ no

Do you understand that they told us about it because we promised each other to care about everyone in our school community and to tell someone if we saw something that we felt was bullying behaviour? ♦ yes ♦ no

What way have you been behaving towards this student that has made others feel that you were behaving in a bullying way? We want to help you talk about it because you know that when we were all trained, we were told that people who bully others are themselves usually unhappy about things.

Do you know why you have been treating this student in this way?  
 Have you or anyone in your family ever been bullied? (If yes) How did it feel?  
 If someone in your family was being bullied like this student, how would you feel?  
 Do you remember from our training how being bullied makes someone feel You have broken your  
 Care promise that you made when we began our Care Programme. You have also broken the  
 school rules and you have hurt someone by your behaviour towards them.  
 Do you understand how serious this is? Do you understand that you have now lost a Care Credit?  
 ♦ yes ♦ no  
 Are you ready to promise again to never behave in a bullying way towards a student in our  
 school? ♦yes ♦ no

Care Credit Loss Date:  
 Care Credit Return Date:

Parent's Signature: Date:

School Stamp: CLONOWN NATIONAL SCHOOL

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and PostPrimary Schools

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: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Principal)