



Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

May 2025



Rialtas na hÉireann
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Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

Mission Statement

School Mission statement: At Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. we aspire to develop a caring and inclusive learning community that encourages the full potential of each person.

The mission is realised through our core values of Excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community and Respect. Rath as Saothar – Success through effort

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (welfare) Act 2000 and Bí Cineálta: Procedures to prevent and address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, the Board of Management of Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. has adopted the following Policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in conjunction with and within the framework of Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'s overall Code of 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*. These procedures can be found in full at <https://assets.gov.ie/296487/d0ea26bc-5b6c-45f3-b0fd-2f3e2d3c1f07.pdf>.

This policy is available to our school community on Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'s website and in hard copy on request at the school office. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. and is also available on our website, in student journals and in hard copy on request from the school office.

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: _____
(Chairperson of board of management)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

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Link to Mission Statement & Key Principles of Best Practice

The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying behaviour and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students and is therefore fully committed to ensuring that policy and practice in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. is guided by the four key principles of Cineáltas:

1. Prevention
2. Support
3. Oversight
4. and Community

The Board of Management of Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying/alleged 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*.

This policy addresses bullying behaviour which relates to students in the school. However, in line with employers' obligation to have policies and procedures in place to deal with workplace bullying, attention is drawn to Tipperary ETBs policy for the prevention and resolution of bullying at work which provides information for staff, should the need arise. The policy can be found on Tipperary ETBs staff hub.

The Board of Management of Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. 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, 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 their wellbeing is supported. 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 *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 Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'s Code of Behaviour and in the Acceptable use policy.

The definition above sets out clear criteria to help school communities to prevent, correctly identify and address bullying among students. Alleged incidents of bullying are, however, often complex and must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The core elements of the definition are further described below:

➤ Targeted behaviour

- Bullying is deliberate, unwanted behaviour that causes harm to others, and where the student displaying bullying behaviour knows that their behaviour is or will be perceived as harmful by the child or young person experiencing the behaviour. Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. The harm can be physical (for example, personal injury, damage to or loss of property), social (for example withdrawal, loneliness, exclusion) and/or emotional (for example, low self-esteem, depression, anxiety) and can have a serious and long-term negative impact on the student experiencing the bullying behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying but, importantly, must still be addressed under Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'s code of behaviour.

➤ Repeated behaviour

- Bullying takes the form of a systematic pattern of behaviour which is repeated over time. Single offline incidents of intentional negative behaviour involving an imbalance of power are not considered bullying but must still be addressed under Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'s code of behaviour or Acceptable Use policy. Posting a single harmful message/image/video online, and which is highly likely to be reposted or shared with others can therefore be seen as bullying behaviour.

➤ Imbalance of power

- In incidents of bullying, the student experiencing the bullying behaviour finds it hard to defend themselves as a result of the abuse of a real or perceived imbalance of power. This imbalance of power may manifest itself through differences (for example) in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin including membership of the Traveller and/or Roma communities, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, experience of the care system, disability or the receipt of special education. In incidents of online (or cyber) bullying, the imbalance of power may relate to online anonymity, technical proficiency and possession of information/images/video, and the inability of the targeted student to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour

A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards another student is not bullying behaviour. However, a single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be visible to a wide audience and has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and so becomes a repeated behaviour.

Disagreement between students, or instances where students don't want to be friends or to remain friends, is not considered bullying behaviour unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others including deliberate manipulation of friendship groups.

Some students with additional educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves or others. It is important to note that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned but, in certain situations, they are an automatic response which they can't control.

Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying.

These behaviours, while not defined as bullying, can be distressing.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'s Code of Behaviour.

Criminal Behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be considered criminal behaviour under certain circumstances and legal consequences can apply. The age of criminal responsibility in Ireland is 12 years.

Some online behaviour may be illegal, and students need to be aware of the far-reaching consequences of posting inappropriate or harmful content online. In cases of intimate imagery, the Harassment, Harmful Communications and Related Offences Act 2020, also known as Coco's Law, ***criminalises the non-consensual sharing of intimate images and also criminalises threatening to share these images.***

If bullying behaviour ***involves physical violence or threats of violence***, it may be considered ***assault***.

If bullying behaviour involves ***discrimination or hate speech*** targeting a student based on their race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller Community, it may be ***considered a hate crime*** under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989, and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges.

If bullying behaviour ***involves sexual harassment or sexual assault***, this may also be ***considered criminal behaviour***.

An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority for investigating alleged criminal behaviour.

Types of Bullying Behaviour deemed to be inappropriate:

(this list is not exhaustive)

General behaviours which apply to all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g., sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc. • Physical aggression and or uninvited physical contact • Damage to property • Name calling • Slagging/teasing/'just messing' • The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person • Offensive graffiti • Extortion • Intimidation • Insulting or offensive gestures • The "look" • Invasion of personal space • A combination of any of the types listed. • Exclusion • No innocent bystander
Cyber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denigration: Spreading rumours, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation • Harassment: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual • Impersonation: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name • Flaming: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight • Trickery: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online • Outing: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images • Exclusion: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group • Cyber stalking: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety • Silent telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls • Abusive text messages • Abusive email • Abusive communication on social networks e.g., Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles • Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures • Abusive posts on any form of communication technology
Identity Based Behaviours	<p>Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community).</p>

Homophobic and Transgender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation • Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation • Name calling e.g., gay, queer, lesbian ... used in a derogatory manner • Physical intimidation or attacks • Threats
Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background • Exclusion on the basis of any of the above
Relational	<p>This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malicious gossip • Isolation & exclusion • Ignoring • Excluding from the group • Taking someone's friends away • "Bitching" • Spreading rumours • Breaking confidence • Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear • The "look" • Use of terminology such as "nerd" in a derogatory way
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching • Harassment
Disablist/Additional Educational Needs, Disability – Learning Difficulties and Gifted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name calling • Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying • Taking advantage of some students' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues. • Mimicking a person's disability • Setting others up for ridicule

This Policy Applies

- On the Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. premises - in class, between classes, at break times etc.
- While in school uniform
- On the way to and from school
- On school-based activity, school tours etc.
- To anything done in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'s name
- To any behaviour that adversely affects Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'s reputation or the education of any student in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

It should be noted, however, that in accordance with the Department of Education Bí Cineáltas Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools; Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. considers that 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, Coláiste Mhuire will deal with it in line with our Bí Cineáltas policy.

Rights and Responsibilities of Each Member of the School Community

Right	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have the right to be safe in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have a responsibility to make our school a safe and secure place for others

Rights and responsibilities of students and staff

I have a right to be:	I have the responsibility to ensure that:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treated with respect Physically safe and to expect my property to be safe at school Free from all forms of bullying Able to learn & teach without disruption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Others are treated with respect Others are physically safe and the property of others is safe Others are free from all forms of bullying Others/students are able to learn without disruption Bullying behaviour is acted upon as appropriate

Rights and responsibilities of parents

I have a right to:	I have the responsibility to ensure that:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect that my child is safe in school and can learn without disruption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To report bullying behaviour to the school Cooperate fully with the implementation of school policy

Responsibilities of bystanders/witnesses

I should:	I should not:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say 'no' or 'stop' when you see or hear someone behaving unfairly - be assertive but not aggressive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join in bullying behaviour for example, laughing at, sneering, 'slagging' or fighting etc.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Seek help immediately from an adult, if the situation is dangerous ● Tell when you know a student is being bullied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Say nothing because I think it has nothing to do with me ● Cheer on somebody who is bullying ● Stay in a dangerous situation, e.g. a fight. ● Bully the 'bully'
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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 provide input into the development/review of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	6/2/25 25/3/25 2/4/25	Student Support team collaboration AP1 Consultation Presentation to whole staff Opportunity for Policy feedback Staff Survey
Students	24/3/25	Student Survey
Parents	20/1/25 9/4/25	Parent Survey Draft Policy to parent subgroup
Board of Management	13/5/25	Discussion and presentation of policy to BOM
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	15/4/25	Meeting with Glasheens bus company Meeting with Relish Fine Foods Meeting with Harveys Garage and shop Meeting with Doyles Corner Meeting with Dome Management
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. 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):

Bullying Prevention aligned with Key Areas of Wellbeing Promotion

Culture and Environment	Curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open Door Policy ● Active Student Support Team ● Students encouraged to tell ● Visible Displays around the school ● Anti bullying posters visible on toilets doors ● Anti bullying section in school diary ● Anti bullying addressed in school assemblies ● Display of students' work ● Designated area to report bullying issues- Student Post Box ● Support email address - students can email support@cmco.ie ● Empowerment of student voice- Students' Council, Le Cheile, Surveys 3 times per year, Focus Groups ● Designated areas for students- split breaks, separate toilets for junior and senior year groups, Library, Sports Blitz, Quiet Room, Autism Centre/ Sensory Room Access, ● Random Acts of Kindness as part of the ENERGY programme ● Respect charter displayed in all classrooms ● Wellbeing plan/committee and one of the actions is around restorative practice ● School Guidance Counselors ● Behaviour for Learning Teacher ● HSCL ● SCP ● Students going on trips and activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Various awareness weeks throughout the school calendar e.g. Stand-up week, Bí Cineálta Week, Breathing weeks, Nutrition weeks, Random acts of Kindness week, Exercise week ● Good things exercise in RE/IMBV classes ● Internet Safety Week, ● Sports Day ● Variety of programmes are run in SPHE and Computers, and Wellbeing/Guidance Classes e.g. Lockers, Fuse, Alert, Show Racism the red card, Be in Ctrl etc... ● Wellbeing in subject plans ● Wellbeing indicators addressed in Teaching & Learning ● 1st year transition programme through Belonging Plus ● Drama – School Show ● AEN/ASD: Primary school visits, weekly AEN meetings, school, culture of inclusion, updates to staff from management & AEN meetings, regular staff meeting updates, whole school AEN, yearly meetings of AEN lead teachers and class teachers of first year, Provision mapping ● Staff CPD on area of anti-bullying ● Year head anti-bullying surveys

Relationships and Partnerships	Policy and Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Linking with external services e.g. NEPS, CAMHS, Tusla, Gardaí ● Linking with BOM, PA, Students' Council, Local clubs, Community Activities, Mini Projects, Subject specific, Class events, Fundraising events ● Student Support Team ● Guest Speakers ● Garda Visits ● Extra-Curricular- Coaches, Choreographers, Artists, Creative Schools ● Jigsaw One Good School ● Planet Youth ● Merit System ● Partnerships with other schools (eg Scoil Cormac, Primary schools etc) ● Use of facilities eg the Source ● Cultural Exchanges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Code of Behaviour Policy ● Acceptable Use Policy ● Artificial Intelligence Policy ● Child Safeguarding ● Data Protection ● Student Support Team Policy ● Critical Incident Policy ● Wellbeing Policy ● SPHE Policy ● Staff CPD is supported ● Staff aware that they are all mandated persons, child protection procedures handed out each year as reminder and complete Children First E-Learning Programme. ● Principal & Deputy Principal complete DLP/DDLP training and refreshers

Supervision & Monitoring

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

In addition to all the practices identified above under Culture and Environment, Curriculum, Planning and Policy and Relationships and Partnerships Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. has the following supervision and monitoring policies to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

- As evidenced by surveys carried out as part of our School Self Evaluation Report on Ethos, our students feel respected by their peers and teachers and enjoy positive relationships in our school which aligns to our core values of respect, care and community. The further embedding and ensuring that students who transition into the school are familiar with these values takes place in first year and is explicitly addressed in the “belonging plus” programme.
- All staff are watchful and observe relationships between students in class, note absence patterns and let it be known that high standards of behaviour are always expected. Use of the Reach for the Stars and merit and demerit systems are encouraged.
- Survey of Students - Students are surveyed through an online form 3 times per year by the Senior Management Team to ascertain what they feel is going well and what they would change if they could. Students are also surveyed at the discretion of their year heads.

- Student Support Team – the student support team meet weekly and operate a check and connect system where teachers meet students where concerns may have been brought to their attention
- Posters throughout the school address the need for a telling environment and surveys carried out at the whole school level and by year heads reinforce this.
- The support email address and the postbox outside the staff room also help to encourage this
- When required by the class tutors, a class teacher or member of the student support team will act as “one good adult” for a child who may need additional support using a check and connect system which is routed through the school student support team.
- There is a digital CCTV system throughout the school and in line with child protection risk assessment all classrooms have windows on the doors
- Supervision in yard and corridors and in class - A weekly schedule of student supervision on corridors and yard is in place. Any causes for concern are dealt with and reported to school management.
- There are split breaks and lunches so that 1, 2, TY are out together and 3, 5 and 6 are out together. TY are deliberately on break with 1st years to allow the Le Cheile leaders to mix with the 1st years.
- We have posters and artwork throughout the school to promote a culture of kindness and support for students.
- Throughout the school grounds there are benches and places to sit and relax. The green leafy environment as well as our connection to nature, through the willow garden, school hens etc provide a positive environment for students.
- There is also an email support@cmco.ie and a post-box (outside the staffroom) where students can post concerns.
- Students are surveyed 3 times a year and asked what they like about the school and what they would change if they could. Any report of bullying in that survey is referred to the relevant year head.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. reserves the right to investigate allegations of bullying (and to take disciplinary action where necessary) where bullying is carried out by a member of the school community and it impinges on the work or well-being of a student in the school, even where the bullying acts are committed outside of the school. Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. takes a restorative approach in addressing bullying behaviour.

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. reserves the right, in accordance with Section 6 Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools to seek the assistance of agencies such as NEPS, the HSE, and the Gardaí, where it deems such assistance is necessary in dealing effectively with bullying behaviour. In any case, where Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed deems bullying behaviour to be potentially abusive (Section 2 Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) it will consult with the HSE’s Children and Family Services to assist it in

- (a) drawing up an appropriate response or

- (b) to obtain advice or
- (c) to make a formal child protection report to the HSE or the Gardaí (as appropriate) in accordance with the DES Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary (revised 2023)

The steps that will be taken by Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed 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):

Responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is as follows:

- Year head for each year group assisted by principal and deputy principal if necessary
- Following investigation by year head - the anti-bullying team.

When bullying behaviour occurs, Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. 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

Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed., in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties 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 as outlined in this policy.

- It is important that students and/or their parents report bullying behaviour in a timely manner
- Where a member of staff has a concern about a student being bullied, either as a result of a personal observation or as a result of receiving a report from a third party, the teacher should without delay refer the matter to the Year Head. It is important that the Year Head, not the observing teacher, carries out the investigation.
- When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred relevant teachers will consider: what, where, when and why?

- In investigating bullying behaviour or addressing bullying behaviour in any way, Year Heads are welcome to seek the assistance and support of the principal, the deputy principal or the student support team at any time.
- Investigating bullying- initially a “no-blame” approach is taken but the behaviour is taken very seriously.
- Year heads will investigate all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour with a view to establishing the facts and resolving the issue. When investigating bullying Appendix C of the Bí Cineálta procedures will be referenced.
- Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. reserves the right to ask any student to write an account of what happened, as part of an investigation. This will be standard procedure and does not necessarily imply that a student is guilty of misbehaviour. As part of this the student who reports bullying behaviour will be asked to note what happened, when it happened and who was present.
- If a group is involved, students will be engaged with, individually, and thereafter students involved will be met as a group and supported individually after the meeting.
- Students who are alleged to have been involved in bullying behaviour are interviewed by their year head to establish the nature and extent of the behaviour and the reasons for it.
- In the event that it is established that a student has been bullied they will be referred by their year head to the guidance counsellor for support and their parents will be informed and views of parents will be noted for reporting purposes.
- In all cases if a student has been involved in bullying behaviour, the year head will contact their parents, give a report of the investigation to the anti-bullying team - using the compass template - and refer the student to the Anti-bullying Team and note the incident in the anti-bullying register.
- The Anti-bullying Team will speak to the student(s) accused of bullying behaviour and if it is a first offence the student(s) will be given a verbal warning and referred to the guidance counsellor for support.
- When an investigation is completed and/or a bullying situation is resolved the Anti-Bullying Team members involved will prepare a report - using the compass template - to include the findings of the investigation, strategy adopted and the outcome of the intervention, as well as any other relevant information. This will also be noted in the anti-bullying register.
- The Anti-bullying Team does not apportion blame but rather treats bullying behaviour as a “mistake” that can and must be remedied. It emphasises that its intention is not to punish perpetrators but to talk to them, to explain how harmful and hurtful bullying is and to seek a promise that it will stop. If that promise is forthcoming and is honoured there will be no penalty and that will be the end of the matter. Students who report bullying therefore are not getting

others “in trouble” so much as enabling them to get out of trouble into which they may ultimately get into if the bullying continues. This is based on restorative practice principles.

- If the student is found to be engaged in bullying behaviour for a second time, they are asked to sign a binding promise that they will treat all students fairly, equally and respectfully including the targeted student. This will also be noted in the anti-bullying register.
- If the student is found to be engaged in bullying behaviour for a third time, they and their parents will be asked to sign a binding promise that they will treat all students fairly, equally and respectfully. This will also be noted in the anti-bullying register.
- Any subsequent issues with a student will be considered to be an extreme breach of the code of behaviour and will be dealt with accordingly (see the Code of Behaviour at www.cmco.ie).
- Year heads will liaise with the Anti-bullying Team no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement and parents and students will be checked in with by the year head.
- If Bullying behaviour has not been resolved after 20 days it will be referred to Tusla.
- This will be recorded and the date that it is determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased will also be recorded.
- The Anti-bullying Team will check in with students involved again within two months to determine if the situation has been resolved. At the two month mark they will inform the student to contact their year head if any further issue arises.

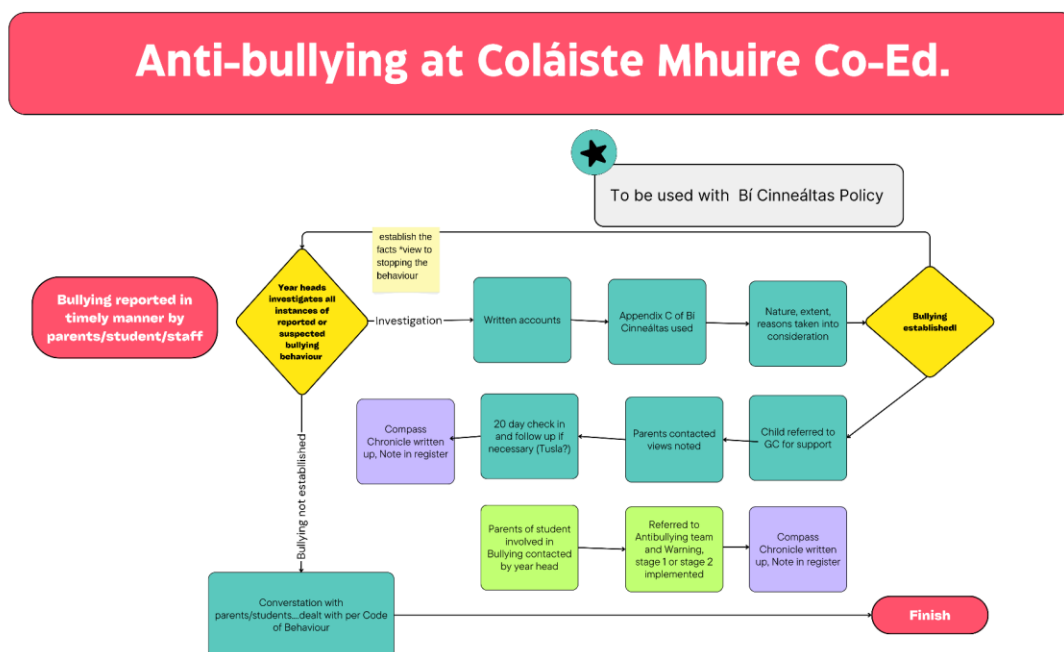


Figure 1: An illustration of the steps in dealing with a bullying situation at Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

Bullying reported in timely manner by parents/student/staff	
Referring/investigating teachers will consider: what, where, when and why?	
"No-blame" approach but the behaviour is taken very seriously.	
Initial Investigation	
Year heads investigate all instances of reported or suspected bullying behaviour* establish the facts *view to stopping the behaviour	
Right to ask any student to write an account of what happened	
When investigating bullying Appendix C of the BÍ Cineálta procedures will be referenced.	
Group - students engaged with, individually, and thereafter met as a group and supported individually afterwards	
Students alleged to be involved in bullying behaviour: interviewed by their year head to establish *nature *extent and *reasons	
Bullying established?	
Student has been bullied	
	referred to the guidance counsellor for support
	parents informed, views noted
	check in by year head after 20 days/liaise with Anti bullying team
	Not resolved after 20 days referral to Tusla
Student has been involved in bullying behaviour	
	year head will contact their parents,
	give a report of the investigation to the anti-bullying team - using the compass template
	and refer the student to the Anti-bullying Team.
Anti Bullying team	
Speak to student	
First Offence	verbal warning and referred to the guidance counsellor for support.
	Anti-Bullying Team members involved will prepare a report - using the compass template
Second Offence	Students asked to sign a binding promise that they will treat all students fairly, equally and respectfully including the targeted student.
	Anti-Bullying Team members involved will prepare a report - using the compass template
Third Offence	Student and parents will be asked to sign a binding promise that they will treat all students fairly, equally and respectfully.
	Anti-Bullying Team members involved will prepare a report - using the compass template
	Any subsequent issues with a student will be considered to be an extreme breach of the code of behavior and will be dealt with accordingly (see the Code of Behaviour at www.cmco.ie)
Follow up	
Year heads will liaise with the Anti-bullying Team no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement and parents and students will be checked in with by the year head.	
This will be recorded and the date that it is determined that the bullying behavior has ceased will also be recorded	
The Anti-bullying Team will check in with students involved again within 2 months to determine if the situation has been resolved. At the 2 month mark they will inform the student to contact their year head if any further issue arises.	

Figure 2: the steps in dealing with a bullying situation at Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

Recording of bullying behaviour

Those involved in investigating and resolving bullying behaviour will note and report developments as follows and, in doing so, they will comply with relevant data protection legislation. It is imperative that all recording of bullying incidents must be done in an objective and factual manner.

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'s procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour are as follows:

- All incidents of bullying behaviour should be recorded by year heads using the compass chronicle.
- The record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour (Section 2 BÍ Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools), if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students and their parents.
- The record will include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.
- It will 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.
- It will document the date of each of these engagements and the date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased.

- Any engagement with external services/supports will also be noted.
- These records will be retained in accordance with the school's record keeping policy and in line with data protection regulations.
- Where a Student Support File exists for a student, a cross reference to the compass chronicle will be made. This will assist the student support team in providing a consistent and holistic response to support the wellbeing of the students involved. Where a Student Support Plan exists, the plan will be updated to incorporate response strategies and associated supports.

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred

- The Year Head must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school 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
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the Year Head and Anti-bullying Team should review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents and take next steps.
- A timeframe should be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased
- 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

Requests to take no action

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour other than "look out" for them. The staff member should in any case inform the year head while bearing confidentiality and this reticence in mind. The student may not want to be identified as having told someone about the bullying behaviour. They may feel that telling someone might make things more difficult for them. Where this occurs, it is important that the member of staff and year head shows empathy to the student, deals with the matter sensitively and speaks with the student to work out together what steps can be taken to address the matter and how their parents will be informed of the situation. It is important that the student who has experienced bullying behaviour feels safe.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. *Parents should put this request in writing to the school or be facilitated to do so where there are literacy, digital literacy or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.*

Support

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Students who experience bullying or witness bullying:

The school's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is as follows:

- Students may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.
- In this regard the relevant Student Support Team members will work closely with the student to ensure they are actively supported in the school and to engage in school based activities they enjoy. They may be placed on our school's focus in/out support list and/or engage in check and connect.
- The school's guidance department will also put in place a program of support in conjunction with the Year Head
- The learning strategies applied within the school will also allow for the enhancement of the student's self-worth

Students who display bullying behaviour:

- Students who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.
- The Year Head in conjunction with the relevant Student Support Team will work closely with the student in this regard.

Outside agency support:

- The school in certain circumstances may also seek the support and advice of TUSLA, EWO, NEPS, NCSE, second level school support services, HSE and any other agency deemed appropriate to support the school in dealing with incidents of bullying.

Links with other policies

- Code of Behaviour
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement

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 been reported since the last meeting, 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
- Any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant.
- If any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student
- If a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- If any additional support is needed from the board of management
- If the school's Bí Cineálta policy needs urgent review in advance of the annual review.

This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will document the number of new incidents of bullying behaviour, the number currently ongoing and the total number of incidents of bullying behaviour since the beginning of the school year.

The minutes will also note where the board has considered the bullying behaviour, verbal update and document when the board has decided that an urgent review of the policy is required.

This policy is available to our school community on Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.'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.

Appendix A: Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour the Year Head should 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 should 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.

Appendix B: Alleged Bullying Incident Student Statement Form

DATE: _____

STUDENT: _____

DETAILS: Include time, place, names of alleged perpetrators, names of bystanders. Detail here both sides of the event

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Appendix C: Student Behaviour Promise

Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. Student Behaviour Promise

Student Name: _____ **Class:** _____

I recognise that my fellow students and I are all unique in many ways - such as our hair color, skin color, clothing, height, weight, size, accents, religions, nationalities, sexual orientations, past and current homes, hobbies, personalities, academic abilities, study habits, athletic skills, musical preferences, and much more.

I don't want to be treated unfairly or made to feel bad because of any of these differences, or simply because someone might not like me.

I understand that I have the right to be different, and no one has the right to treat me unfairly or be unkind because of that.

I know I am entitled to fair and respectful treatment both in Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed., in line with the school's Bí Cineálta Policy & Code of Behaviour, and outside of school as well.

Likewise, I recognise that all students deserve to be treated with fairness, equality, and respect. It is wrong to treat anyone in any other way. Therefore, I promise to treat all my fellow students with fairness, equality, and respect, regardless of our differences or personal feelings.

In particular:

(Handwrite below "I will always treat (Name) equally, fairly and respectfully")

Signed: Student: _____ Date: _____

Teacher: _____

Appendix D: Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update

Guide to providing Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management meeting of Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed.

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous board of management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school year	

Where incidents of bullying behaviour have been reported since the last meeting, the update must include a verbal report which should include the following information where relevant:

- the trends and patterns identified such as the form of bullying behaviour, type of bullying behaviour if known, location of bullying behaviour, when it occurred etc
- the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour
- if any serious incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred which have had a serious adverse impact on a student.
- if a parent has informed the school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the board of management
- if the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.

Appendix E: Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management (the Board) 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.

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

1. When did the Board formally adopt its Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour in accordance with the *Bí Cineálta Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*? Insert date when the Bí Cineálta policy was last adopted by the school.

_____/_____/20__

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? _____/_____/20__

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 *Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying*

☐ Yes ☐ No

Behaviour for Primary and Post- Primary Schools?

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?

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

Appendix F: Notification regarding the board of management's annual review of the school's Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management of Coláiste Mhuire Co-Ed. 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 on _____.

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: _____
(Chairperson of board of management)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(Principal)

Date: _____

Date of next review: _____