

Scoil Bhríde Clane, Co Kildare

Roll No.: 19797E, RCN No.: 20124960

Principal: Mrs. Eimear Hennessy

Bí Cineálta Policy /KiVa Anti-Bullying Programme to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

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The Board of Management of Scoil Bhríde has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

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

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

Ireland ratified the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child in September 1992. In doing this, we committed to promote, protect and fulfil the rights of children. Bullying is a children's rights issue.

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.

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 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 harm caused by bullying can be:

- Physical: e.g personal injury, damage or loss of property
- Social: e.g withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion
- Emotional: low self-esteem, depression, anxiety

*If the behaviour displayed, is not deemed as bullying, it will be addressed via the school's Code of Behaviour

Types of Bullying:

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

Bullying can be: Direct

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

Bullying can be Indirect:

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

Online bullying behaviour:

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

This can include:

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

Section A: Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	January and February 2025	Half day closure to facilitate staff training on Bí Cineálta policy and procedures. Follow up Croke Park meeting to collaborate and reflect on key messages. Staff Survey administered and answers collated. Draft policy shared with staff to discuss and relay feedback. Staff provided with opportunity to discuss the new Bí Cineálta action plan and ensure everyone was familiar with the policy and procedures.
Students	March 2025	Focus Group with cross selection of students to seek their input in developing the child friendly Bí Cineálta policy
Parents	March 2025	Parental survey administered and answers collated. Draft policy shared with Parents' Association Bí Cineálta policy document uploaded and available on school website.
Board of Management	April 2025	Board of Management meeting held on the 8th April. Draft policy sent to Board members a week in advance of the meeting to review. Policy read and discussed at meeting. Policy ratified by the Board.
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		Draft Policy shared with Parents' Association for comments and feedback.
Date policy was approved: 8th April 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 23rd September 2025		

In addition to this a whole school staff training on the KiVa programme took place in September 2025. The training was provided by Archways (Centre of Excellence for Children and Family Programmes) who hold the license to deliver the training in 32 counties across the island of Ireland.

KiVa is a research- and evidence-based anti-bullying programme that has been developed in the University of Turku, Finland, with funding from the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture. The strong effectiveness of KiVa has been proven scientifically through a large national randomized and controlled trial as well as several different studies. KiVa is being used around the world and it is the world's most studied anti-bullying programme.

The goal of KiVa is to prevent bullying and to tackle the cases of bullying effectively. The programme is based on decades of extensive research of bullying and its mechanisms. KiVa is based on three main

elements: prevention, intervention and monitoring.

Out of this training a team of five staff members were identified to form part of a core KiVA team and will complete/completed training in November 2025.

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by this school to address all forms of bullying behaviour, in whatever form and however motivated, including online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment. (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.

Bullying prevention and the four key areas of well-being

5.1 Culture and the Environment

We endeavour to create a positive school culture and environment through the following ways:

- School mission statement and child safeguarding statement displayed at main entrance
- Prominent well-being and Restorative Practice notice boards created by the children
- KiVa classroom displays, posters and school staff wearing KiVa high-vis jackets on yard
- Yard buddy bench
- Culture of a safe environment created where children are encouraged to speak to a trusted adult
- Class contracts in place promoting respectful, kind and inclusive behaviour,

- Student Council established to represent student voice
- Circle time check ins in classrooms
- Social and nurture groups in operation
- Kindness jar and thoughts box in classrooms
- Buddy systems in place
- 'What I'd like my teacher to know' activity completed with the children at the beginning of the school year
- Positive culture/expectations
- Amber flag attained for positive well-being strategies
- School assemblies held regularly.

5.2 Curriculum (Teaching & Learning)

Through our daily classroom teaching and learning and the implementation of the curriculum, we ensure the following:

- Stay safe programme taught annually
- Engagement with anti-bullying lessons with all classes each year
- Read aloud moral and social stories
- Weaving wellbeing and Lust for Life programmes in place
- Classroom contracts and agreements,
- Child friendly policy discussions
- Restorative practice implemented as a means of repairing and restoring positive relations
- Well-being week celebrated annually
- Ten modules of KiVa lessons are delivered approximately once a month, across 1st to 6th classes and involve discussions, group assignments and videos, as well as active exercises, involving games and assignments. See below the themes of each lesson.

Unit 1	Unit 2
1. Let's get to know each other!	1. Respect is for everyone
2. Emotions	2. In a group
3. Our class – everyone is included	3. Recognise bullying
4. Difference is richness	4. Hidden forms of bullying
5. We say NO to bullying	5. Responsibly online
6. We will not join in on bullying	6. Consequences of bullying
7. The bullied child needs your support	7. The group and bullying
8. I will not be bullied	8. Communicating support
9. Literature lesson	9. Stick up for yourself
10.The KiVa contract	10.KiVa school – let's do it together!

KiVa Online Games:

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

5.3 Policy and Planning

The aim of our Bí Cineálta/ KiVa policy is:

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

Current policies such as the Acceptable Usage Policy, Special Education Policy and Code of Behaviour all support the implementation of the Bí Cineálta/ KiVa policy.

5.4 Relationships and Partnerships

Interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal links such as the Board of Management, the Parents' Association, bus drivers and the bus escort, and various student committees and groups. We also have the following in place:

- Student Council representing student voice.
- Inter school participation in competitions e.g sport, music, debating, quizzes etc
- Communities of practice with neighbouring schools
- Home / School connection through monthly newsletter
- Open Day for Junior Infants welcoming parents and incoming Junior Infants'
- Promotion resilience strategies
- Community Guard
- Parish links strengthened through attending mass celebrated by priests of the parish
- Restorative Practice in place to restore and repair relations.
- Celebrating Achievements (academic and non-academic)
- Engagement in Erasmus programme linking in with schools in other countries
- A KiVa team composed of members of the In School Leadership team.
- Each year, students complete a KiVa survey online, which provides information to us about the prevalence of bullying in the school and what students feel the school is like. There is a separate survey for staff members with questions about implementing the programme. We use the survey responses to monitor the implementation of the programme and its impact.

5.5 Preventing Cyberbullying

Preventing Cyber Bullying, Homophobic/transphobic bullying, racist bullying, preventing sexual harassment.

In addition to the above-mentioned strategies, we have the following in place to prevent and address bullying:

- Workshops and activities organised to promote 'Safer Internet Day'
- Use of Webwise and other resources to heighten awareness of staying safe online
- Lessons on Cyberbullying as part of the KiVa programme
- Visit from community guards for class talks
- Acceptable Usage Policy in place.
- Supervised use of ipads for all children
- Guidelines for staff through detailed digital learning plan
- Social Stories to remind children about being kind online and how to use the internet safely
- Assemblies and class discussions about the harm that can be caused by cyberbullying.

5.6 Preventing homophobic / transphobic bullying behaviour

- Picture books - representation of cross section of society.
- A time and space for each child to share about their family
- Class discussion during Relationships and Sexuality Education programme
- Reminder of key messages in Bí Cineálta/ KiVa Anti bullying policy and procedures.
- Restorative practice
- Discussion of whole school strategies towards preventing and addressing bullying behaviour
- Enhanced education around the four key areas of wellbeing: Curriculum, Policy and Planning, Culture and the Environment and Relationships and partnerships.
- Social stories and drama implemented as teaching methodologies.

5.7 Preventing racist bullying behaviour

- Celebrating diversity through display of languages and cultures of children in our school. Celebrating different cultures, festivals and foods etc.
- Highlighting role models who are culturally diverse.
- Restorative Practice and perspective focusing on empathy and discussion
- Dramatising a variety of scenarios and role plays in class.
- Exploring films, youtube clips and books that explore similarities and differences in cultures around the world.
- Picture book representation for discussion in junior classes.

5.8 Preventing Sexist bullying behaviour

- Staff modelling of gender equality, S.P.H.E lessons and stories (picture books)
- Promotion kindness, respect, empathy and inclusion through class circle time and school culture
- Use of the arts to create context and show how sexist bullying behaviour is unacceptable.
- Participation in simulations and scenarios through the medium of drama.

5.9 Preventing sexual Harassment

- Open safe environment for reporting inappropriate 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):

- Teachers and SNAs are assigned designated areas for supervision for children entering and exiting at the beginning and end of the day.
- Supervision on yard during break and lunch time.
- Teachers will wear KiVa high-vis jackets on yard to remind students about our KiVa ethos and what they have learned about bullying as part of their KiVa modules
- All staff in the school have been trained in the Kiva anti-bullying programme, including the screening process for bullying . This means that all staff members can screen for potential bullying before passing suspected cases to the KiVa team. The KiVa Team are a group of 5-6 school staff who investigate cases of bullying. The KiVa programme includes documentation for each part of the screening and investigation process, which ensures clear documentation of suspected bullying cases.
- SNAs are assigned specific children to monitor at breaktime.
- Special cognizance of difficult dynamics within friendship groups.
- Active School Playground Leaders set up and run organised activities during yard time.
- Restorative Practice Buddies help to ensure that each child feels safe and happy on yard and has recourse to report incidents.
- Toilets are supervised at breaktime by the teacher on the first aid station.
- On wet days, girls from the senior classes help to monitor classroom-based activities in the junior classrooms.
- SNAs take staggered breaks to help to ensure that the child whom they assist is monitored at all times by an adult.
- Entry and exit points are monitored by teachers and SNAs at opening time and home time.
- All teachers are in their classrooms ready to welcome children at 8.50 a.m.

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

The principal, all teaching staff, SNAs, and the Board of Management will take responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour

The principal will follow up after twenty days to investigate if bullying has ceased.

The principal will inform the Board of Management of the incidences of bullying.

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
- As we are implementing the KiVa anti-bullying programme, members of the KiVa team address cases of bullying in cooperation with the class teacher

*Where a student is concerned about parents being informed, an appropriate plan to inform the parents will be created

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):

6.1 Identifying if bullying behavior has occurred

- KiVA screening form will be completed by staff member who has witnessed the bullying or has been made aware of it
- Member of the KiVa team will review the screening form. If it has occured in the KiVa team members class, the form will be passed onto a member of staff external to that class
- First points to consider: What, where, when and why.
- Each individual engaged with before being brought together as a group. If children do not want to express their view verbally, they should be encouraged to write down their account of the incident.
- When engaging with a group of children, each student will be asked for their account so that everyone is clear about each other's views. Each student should be supported following the group meeting.
- School uses definition and clear criteria to identify if behaviour can be classified as bullying: Is the behavior targeted, repeated and is there an imbalance of power at play?
- Where behaviour is not classified as bullying the incident is dealt with using the steps outlined in code of behaviour.

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore as far as is possible to repair and restore the relationships of the parties involved. With this in mind, the school will follow the procedures outlined below:

6.2 Where bullying behavior has occurred

- Bullying behaviour that occurs outside of school will not be investigated, unless it has an impact in school and in which case, the students involved will be supported
- If both students involved are attending our school, both students will be supported
- If only the student experiencing the bullying behaviour attends your school, they will be supported by engaging both with them and their parents.

- Staff will be fair and consistent in approach when addressing bullying behavior and will act without delay to ensure the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and supported.
- Staff will endeavour to identify the supports needed for the student displaying bullying behaviour to ensure their needs are met.

6.3 Requests to take no action

When a student reports bullying behaviour to staff:

- The student requests that staff do nothing but monitor the situation.
- Staff will show empathy and deal with the matter sensitively.
- Student and teacher work together on what steps are to be taken and how parents will be informed.

When parents report bullying behaviour to staff:

- If parent requests that the school takes no action, this request must be confirmed in writing by the parent.
- If a parent has difficulty with this step due to language, digital or other, they will be assisted and facilitated by the school.
- However, it remains at the school's discretion based on the circumstances and evidence provided whether or not, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

6.4 Determining if bullying has ceased

- Staff will engage with students and parents to review progress **within 20 school days** of initial intervention,
- The review will consider the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used and the relationship between the students involved.
- If it is agreed by all involved that bullying behaviour has ceased, ongoing support should still be provided for all students involved.
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher, students and parents should

review the strategies and meet again over an agreed timeframe.

- This will be repeated as necessary, until the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- If inappropriate behaviour is continued, the school will consult the school's Code of Behaviour.

6.5 Recording bullying behaviour

- All incidents of bullying will be recorded by staff using the KiVA Screening Form
- The KiVa Screening form and type of bullying behaviour will be documented. It will include where and when it took place. Initial date of engagement with students and parents will also be noted.
- The record will include the views of the students and parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.
- A review with students and their parents will take place and be documented to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of the student/parent in relation to this.
- Each engagement will be dated and will also include, the date it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased.
- Any engagement with external services/supports will also be noted.
- The records should be retained in accordance with the school's record-keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations.
- Where a student support file/plan exists, the school is encouraged to attach a copy of the bullying behaviour report to the file in order to assist the support team in providing consistent and holistic response and help support the student's wellbeing. Plans should be updated accordingly with relevant strategies and supports.

6.6 Complaint process

- School complaints procedure will be followed if a parent feels that a bullying incident has not been adequately addressed by the school.

- If parent/ student is dissatisfied by how the complaint has been handled they may make a further complaint to the Ombudsman for Children where they feel the school's actions have negatively impacted their child.

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):

- KiVA Anti-bullying programme (pposter on display, class noticeboard, displays about KiVa, school KiVa song)
- SPHE Curriculum: Explicit teaching of anti bullying through Stay Safe lessons taught at all class levels
- Awareness raised about cyberbullying throughout the year and particularly on 'Safer Internet Day.'
- Frequent check ins which children by staff members
- Safe space for vulnerable children in the form of our Nurture Group
- Communication with parents and other stakeholders involved in the care of children and their well-being.
- Transparent approach taken to addressing issues which arise. Children are informed of the process we follow to address bullying behaviour.
- Supervision and monitoring of the environment to prevent bullying.
- Peer support network encouraged where the children support each other.
- Bí Cineálta child friendly policy is displayed around the school and referenced during SPHE lessons
- Social groups in place to support children with identification of zones of regulation in place.
- Explicit teaching of school and class rules particularly at the beginning of each school year with clear expectations outlined.
- Go phone free initiative promoted by the Parents' Association.
- Be kind on line garda talk and workshops organised to educate children in this area.
- Positive school culture and communication modelled and encouraged at all times.
- Teacher Professional Learning availed of by staff members via online and face to face courses
- Support and advice from outside agencies sought when appropriate e.g play

therapy and other counselling supports e.g NEPS, OIDE, Webwise, National Parents' Council, DCU (Anti-Bullying Centre) and Tusla for advice in cases where it is considered that bullying behavior is a child protection concern.

In Scoil Bhride, 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.

The school will be receiving training in KIVA, an anti- bullying programme in September 2025. This programme will be implemented whole school in the 2025/2026 school year.

Signed: _____ (Chairperson)

Date: 23.9.25

Signed: Eimear Hennessy (Principal)

Date: 23.09.2025