Presentation Secondary School Clonmel

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Introduction

Presentation Secondary School Clonmel is voluntary secondary school which caters for students of all religions and backgrounds in accordance with current equal status legislation.

Mission Statement

Presentation Secondary School Clonmel is committed to offering our students a holistic Catholic education in a caring environment conducive to learning and personal development

Our Ethos

It is the aim of our school to provide a programme of education for students that will equip them to meet the challenges that they will face as young adults in the 21st century.

Ownership of the school is vested in a trust body called CEIST. CEIST (Catholic Education, an Irish Schools Trust) was established by five Catholic Religious Congregations – Daughters of Charity, Presentation Sisters, Sisters of the Christian Retreat, Sisters of Mercy, and Missionaries of the Sacred Heart – to provide a sustainable moral and legal trustee framework for post-primary Catholic education in Ireland. Rooted in the founding vision of its Congregations, CEIST emphasises the dignity and rights of individuals, empowers the vulnerable, and prepares young people to be agents of social transformation. The Trust is dedicated to fostering inclusive, hospitable, excellent, and compassionate learning environments inspired by Gospel values and the wisdom of its Founders. CEIST promotes collaborative school faith communities, supports staff in their essential roles, and addresses the evolving needs of youth. Engaging in ecumenical dialogue, CEIST values its Catholic identity while working with other Christian traditions and all people of goodwill to advocate for the poor, justice, and environmental stewardship, respecting diversity.

The core values that all our schools subscribe to are:

- Promoting Spiritual and Human Development
- Achieving Quality in Teaching and Learning
- Showing Respect for Every Person

- Creating Community
- Being Just and Responsible

The Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School Clonmel 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. As a school community, we share the responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to mitigate the negative impact of bullying on our students.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend Presentation Secondary School Clonmel are kept safe from harm, with the well-being of our students as our foremost priority. We recognise the detrimental effects that bullying can have on the lives of our students, and we are fully dedicated to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

In accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, we will take all reasonable steps 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 *"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. This harm can be physical, social, and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between individuals or groups within society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Presentation Secondary School Clonmel will develop and implement a specific Bí Cineálta policy that sets out how our school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour that does not constitute bullying will be provided within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Culture and Environment

A positive and inclusive school culture is essential for preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. Presentation Secondary School Clonmel aims to create an environment where students and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected, and supported. Relationships among all members of the school community should be founded on respect, care, integrity, and trust.

Open communication among the patron CEIST, Board of Management, school staff, students, and their parents is crucial to fostering a collaborative approach and shared responsibility in preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. The school leadership team plays a vital role in influencing the school culture and setting standards and expectations for the community regarding bullying prevention and response.

Each staff member is responsible for maintaining a school culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and for adopting a consistent approach to addressing such behaviour. Students are encouraged to promote kindness and inclusion within their peer groups, contributing to a positive and supportive environment for all. Parents/guardians, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an atmosphere where bullying is not tolerated by promoting empathy and respect.

Section A: Development/Review of Our Bí Cineálta Policy

All members of our school community will have the opportunity to provide input into the initial development and annual review of this policy in the following ways.

Stakeholders	Methods of Consultation and Future Review	Consultation Dates/Periods	Review Period
School Staff	Staff Meeting/Training MLT Meetings Pastoral Care Meetings	18th March 2025	Annually
Students	Surveys Focus Group "Drop Everything and Teach" SPHE Lessons Student Council Assemblies	19th May 2025 21st May 2025	Annually
Parents	Parent-Teacher Meetings Parents' Association Meetings Coffee Mornings Webinars Information Evenings	February 2025 March 2025	Annually
Board of Management	Meetings and Review	June 2025 October 2026	Annually
Wider School Community	Informal Discussions	Continuous	Continuous

Date policy was approved: _____

Date policy will be reviewed: _____

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies are in place to both prevent and address bullying behaviour and facilitate early intervention where possible. A proactive approach is encouraged during periods of supervision, which occurs before and after school and during morning and lunch breaks. Designated areas for socialising and eating are assigned to students.

We provide facilities such as a wide variety of lunchtime activities along with quiet spaces during designated lunchtimes.

Each year group has an assigned Year Head who carries out student 'check-ins' on a continuous basis.

There are two Pastoral Care Teams in place (Junior and Senior), comprising the Principal, Deputy Principal, Year Heads, Guidance Counsellor, and ASD Class Lead Teachers. The PC teams meet once a week to record any concerns and agree on actions to be taken.

Our school community aims to prevent various forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, homophobic and transphobic bullying, racist bullying, sexist bullying, and sexual harassment, as outlined in the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Some our strategies include:

- Promotion of a positive school climate where respect and kindness among stakeholders is key
- Creating a positive, inclusive classroom atmosphere
- Building strong, respectful relationships with students to foster a safe and supportive environment.
- Addressing inappropriate behaviour promptly, including restorative practices and clear classroom expectations.
- Effective middle and senior leadership teams
- Using the Pastoral Care system to assist in managing and resolving bullying incidents
- A whole-school approach to the prevention of bullying
- Increased vigilance during breaks and transitions in unsupervised areas
- A fair and transparent Code of Behaviour
- An Acceptable Use Policy for technology

- Digital Awareness Information
- Encouragement of Peer Support
- Celebration of Diversity
- Support for EAL (English as an Additional Language) students
- Awareness Programs in CSPE, SPHE, and RSE
- Anti-Bullying Workshops and Guest Speakers during Positivity Week
- Consistent Recording, Investigation, and Follow-Up of Bullying Behaviour
- Ongoing Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Bí Cineálta Procedures

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour is to stop the bullying and restore relationships among students involved, rather than to apportion blame. All staff have a responsibility to report suspected incidences of bullying by liaising with the Year Head and completing the Bullying Incident Report Form *(Appendix 1)*

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying is heard and reassured
- Maintain the privacy of those involved
- Conduct all conversations with sensitivity, considering the age and ability of those involved
- Listen to the views of the student experiencing bullying regarding how best to address the situation
- Take action in a timely manner
- Inform parents/guardians of those involved

Identifying Bullying Behaviour

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

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

If the answer to all these questions is "Yes," then the behaviour is considered bullying and should be addressed according to the Bí Cineálta Procedures.

Strategies for Addressing Bullying Behaviour

- Engage with each student individually if a group is involved, then meet as a group where necessary

- Document the incident and actions taken

- Review the situation with students and their parents no later than 20 school days after initial engagement

- If bullying persists, re-evaluate strategies in consultation with students and their parents

Supports

The school may seek support from various resources when working with students affected by bullying, including:

- Counselling services (through guidance or other services) - Building self-esteem and developing social skills - Restorative practices to rebuild and maintain relationships - Cooperation with parents	- Referral to outside agencies if necessary - National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) - Oide - Webwise - National Parents Council - TUSLA

Record-Keeping

All bullying behaviour will be recorded on the Bullying Incident Report Form (*Appendix 1*), including the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of engagement with students and parents. This documentation will include the actions and supports agreed upon to address bullying behaviour. If any bullying behaviour raises child protection concerns, it will be addressed immediately 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 reported, ongoing incidents, and trends or patterns identified. The update will not contain personal or identifying information.

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 will be displayed in the school and made available online and in hard copy.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually or as needed, following input from our school community.

Signed: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _____

Presentation Secondary School Clonmel

Bí Cineálta

In Compliance with Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2024

Appendix 1: Bullying Incident Report Form - Bí Cineálta

Section 1: General Information

Date of report	
Name of student(s) reporting (if applicable)	
Name of student(s) affected	
Name of alleged bully/bullies	
Year and class	
Teacher(s)/Staff Member(s) completing the report	

Section 2: Incident Details

Date of incident	
Time of incident	
Location of incident	
Description of incident *(include as much detail as possible – attach extra sheets if necessary)*	
Form of bullying behaviour *(check all that apply)*	- Physical - Gender-identity bullying - Verbal - Extortion - Damage to personal property

	- Written bullying - Exclusion/isolation - Relational bullying - Cyberbullying - Other - Intimidation

Section 3: Initial Engagement

Date of initial engagement with student(s) involved	
Summary of student(s) view of the incident (*impact of the bullying behaviour)*	
Detail of initial engagement with parent(s)/guardian(s)	
Summary of parent(s)/guardian(s) view on the incident and actions to be taken	

Section 4: Follow Up Actions and Review

Actions taken to address the bullying behaviour (*check as applied)*	Warning issued Mediation between students Parental involvement Referral to counselling/support services Other (please specify)
Follow Up Review Date	
Has the bullying behaviour ceased?	

Date of determination that bullying has ceased	
Student's view on resolution	
Parent(s)/Guardian(s) view on resolution	

Section 5: External Services/Supports (if applicable)

Were external support services engaged? If 'Yes' please give details	

Section 6: Record Retention and Compliance

This report is to be retained in accordance with the school's record-keeping policy and data protection regulations.

Signature of Reporting Staff Member: _____

Date: _____

Presentation Secondary School Clonmel

Bí Cineálta

In Compliance with Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2024

Appendix 2 - Impact of Bullying on Individuals and the School Environment

1. Emotional and Psychological Distress

- Bullying can cause stress, humiliation, and insecurity.
- Victims of bullying often experience anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, which can affect their overall mental health.
- Bullying can cause changes in mood and behaviour.

2. Academic Performance

- Bullying can have a detrimental effect on experiences of education and educational outcomes.
- Bullying can lead to decreased concentration, lower grades, and higher absenteeism, impacting students' academic success.

3. Physical Health Problems

- Victims may suffer from physical symptoms such as headaches, stomach aches, and sleep disturbances due to the stress of being bullied.

4. School Climate

- A school environment where bullying is prevalent can become hostile and unsafe, affecting the well-being of all students and staff.

5. Long-Term Consequences

- Bullying can have a severe and profound impact on people in both the short and long term.
- The effects of bullying can persist into adulthood, leading to ongoing mental health issues, difficulties in forming relationships, and challenges in professional settings.