

Lanesborough Primary School
Lanesborough, Co. Longford, N39EH04
Tel: 043 3321545
Roll Number: 18259R Email: smgslb2020@gmail.com



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Lanesborough Primary School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Lanesborough Primary School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of [Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024](#).

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

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

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

In Lanesborough Primary School, the primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.

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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:

Bullying is 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.

Note: A one off incident 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.

The detailed definition of Bullying is provided in Chapter 2 of the [Bí Cineálta procedures](#).

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

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

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

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	26th March 2025	*Half day closure for training and to get input
	April 2025	*Google form questionnaire
Students	May 2025	*Google form questionnaire
Parents	May 2025	*Google form questionnaire
Board of Management	03 rd March 2025	* Meeting outlining new procedures
	26 th March 2025	* Short video outlines the key messages and intentions of the Bí Cineálta framework sent to all Board Members.
	19 th June 2025	*Meeting & ratification

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Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice provides the following four key areas that are essential for a holistic, whole school approach to wellbeing promotion: **Culture and Environment, Curriculum (Teaching and Learning), Policy and Planning, Relationships and Partnerships**

These four areas have been considered by our school when developing measures to prevent bullying behaviour.

Culture and Environment

At Lanesborough Primary School, we believe that a positive and inclusive school culture and environment is essential to both preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. We strive to create a welcoming space where every student, staff member and visitor feels a strong sense of belonging, safety, connection and support.

Relationships within our school community are founded on respect, care, integrity, and trust. We actively foster open and honest communication between our school patron, Board of Management, staff, students and parents to ensure a collaborative approach to supporting student wellbeing and preventing bullying.

The school leadership team plays a vital role in shaping and upholding our school's ethos, values, and high expectations. Every member of our staff is committed to cultivating a culture where bullying behaviour is clearly unacceptable and where consistent, fair action is taken when issues arise.

We also empower our students to be active agents of positive change by promoting kindness, inclusion and peer support in daily interactions. Our pupils learn that their words and actions contribute to building a school where everyone feels valued.

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Parents are essential partners in our efforts. By promoting empathy, respect and understanding at home and in school interactions, they help to reinforce our culture of care and inclusivity.

At Lanesborough Primary School, our commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive environment is evident through a wide range of practices and initiatives, including:

- Adherence to our Catholic Ethos, promoting love, compassion and respect for all
- Whole-school assemblies that celebrate achievements, kindness and community values
- A broad and diverse curriculum that reflects and respects the experiences and abilities of all learners
- Strong relationships with parents and families, with open-door communication and regular engagement
- The implementation of SPHE (Social, Personal and Health Education) and Stay Safe programmes
- Ongoing anti-bullying awareness campaigns, such as Wellbeing Week and Internet Safety Day
- The promotion of student voice through the Student Council and classroom-based discussions
- Use of restorative practices to resolve conflict and promote empathy
- Encouragement of inclusive play and cooperative games during yard time
- Access to supportive spaces, such as our sensory room and nurture room, for children who need additional emotional or social support
- Regular staff training on inclusion, child protection and wellbeing
- The integration and celebration of our autism classes as a vital part of our school community, with opportunities for shared activities, buddy systems, inclusive play, and participation in school events

We are proud of our inclusive ethos that embraces neurodiversity and ensures that children in our autism classes are valued, supported, and actively included in the life of the school in meaningful ways.

These practices ensure that Lanesborough Primary School is a place where all children can grow, thrive and learn in a positive, inclusive, and respectful environment.

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Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

At Lanesborough Primary School, the Bí Cineálta (Be Kind) policy is reflected and reinforced through our approach to teaching and learning. We actively promote a classroom culture that is collaborative, respectful-and inclusive, where kindness is both taught and modelled by staff and pupils.

Children are given regular opportunities to work in small groups and engage in peer learning. These interactions help foster a strong sense of connection, empathy and belonging— key elements of a kind and supportive school environment. Across the curriculum, we ensure that learning experiences celebrate diversity, inclusion and mutual respect, helping each child feel seen and valued.

We also strive to nurture each child's sense of self-worth through a balance of curricular and extra-curricular activities, including sports, arts, music, drama and community initiatives. These experiences help children discover their strengths, build confidence, and feel part of the wider school community.

A central pillar of our kindness-focused curriculum is the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) programme, including Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE). These programmes are key to promoting children's wellbeing, resilience, self-confidence, and sense of personal responsibility. They support the development of vital social and emotional learning (SEL) skills such as empathy, communication, and emotional regulation—skills that directly contribute to a kinder school culture.

At Lanesborough Primary School, we place particular emphasis on:

- The full and consistent delivery of the SPHE curriculum
- The Stay Safe programme, which equips children with the knowledge to recognise and respond to unsafe or unkind behaviour
- The use of children's literature to explore themes such as friendship, fairness, difference, and emotional awareness
- Creating space for open dialogue in classrooms where kindness, inclusion, and respect are discussed regularly and meaningfully

Through this approach, our curriculum becomes a powerful tool for embedding the values of the Bí Cineálta policy, ensuring that every child is empowered to contribute to a positive, safe, and caring school community.

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Policy and Planning

At Lanesborough Primary School, we have a range of policies that work together to support the effective implementation of our B Cineálta (Be Kind) policy. These include our Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision Policy, Special Education Teaching Policy, and our Code of Behaviour. Each of these policies plays a key role in creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive school environment where bullying behaviour is not tolerated.

We believe that student voice is essential in shaping a positive school culture. As such, we are committed to involving our pupils in the development and review of policies that affect their wellbeing. By encouraging student participation, we increase awareness, promote ownership and support more meaningful implementation of school initiatives.

Ongoing professional development is also a priority. Staff are encouraged to engage in relevant courses and training opportunities that enhance their capacity to prevent and address bullying, promote inclusion, and support student wellbeing. Regular collaboration among staff, including the sharing of good practice and personal insights, helps strengthen our whole-school approach to fostering kindness, empathy and diversity.

A wide range of CPD (Continuing Professional Development) opportunities are available to support staff in these areas, including training on inclusive education, restorative practices, autism awareness as a vital part of maintaining a safe and nurturing environment for all members of our school community.

Relationships and Partnerships

At Lanesborough Primary School, we recognise that positive relationships across the entire school community are key to fostering a culture of kindness, empathy, understanding, and respect. These values are at the heart of our Bí Cineálta (Be Kind) policy and are embedded in all aspects of school life.

We believe that the meaningful involvement of the Board of Management, staff, pupils, and parents in the development, implementation, and ongoing review of our Bí Cineálta policy—including a child-friendly version—is essential to its success. When the whole school community works together, we are better able to prevent and address bullying behaviour effectively and consistently.

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As a staff, we have identified several key areas that support the successful implementation of this policy:

- Positive relationships among all members of the school community help build a culture of respect and empathy while raising awareness of unconscious bias and promoting inclusion.
- All school staff maintain a 'watchful eye'—remaining alert, engaged, and present in the lives of the children in their care. Staff are also supported through ongoing professional learning to ensure they feel confident and knowledgeable in how to recognise and respond to bullying behaviour using best practices.
- We promote the importance of every child having access to a trusted adult, someone they feel safe confiding in when issues or concerns arise.
- Children are not only protected by our policies—they are also actively involved in shaping them. Their voices, ideas, and lived experiences are central to our efforts in promoting kindness and preventing bullying.
- We actively engage with parents and guardians, recognising the crucial role they play in supporting a kind, respectful, and safe environment both at home and in school.
- Open communication and shared responsibility are vital to addressing bullying early and effectively.

Through this whole-school, child-centred approach, Lanesborough Primary School continues to build a safe, supportive and inclusive environment where kindness is a daily practice, and bullying behaviour has no place.

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):

Appropriate supervision is an important measure to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. Lanesborough Primary School will endeavour to take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of the students and to supervise students when students are attending school or attending school activities. In Lanesborough Primary School, the creation of safe physical spaces has been identified as an important measure to prevent bullying behaviour. Spaces have a clear line of sight and make it easier for school staff to supervise students.

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Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

Class Teacher, School Management Team and Principal

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- > ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured
- > seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- > conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- > consider the age and ability of those involved
- > listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- > take action in a timely manner
- > inform parents of those involved

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows:

Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

To determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour, we 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 this BÍ Cineálta Policy.

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Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful, but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Where Bullying Behaviour has occurred

Lanesborough Primary 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, the school will support the students involved. Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, the school will deal with it in accordance with this Bí Cineálta policy.

Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in Lanesborough Primary School but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school will support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken.

It is important for school staff to be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour. Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support. It is important that the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour is engaged without delay so that they feel listened to, supported and reassured. School staff should identify the support needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

A student's agency or sense of power can be decreased when they experience or witness bullying behaviour. When a student tells an adult that they feel that they are experiencing bullying behaviour they may feel that they are taking back some control over what is happening to them. It is very important that a student's agency is not decreased further by adults deciding what will happen next without listening to the student and involving them in deciding on the actions that will be taken.

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In Lanesborough Primary School, the following principles must be adhered to when addressing bullying behaviour:

- ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to 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 Lanesborough Primary School community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved must 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. In circumstances where a student expresses concern about their parents being informed, the school should develop an appropriate plan to support the student and for how their parents will be informed.

If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each student should be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views. Each student should be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting. It may also be helpful to ask the students involved to write down their account of the incident.

Given the complexity of bullying behaviour it is generally acknowledged that no one approach works in all situations. International and national research also continues to evolve in this area and the effectiveness of particular approaches continues to be reviewed.

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Requests to take no action

A student reporting bullying behaviour may ask that a member of staff does nothing about the behaviour. 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 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 the school 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.

Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased

The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention. Important factors to consider as part of the review 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.

Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour. It can take time for relationships to settle and for support to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to the way they were before the bullying behaviour occurred.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed time frame until the bullying behaviour has ceased. This agreed date will not exceed 10 school days.

Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is

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continuing to display the behaviour, then the school should consider using 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.

Complaint process

If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the school's complaints procedure.

Additional Information relating to schools' complaint procedures is available at the following link: <https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/parental-complaints/>

In the event that a student and/or parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, a student and/or parent 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.

The Office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie.

Recording bullying behaviour

All allegations of Bullying Behaviour will be recorded. All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded. This record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour, 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. The school 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 should also be noted. A recording Template (to be used by Lanesborough Primary School) is found in Appendix C.

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, Lanesborough Primary School will place a copy of the record on the student's support file. This will assist the school's student support team, where they exist, in providing a consistent and holistic response to support the wellbeing of the student

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involved. Where a Student Support Plan exists, the plan should be updated to incorporate response strategies and associated supports.

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):

Supports

Support is available for those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour. Lanesborough Primary School have identified the following services to be utilised:

National Educational Psychological Services

In relation to bullying, NEPS psychologists often advise schools on best practice to prevent and address bullying when issues arise in schools and/or provide training in preventative initiatives, such as developing social and emotional skills, social skills, executive function skills, promoting resilience and skills in relationship repair between peers as appropriate.

Oide

Oide fosters a culture of continuing professional learning among school leaders and teachers encouraging lifelong learning and reflective and enquiry-based practices. The work of Oide contributes to school improvement by providing high quality professional learning experiences, supports and resources relating to curricular developments, broader educational goals and national priorities, such as wellbeing which includes preventing and addressing bullying. Oide provides continuing professional learning support to schools to support implementation of these procedures.

Webwise

Webwise is the online safety initiative of the Department of Education and is co-funded by the European Commission. Webwise promotes safer, better internet use through awareness - raising and education initiatives targeting teachers, students and parents. Webwise develops and disseminates resources that help teachers integrate digital citizenship and online safety into teaching and learning in their schools. Webwise also provides information, advice, and tools to parents to support their engagement in their children's online lives.

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Anti Bullying Centre (DCU FUSE Programme)

The Antibullying Centre offers a range of modules as part of its FUSE programme for the entire school community that can be used to help to promote a positive school culture and assist in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours.

Tusla

Schools should contact Tusla directly for advice in cases where it is considered that bullying behaviour is a child protection concern. In certain circumstances, the school may wish to use an outside facilitator to address the school community on the issue of Bullying. If in the presence of children, the class teacher will remain in class at all times and the facilitator will deliver age - appropriate material.

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.

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Section D: Oversight

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each Board of Management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include, where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. See Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on our website and in hard copy on request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed: _____ Date: 19/6/25

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: Niamh Rowan Date: 19/6/25

(Principal)

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Further Information

When Bullying Behaviour becomes a Child Protection Concern

When bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern Section 10 of the Children First Act, 2015 places a statutory obligation on schools, as a "provider of a relevant service" to ensure, as far as practicable, that each child attending the school is safe from harm while attending school or otherwise participating in school activities.

Teachers registered with the Teaching Council are Mandated Persons under the Children First Act. They have a legal obligation under the Act to report harm of children that meets or is above a defined threshold to Tusla, and also to assist Tusla if requested, in assessing a concern which is the subject of a mandated report. If the concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but a teacher feels that it is a reasonable concern about the welfare or protection of a child, a report should be made to Tusla under the Children First National Guidance. The Children First National Guidance applies to everyone. All school staff and volunteers must report reasonable concerns to Tusla. The Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Revised 2023) provide that all school staff should report reasonable concerns to the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) who may take advice and/or report the concerns to Tusla. If the staff member is a registered teacher and the concern is at or above the threshold of harm at which a mandated report must be made the concern shall be submitted as a mandated report to Tusla jointly by the DLP and the registered teacher. See Chapter 5 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (Revised 2023). The Children First Act defines harm as assault, ill-treatment, neglect or sexual abuse and single and multiple instances. The threshold of harm is reached where the mandated person believes that a child's health, development or welfare have been, or are being seriously affected, or are likely to be seriously affected. The Children First National Guidance document 2017 is the national, overarching guidance with regard to child safeguarding. The Guidance provides that in cases of serious instances of bullying where the behaviour is regarded as possibly abusive, a referral may need to be made to Tusla or An Garda Síochána as appropriate.

Generally, bullying behaviour can be addressed without the involvement of Tusla. However, bullying behaviour may become a child protection concern when it results in significant physical or emotional harm, or where it becomes a persistent and severe

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problem and measures taken to address it are not effective. In determining when bullying behaviour should be reported to Tusla the following factors should be considered:

- > the impact on the child
- > protective/appropriate action taken by the parents
- > protective/appropriate action taken by the school
- > engagement of child/family with support services such as NEPS

If there is doubt about whether bullying behaviour is a child protection concern schools should contact Tusla's social work department for advice. This will enable the social worker to explore the situation with school staff and provide advice on the best course of action.