

Scoil Naomh Fiachra
Clontubrid
Roll No. 16865D



School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of Scoil Naomh Fiachra 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.

Definition of bullying

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

Each school is required to develop and implement a Bí Cineálta policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

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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	March 2025	Staff questionnaires
	25 th March 2025	Half-day closure for staff training and input
	June 2025	Staff reviewed a draft of the policy
	June 2026	Staff reviewed the policy at a staff meeting
Students	March 2025	Pupil questionnaires (2 nd – 6 th Class)
	June 2025	Review and feedback of 'Student Friendly Policy'
	June 2026	Review and feedback of 'Student Friendly Policy'
Parents	March 2025	Parent questionnaires
	June 2025	Parents' Council reviewed a draft of the policy
	June 2026	Parents were invited to review and provide feedback on the current Bí Cineálta Policy
Board of Management	17 th June 2025	Review and ratification of final policy
	18 th June 2026	Annual Review of the Policy
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers	N/A	
Date policy was approved: 17 th June 2025		
Date policy was last reviewed: 18 th June 2026		

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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):

1. Culture and Environment

To promote a positive school culture and prevent bullying, the school will implement the following strategies:

- **Foster Kindness and Respect:** Promote values of kindness, inclusion, and respect through school-wide activities, discussions, and visible reminders.
- **Support a 'Telling Environment':** Create a safe space where students are encouraged to report bullying, with staff trained to respond sensitively and effectively. Pupils will be informed of multiple ways to report bullying, including speaking directly to a teacher, using a worry box, asking a friend or parent to report on their behalf, or writing a note.
- **Trusted Adult Approach:** Ensure every student identifies at least one trusted adult they can approach if needed.
- **Enhance Safety and Supervision:** Improve physical safety with strategic supervision and visible staff presence during break times. Supervision extends to all indoor and outdoor areas, including corridors, school events, and extracurricular activities. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report concerns.
- **Student Ownership:** Encourage student involvement in art and environmental projects to foster pride in the school. Initiatives such as buddy systems, lunchtime buddies, and peer mentoring will be supported where appropriate.
- **Whole-School Awareness:** Use visual tools such as wellbeing noticeboards in classrooms and corridors to promote kindness, friendship, and inclusion.
- **Strong Relationships with Parents and Community:** Keep parents informed and engaged through newsletters, sessions, and home-school cooperation. Clear protocols will encourage parents to approach the school if they have concerns about bullying, developed in consultation with families.
- **Leadership and Communication:** Promote open communication between the Patron, Board of Management, school staff, parents, and pupils to support a collaborative anti-bullying culture.
- **Lead by Example:** Ensure staff consistently model respectful behaviour and take a proactive approach to addressing bullying.

2. Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

To nurture respectful relationships and inclusion, the school will:

- **SPHE Curriculum:** Deliver a comprehensive SPHE curriculum focusing on empathy, self-worth, and respectful relationships. The Stay Safe Programme and visits from Community Gardaí will also support learning on personal safety and cyberbullying.
- **Promote Inclusion Across Subjects:** Integrate themes of fairness, empathy, and diversity into various subjects, ensuring a respectful and inclusive environment.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Encourage group and pair work to build connection and reduce social exclusion.
- **Self-Confidence and Talent Recognition:** Offer opportunities for students to participate in school events and celebrate their strengths.
- **Inclusive Teaching Materials:** Use resources that reflect diverse identities, abilities, and cultures, avoiding stereotypes.

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- **SEN-Sensitive Delivery:** Lessons will be adapted to meet the needs of children with additional needs, ensuring access to content and strategies for self-advocacy and social safety.
- **Staff CPD:** Whole-staff training will be supported to raise awareness of bullying and ensure consistent delivery of programmes and messages.

3. Policy and Planning

To integrate wellbeing and anti-bullying practices into the school's framework, the school will:

- **Embed Anti-Bullying Policies:** Ensure the Bí Cineálta policy is part of the whole-school planning alongside other relevant policies (e.g. Code of Behaviour, AUP, SEN Policy).
- **Develop a Student-Friendly Policy:** Create an accessible version of the policy for students, promoting understanding and engagement. The student version will be displayed in visible areas.
- **Include Students in Policy Development:** Involve students in feedback and discussions on rules and anti-bullying practices.
- **Provide Staff Training:** Offer regular professional development on bullying prevention, inclusion, and child protection.
- **Support Inclusive Planning:** Ensure policies and planning support the participation of all students, including those with additional needs or from diverse backgrounds. The school will regularly review current supports and identify new resources or partnerships as needed.

4. Relationships and Partnerships

To strengthen the school community and prevent bullying, the school will:

- **Promote Positive Relationships:** Foster a caring and respectful atmosphere where staff, students, and parents feel valued. Encourage student relationships through initiatives like buddy reading and peer support.
- **Encourage Student Involvement:** Provide students with opportunities to contribute to school life through activities focused on inclusion and empathy, such as school trips, performances, and student-led initiatives.
- **Involve Parents and Community:** Welcome parental participation through events, meetings, and policy consultations. The Parents Association and community partnerships will support positive school culture.
- **Awareness Initiatives:** Organise activities and workshops to explore bullying and promote respect and kindness. The school will celebrate 'Friendship Week' annually.
- **Peer Support and Kindness:** Encourage peer mentoring and empathy-building to help students stand up for others.

5. Preventing Cyberbullying

To address the challenges of online bullying, the school will:

- **Promote Respectful Online Behaviour:** Teach digital citizenship as part of the SPHE curriculum, focusing on kindness and safety.
- **Clear Acceptable Use Policy (AUP):** Implement an AUP that outlines expectations for safe and respectful use of technology. Pupils will be taught that even a single online post can constitute bullying.
- **Digital Literacy:** Integrate digital media literacy into the curriculum to help students understand safe online behaviour. Students will learn specific steps to respond to cyberbullying: Don't reply, Keep the message, Block the sender, Tell someone you trust.
- **Safer Internet Day:** Participate annually in Safer Internet Day to raise awareness about online safety and cyberbullying prevention.
- **Support Parents:** Provide resources and guidance to help parents manage

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technology use and ensure online safety.

6. Preventing Homophobic and Transphobic Bullying

To prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying, the school will:

- **Promote Respect for All Identities:** Foster an inclusive environment by using respectful language and challenging gender stereotypes.
- **Inclusive School Environment:** Reflect diversity through visual materials, books, and classroom activities that promote acceptance.
- **SPHE Lessons on Diversity:** Integrate lessons on understanding difference, friendship, and equality into SPHE.
- **Empower Students to Speak Up:** Encourage students to report any homophobic or transphobic bullying and support their peers.
- **Staff and Parent Awareness:** Provide training for staff and share resources with parents to support an inclusive school ethos.

7. Preventing Racist Bullying

To prevent racist bullying, the school will:

- **Celebrate Diversity:** Promote a school culture that reflects and embraces cultural diversity.
- **Raise Awareness of Racism:** Conduct workshops and discussions to raise awareness of racism and teach students how to identify and challenge it.
- **Foster Empathy:** Promote peer support and empathy-building activities to help students understand and support each other.
- **Support EAL Students:** Provide resources and support for students with English as an additional language to integrate socially and academically.
- **Cultural Visibility:** Ensure the cultural diversity of the school is visible in classrooms and corridors through displays and representation.
- **Staff Capacity:** Provide staff with training and resources to support culturally diverse families and respond to racist incidents confidently.

8. Preventing Sexist Bullying

To prevent sexist bullying, the school will:

- **Model Respectful Behaviour:** Ensure staff treat all students equally, regardless of gender, and encourage equal participation in classroom activities.
- **Celebrate Contributions of All Students:** Highlight the achievements of all genders and challenge gender stereotypes.
- **Organise Gender Equality Lessons:** Promote respect and challenge stereotypes through age-appropriate lessons.
- **Encourage Parental Involvement:** Encourage parents to reinforce values of respect and equality at home.

9. Preventing Sexual Harassment

To prevent sexual harassment, the school will:

- **Zero-Tolerance Approach:** Ensure that sexual harassment is treated seriously and never dismissed as teasing or banter.
- **Teach Healthy Relationships:** Include lessons on boundaries and respect in the SPHE curriculum.
- **Promote Positive Role Models:** Highlight respectful relationships and encourage students to practise kindness and mutual respect.
- **Challenge Gender Stereotypes:** Address harmful gender stereotypes through lessons and discussions.
- **Board of Management Oversight:** The Board of Management confirms that the school, in line with equality legislation, will take all steps reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff.

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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):

The Board of Management confirms that appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and address bullying behaviour, and to facilitate early intervention where necessary.

Supervision of Students

- Staff supervise pupils during school hours, including at arrival (from 8.50am), break times (e.g., 11:00–11:15am, 12:35–1:00pm), and dismissal. Teachers assume a duty of care from 8.50am. The school is not responsible for pupils dropped off earlier than this time.
- At dismissal time, Class Teachers supervise pupils to the school gate.
- Teachers remain with pupils at break times until the class teacher returns. If absent, supervision is covered by reciprocal staff arrangements.
- During wet breaks, pupils remain in classrooms under normal supervision rotas.
- Out-of-school activities (e.g., swimming, sports, tours) are supervised by appropriate staff, with additional supervision arranged as needed.

Safe Physical Spaces

- The school works to create safe physical spaces by ensuring adequate lighting, removing visual barriers (e.g., excessive posters), and addressing blind spots through layout changes.
- Yard and corridor rules are regularly reviewed and communicated to pupils. These rules are designed to promote safety and respect during less structured times.

Cover and Supervision Protocols

- If a teacher is called from the classroom unexpectedly (e.g., to meet a parent), another staff member is assigned to supervise the class. Parents are encouraged to make appointments in advance.
- When external tutors (e.g., PE, Music) take a class, the school encourages a teacher presence to maintain supervision and continuity.

Trusted Adult and Telling Environment

- All pupils are encouraged to identify and access a trusted adult they feel comfortable speaking to about any concerns, including bullying. Staff respond sensitively and promptly.
- A culture of openness is promoted so that students feel safe to report bullying without fear. Common fears (e.g., being labelled a tell-tale or fear of retaliation) are addressed openly in SPHE and reinforced by all staff.
- Peer support is encouraged, and bystanders are regularly reminded of the importance of reporting incidents to a trusted adult.

Parental Concerns and Follow-Up

- If a parent raises a concern about a pupil's experience, the concern is shared (as appropriate) with relevant staff to ensure coordinated monitoring and follow-up during supervision times.

Monitoring

- Staff meetings include time to review the effectiveness of supervision and monitoring strategies and to discuss new concerns or adjustments.

Break Times

- Organised games or activities may be introduced during breaks to promote positive peer interaction and reduce opportunities for exclusion or bullying.

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Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

All Class Teachers

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

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

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

The primary aim of addressing bullying behaviour is to stop the behaviour and restore, as far as practicable, the relationships between the students involved. The school follows a fair, timely, and supportive approach that ensures both the student who experienced the bullying behaviour and the student displaying the behaviour receive appropriate support.

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, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy (Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024.)

Identifying if Bullying Behaviour Has Occurred

To determine if reported behaviour is bullying, staff will consider the following:

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 all of the above is **Yes**, the behaviour will be treated as bullying and addressed under the *Bí Cineálta* procedures.

Note: One-off incidents may still constitute bullying in certain cases — for example, a hurtful message posted online that is likely to be shared or seen multiple times.

If the answer to any question is **No**, the behaviour will be addressed under the school's Code of Behaviour as inappropriate behaviour.

When investigating, the school will also consider **what happened, where, when, and why**.

If multiple students are involved:

- Each will be interviewed individually first.

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- The group will then be met collectively to clarify perspectives and ensure mutual understanding.
- All students involved will be offered appropriate support.
- Students may also be asked to provide a written account of events, where helpful.

Addressing Confirmed Bullying Behaviour

Once bullying behaviour has been confirmed, the following steps will be taken:

- **Timely engagement** with all students involved to ensure support begins without delay.
- **Support and reassurance** for the student who experienced bullying, involving them in decisions on how best to respond.
- **Parental involvement:** Parents of both the student experiencing and the student displaying bullying behaviour will be contacted at an early stage to explain the situation, the planned response, and how they can support their child.
- **Appropriate interventions and supports** will be agreed for the student displaying the bullying behaviour to address relational or behavioural needs and promote positive change.
- **Sensitivity and confidentiality** will guide all interactions, considering the age and ability of those involved.

If a student requests no action be taken, the school will work sensitively with the student to agree on appropriate steps, while ensuring the student feels safe and supported.

If parents make the school aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action, they will be asked to put this request in writing to the school. However, while acknowledging the parents' request, the school may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Review and Follow-Up

A **review meeting** will take place within **20 school days** of the initial intervention:

- The teacher will meet with the students involved and their parents.
- The review will assess whether the bullying behaviour has ceased, how effective the intervention has been, and the nature of relationships between those involved.
- Ongoing supervision and support may continue even if the bullying appears to have stopped.
- If the bullying persists, a new plan of action will be agreed and reviewed until the issue is resolved.

If it becomes clear that bullying is continuing, the school may apply its **Code of Behaviour** and use disciplinary sanctions as appropriate.

Record-Keeping

All bullying incidents will be recorded, including:

- The nature, location and timing of the behaviour
- Type and form of bullying (e.g., verbal, social, physical, online, racist, etc.)
- Accounts from the students and parents involved

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- Actions taken and supports offered
- Outcome of follow-up reviews, including the date when bullying was determined to have ceased

These records will be stored in line with the school's **Record Keeping Policy** and **data protection requirements**. Where appropriate, a copy may be placed in a student's **Support File** to inform future planning.

Complaints

If a parent is not satisfied with how the bullying case has been handled, they may:

1. Refer to the school's **Complaints Procedures**.
2. If dissatisfied with the outcome, submit a complaint to the **Ombudsman for Children** at ococomplaint@oco.ie.

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):

Our school is committed to supporting the wellbeing of all students involved in bullying situations — including those who experience, witness, or display bullying behaviour. Support will be timely, appropriate, and tailored to the needs of each student, with a focus on restoring relationships and preventing further harm.

1. Supporting Students Who Experience Bullying Behaviour

Students who report or are identified as experiencing bullying behaviour will be supported in the following ways:

- **Listening and reassurance:** The student will be heard in a calm, sensitive, and respectful manner.
- **Involvement in decision-making:** The student's views on how best to address the situation will be taken into account.
- **Timely follow-up:** Staff will check in with the student regularly to ensure they feel safe and supported.
- **Parental engagement:** Parents/guardians will be informed and consulted, and their support will be encouraged.
- **Additional supports:** Where needed, support may include check-ins with a trusted adult, access to the student support team, or referrals to external services (e.g., NEPS).
- **Ongoing monitoring:** Staff will continue to monitor the student's wellbeing and social interactions following the incident.

2. Supporting Students Who Witness Bullying Behaviour

Students who witness bullying behaviour play a key role in helping to stop it. These students will be supported to:

- **Recognise their role:** Understand the importance of speaking up and reporting bullying.
- **Feel safe to report:** Be assured that telling is not "telling tales" and will be taken seriously.

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- **Develop empathy:** Take part in discussions or lessons that foster empathy, kindness, and respect.
- **Contribute to a positive culture:** Engage in peer support activities and school-wide initiatives that promote inclusion and kindness.

3. Supporting Students Who Display Bullying Behaviour

Students who have displayed bullying behaviour will be supported, not only held accountable. Our approach will be fair, consistent, and restorative where possible:

- **Understanding the behaviour:** Staff will explore the reasons behind the behaviour and support the student to understand its impact.
- **Individual or small-group support:** Students may receive help with developing social skills, empathy, problem-solving, or anger management.
- **Restorative practices:** Where appropriate and agreed by all parties, restorative conversations may be facilitated to repair relationships.
- **Parental involvement:** Parents/guardians will be engaged early to support behaviour change and discuss appropriate actions.
- **Behaviour planning:** A support or behaviour plan may be developed, where needed, to promote positive behaviour and prevent recurrence.
- **Monitoring and review:** Progress will be reviewed over time and further support provided as necessary.

4. Support Team and External Agencies

- The **student support team** will coordinate internal supports and referrals.
- Where necessary, the school may seek guidance or involvement from **NEPS**, **Tusla**, or other relevant support services.
- Resources from **Webwise**, **NPC**, **DCU Anti-Bullying Centre**, and **Oide** may be used to assist students and families.

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*.

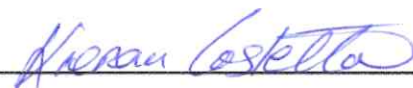
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Section D: Oversight

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: 
(Chairperson of board of management)

Date: 18/6/26

Signed: 
(Principal)

Date: 18/6/26

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Template for recording bullying behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____ Class _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

3. Source of bullying concern/report

(tick relevant box(es))

Pupil concerned	☐
Other pupil	☐
Parent	☐
Teacher	☐
Other	☐

4. Location of incidents

(tick relevant box(es))

Yard	☐
Classroom	☐
Corridor	☐
Toilets	☐
Other	☐

5. Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern and/or relationship to the pupil(s)

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6. Form of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))

Physical Bullying Behaviour	☐	Exclusion Bullying Behaviour	☐
Verbal Bullying Behaviour	☐	Relational Bullying Behaviour	☐
Written Bullying Behaviour	☐	Online Bullying Behaviour	☐
Extortion	☐	Other (specify)	☐

7. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))

Disablist Bullying Behaviour	☐	Racist Bullying	☐
Exceptionally Able Bullying	☐	Poverty Bullying	☐
Gender Identity Bullying	☐	Religious Identity Bullying	☐
Homophobic/ Transphobic (LGBTQ+) Bullying Behaviour	☐	Sexist Bullying	☐
Physical Appearance Bullying	☐	Sexual Harassment	☐
Other (specify)	☐		☐

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

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9. Details of actions taken

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10. Date of review with pupil(s) and parent(s) (within 20days).	
11. Has bullying behavior ceased?	
12. Views of pupil(s) and parent(s) in relation to this.	
13. If bullying behavior has not ceased, set an agreed timeframe to meet again and review strategies.	
14. Engagement with external services or supports (if any)	

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)

Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix F

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

The Board of Management of *Scoil Naomh Fladhra* 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 of *18/6/26* [date].

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: *Kieran Costello*
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: *Pat Malden*
(Principal)

Date: *18/06/2026*

Date: *18/06/2026*

Date of next review: *June 2027*