Crescent College Comprehensive SJ
Bí Cineálta

The Board of Management of Crescent College Comprehensive SJ (CCC) 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 Colleges* 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 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.

2.0 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 Colleges* 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. There are many different methods of bullying behaviour, including physical, verbal, and relational forms, and it can take place online and offline.

2.1 The core elements of the Bullying involve the following:

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. 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 the school'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 the College's code of 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 in size, strength, age, ability, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, race, ethnic origin, 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/videos/video, and the inability of the targeted to remove offensive online material or escape the bullying.

2.2. 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 (AEN) 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.

2.3. 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. 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 or sexual orientation, it may be considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989(11), and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges. If bullying behaviour involved sexual harassment or sexual assault, this may also be considered criminal behaviour.

In such cases An Garda Síochána is the appropriate authority to investigate alleged criminal behaviour.

2.4. When bullying behaviour becomes a child protection concern

Section 10 of the Children First Act, 2015 places a statutory obligation on Colleges, as a "provider of a relevant service" to ensure as far as practicable, that each child attending the College is safe from harm while attending College or otherwise participating in College 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.

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Colleges (Revised 2023)* provide that all College 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.

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 problem and measures taken to address it are not effective.

2.5. How bullying behaviour occurs

Bullying behaviour can take many forms, which can occur separately or together. These can include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Physical bullying behaviour
- Verbal bullying behaviour
- Written bullying behaviour
- Extortion
- Indirect bullying behaviour
- Exclusion
- Relational
- Online bullying behaviour

2.6. Types of bullying behaviour
There are many different types of bullying behaviour. These can include the following which is an exhaustive list:

- **Disablist bullying behaviour:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of a perceived or actual disability or additional need
- **Exceptionally able bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their high academic ability or outstanding talents
- **Gender identity bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual gender identity
- **Homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying;** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their perceived or actual membership of the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Physical appearance bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their physical appearance.
- **Racist bullying:** behaviour or language that intends to harm a student because of their race or ethnic origin.
- **Poverty bullying:** behaviour that intends to humiliate a student because of a lack of resources
- **Religious identity bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student because of their religion or religious identity
- **Sexist bullying:** behaviour that intends to harm a student based on their sex, perpetuating stereotypes that a student or a group of students are inferior because of their sex
- **Sexual harassment:** any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex which affects the dignity of the student

3.0 Culture and Preventing Bullying Behaviour
A positive and inclusive College culture and environment is essential to prevent and address bullying behaviour. The College environment should be a space where students and College staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported. Relationships between all members of the College community should be based on respect, care, integrity and trust. **Responsibilities**

3.1 Responsibilities of all members of College Community in relation to Bullying
Staff have a responsibility to contribute and maintain a culture where bullying behaviour is unacceptable and to take a consistent approach to addressing bullying.

Students shape the College culture by promoting kindness and inclusion within their peer group and maintaining a positive and supportive College environment for all.

Parents, as active partners in their child's education, can help foster an environment where bullying

behaviour is not tolerated through promoting empathy and respect.

3.2 Responsibilities in relation to Bullying

Staff:

- To have read and understood the College's Anti-Bullying policy.
- To acknowledge that bullying is a shared responsibility within the College.
- To be vigilant against bullying behaviour inside and outside the classroom.
- To take all reports of bullying seriously and to report them to the appropriate authority if warranted.
- To assist in prevention and intervention strategies.
- To empower students to deal with conflict in constructive ways.

Students:

- To never bully others.
- To show consideration, respect and support towards others.
- To be sensitive to the wellbeing of everybody.
- To be vigilant and watch out for each other.
- To be able to identify bullying behaviour.
- To report if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied.

Parents:

- To support the College in the implementation of the policy and other related College policies such as the Code of Behaviour and IT Acceptable Use Policy.
- To watch out for signs that their son may be being bullied.
- To speak to the Form Tutor or Year Head if their son is being bullied or if they suspect that this is happening.
- To instruct their son to tell if he is being bullied or if he has seen other pupils being bullied.
- To notify the College if they think that their son is displaying bullying behaviour and to work with the College in addressing this problem.
- To ensure that if their son is online that he is using social media in a safe and responsible manner.
- To never directly approach another student, or the parent of another student, at the College to intervene in behavioural issues.

3.3 The education and prevention strategies that are used by our College include:

- Acknowledging the right of each member of the College community to enjoy school in a secure environment.
- Promoting the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping
- Recognising the need to work in partnership with parents and to keep them informed on procedures to improve relationships on a College-wide basis.
- Promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online.
- The College Bí Cineálta Policy is discussed with pupils and all parent(s)/guardian(s) through the Parents' Association. It is also available on the school website.
- Promoting a proactive approach to bullying by the class captains, prefects, peer mentors and student council.
- Fostering the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth through formal and informal interactions.

- Whole staff professional development on bullying to ensure that all staff develops an awareness of what bullying is, how it impacts on pupils' lives and the need to respond to it-prevention and intervention.

- Raising-awareness on all aspects of bullying, including pupils, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community through talks for parents and pupils on Stay Safe, internet safety, cyberbullying and through RSE, CSPE and SPHE schemes of work and policies.
- Supporting the participation of students in the development and implementation of College policies and plans increases awareness and ensures effective implementation i.e Code of Behaviour, Student Council Constitution, College's Bí Cineálta policy, Acceptable User Policy etc.
- Supervising and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities for signs of bullying behaviour. This also applies to monitoring pupils' use of communication technology within the school.
- Being familiar with and using the support system as outlined by the "*Cura Personalis*" document which reinforces the reporting system.
- Students can contact a Form Tutor, Year Head, Deputy Headmaster, Chaplain, Pastoral Care Team, School Captain or Senior Prefects or any member of staff.
- The implementation of regular whole school awareness measures, including school assemblies, boarding declamations, posters, competitions etc.
- Whole Community engagement with the Pastoral calendar of which one of the 5 themes is anti-bullying.
- Annual Student and Parent Survey, Whole School Anti Bullying Survey and Live Reporting Link within the Parent and Student
- Students have regular opportunities (curricular and co-curricular) to work in small groups with their peers, which helps build their sense of connection, belonging and empathy among students.
- The curricular subjects offered by the College to students provide opportunities to foster inclusion and respect for diversity.
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship.
- Staff engagement in relevant CPD such as Child Protection and Behaviour for Learning each academic year support creates awareness in relation to the identification and prevention of bullying behaviour.
- These interpersonal connections are supported through a range of formal and informal structures such student councils, College clubs, parents' associations and student support teams.
- Encouraging peer support through Peer Mentoring, Rhetoric Prefects and lunchtime Clubs and activities.
- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment such as by displaying relevant posters
- Fostering a College culture where diversity is celebrated and where students "see themselves" in their College environment through Stand Up Week, Culture Week, Flag Day and Iconography.

4.0 Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

Those involved in the investigation of bullying at CCC SJ are as follows:

In investigation and dealing with bullying, the teacher will excersice his/her own professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved

Class teacher/supervisor: May fill out a bullying report form on Compass and inform the relevant Year head.

Coach / ancillary staff: May fill out a bullying report form at the school office for the attention of the Principal or the Deputy Principals.

Year head: Investigates the incident and speaks with all parties involved and any witnesses. Findings will be

recorded. Appropriate disciplinary sanctions will be applied in line with the schools Code of Behaviour. The Year head may involve the Deputy Principal in the inquiry if deemed necessary

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Year head / Deputy Principal will contact Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of all parties

Form Tutors: Will be informed to link in with pastoral care of the pupils

Guidance Counsellors: May be informed to link in with the pastoral care of the pupil(s). And/or to provide or advise of counselling for the perpetrator(s) of the bullying.

4.1 The staff with responsibility for dealing with bullying are as follows:

- Leadership Team
- Year Heads
- Members of the Student Support Team (i.e. Form Tutors, Care Team Members)

4.2 Identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred

1. The following will be considered: what, when, when and why?
2. Students who have reported a bullying incident will be asked to complete a written report of the incident(s).
3. If a group of students is involved, each student will be engaged individually at first. Students will be asked to write an account of the incident(s). Thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group.
4. 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 will be supported, as appropriate, following the group meeting.
5. All cases will be treated seriously, investigated with care, and with all possible confidentiality.
6. Sensitivity and respect will be shown to both the person making the complaint, and to the subject (s) of the complaint.
7. Every effort will be made to resolve a complaint informally. If this is not possible, a formal process will begin.
8. The facts will be established straight away i.e. time, date, place of the incident, and details of the incident itself.
9. The College takes very seriously any attempt at intimidation during the course of an investigation.
10. The Recording Bullying Behaviour Form contained within the Serious Disciplinary Incident Form will be completed by the Year Head following the investigation (See appendix 3). as outlined below

4.3. Where bullying behaviour has occurred

When it has been ascertained that bullying behaviour has taken place the following steps will be taken:

1. Parents will be informed of the incident(s) as soon as reasonably possible.
2. They will be informed of the actions to be taken to address the behaviour as outlined in the College's Bí Cineálta Policy.
3. Disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion will be taken.
4. The Year Head will put in place a support plan for those involved in the incidents utilising the existing College Pastoral Support Team.
5. Both the student who is experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour will be supported by the designated staff who deal with bullying.
6. The student who has experienced bullying behaviour will be supported so that they feel listened to, supported and reassured.
7. Designated College staff will identify the support needed for the student who has displayed bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.
8. After 20 days the case will be reviewed by the relevant Year Head and Link Deputy Principal.

4.4 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. 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. All members of staff must report such disclosures to the YH and/ or Link Deputy.

Parents may also make Colleges aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the College take no action. Parents must put this request in writing to the College or be facilitated to do so where there is literacy, digital literally or language barriers. However, while acknowledging the parent's request, Colleges may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address bullying behaviour using its Bí Cineálta policy.

4.5 Determining if bullying behaviour has ceased

The College will engage with the students and parents involved no more than 20 College days after the initial discussion to review progress following the initial intervention.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased, the College will review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe until the bullying behaviour has ceased.

Where it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the College will consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the College's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the College.

5.0 Recording Bullying Behaviour

All incidents of bullying behaviour will be recorded (see appendix 3) and will include the following information:

- the form **(Section 2.5)** and type **(see section 2.6)** of bullying behaviour
- where and when it took place
- the date of the initial engagement with the students and their parents
- record will the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.
- Include a section to 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 and all relevant dates.
- Any engagement with external services/supports will also be noted.

These records will be retained in accordance with the College's Data Protection Policy and data retention schedule.

6.0 Complaint Process

If a parent is not satisfied with how bullying behaviour has been addressed by the College, in accordance with these procedures, they should be referred to the College's complains procedure as outlined by the Department of Education 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 College's actions have had a negative effect on the student. The office of the Ombudsman for Children can be contacted at ococomplaint@oco.ie

7.0 Oversight

7.1 Bullying behaviour update to Board of Management

At each meeting of the Board of Management the Headmaster will be present and update on the number of incidents of bullying behaviour and the measures taken to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

The update will include the following:

- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting
- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that are currently ongoing
- the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the beginning of the College 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
- the strategies used to address the bullying
- 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 College that a student has left the College because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the Board of Management
- if the College's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

7.2 Review of a Colleges Bí Cineálta Policy
The College's Bí Cineálta policy will be reviewed each calendar year or as soon as practicable where the Board of Management determines that a review is warranted.

The review will be completed with input from the College community which includes the board of management, staff, students and their parents and members of the wider College community (as appropriate).

The College community will be given notice that the annual review has taken place (see Appendix F of Bí Cineálta procedures). This confirmation will be published on the College website once the annual review has taken place.

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

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Headmaster)

Appendix A
BOM Annual Review Document

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.

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.* 30/9/2026
2. Where in the school is the student–friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?
   Throughout the School Building
3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student– friendly policy on the school website? 30/09/2026
4. How has the student–friendly policy been communicated to students?
   S.P.H.E Classes - YEAR Assemblies
5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student–friendly policy been communicated to parents
   PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS / School website
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 Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*?

Yes	✓	No	

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?

YEAR HEAD MEETINGS
STAFF INFORMATION MEETING
Student Council

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:

N/A - Reviewed in June Meeting 2026
- today's meeting 20th September

15. Where areas for improvement have been identified, outline how these will be addressed and whether an action plan with timeframes has been developed?

N/A

16. Does the student–friendly policy need to be updated as a result of this review and if so why?

N/A

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	

N/A

18. Has a parent informed the school that a student has left the school due to reported bullying behaviour?

Yes		No	✓

19. Has the Omce of the Ombudsman for Children initiated or completed an investigation into how the school has addressed an incident of bullying behaviour?

Yes		No	✓

Signed:

Helen O'Donnell

_____ Date: 30th September 2026

(Chairperson of board of management)

Signed:

Diarmuid Mullen

_____ Date: 30th September 2026

(Headmaster)

Appendix B

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

The Board of Management of Crescent College Comprehensive SJ 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 30th September2026 [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: (Chairperson of Board of management)

Date: 30th September 2026

Appendix C - Bullying Recording Template

1. **Name of pupil being bullied and Form Group/Year**

Name: _____ **Form/Year:** _____

2. **Name(s) and Form(s) 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/Canteen	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
School bus	
Other	

5. **Name of person(s) who reported the bullying concern**

6. **Type of Bullying Behaviour** *(Tick relevant box(es))**

Physical bullying behaviour		Online bullying behaviour	
Verbal bullying behaviour		Exclusion	
Written bullying behaviour		Relational	
Extortion		Malicious Gossip	
Indirect bullying behaviour		Other (specify)	

7. **Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:**

Homophobic	Disability/AEN	Racist	Membership of Traveller Community	Other (Specify

8. **Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact**

9. **Details of actions taken**

10. **Review of incident as per 20 day follow up.**

Signed: _____ **(Year Head) Date:**_____

Date submitted to Headmaster/Deputy _____