



An Roinn Oideachais  
Department of Education

# Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying Implementation Plan 2023-2027





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## Foreword from Minister Norma Foley TD

An experience of bullying can rob a child or young person of their happiness and satisfaction, often causing lifelong damage for them. It is for this reason that we in education must take proactive and ambitious measures to prevent and address bullying in all its forms. *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* is an action plan which commits to doing just this and to working together as a sector to prevent bullying in our school communities and ensure that individual difference is both valued and celebrated in schools.

The plan takes a whole education approach to addressing bullying, one which emphasizes prevention, support, oversight and community. Tackling the scourge of bullying is a responsibility for each of us, and it must be reflected in our everyday attitudes, thoughts, words and actions.

This implementation plan demonstrates my Department's commitment to implementing each of the 61 actions contained in *Cineáltas* over the next five years. The plan commits to a wide range of innovative and concrete actions to address bullying, including new data collection and oversight procedures, new curriculum content to teach students about the negative impacts of bullying and the importance of safe online behaviour, and a new recognition process for schools embedding anti-bullying practices.

An Implementation and Evaluation Group will be established to oversee implementation of the actions and the publication of annual implementation and evaluation reports informed by feedback from children and young people, parents, school staff, education partners, key stakeholders and relevant agencies.

Our children and young people are placed at the very heart of *Cineáltas*. I believe that the implementation of the actions in *Cineáltas* as outlined in this implementation plan will greatly enhance the work that we already do to ensure that all the children and young people who attend our schools are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our children and young people is at the forefront of everything that we do.

**Norma Foley TD**  
Minister for Education





## Foreword from Secretary General Bernie McNally

The actions contained in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* are wide-ranging and ambitious, and when implemented over the next five years will contribute to enhancing the development of inclusive schools where children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.

By grounding *Cineáltas* in the Department's *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice* and UNESCO's whole education approach to preventing and addressing bullying and cyberbullying, the Department acknowledges the importance of a multi-faceted approach to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour. This approach requires us to look at bullying behaviour from a variety of angles; we need to focus on prevention, providing support to every school community, improving oversight and awareness at all levels and working together as a community with a renewed sense of partnership and *Cineáltas* towards each other.

Both individually and collectively we need to reflect on our values. Values such as kindness, empathy and integrity help to shape who we are and how we behave. Our values can help us to understand the harm that can be caused by bullying and how to try to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to promote equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing. Our values can help us all to work together to implement the actions in *Cineáltas*. I am really looking forward to leading on this work and making this implementation plan a reality.

**Bernie McNally**  
Secretary General



## Introduction

*Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* is Ireland's whole-education approach to preventing and addressing bullying in schools. Cineáltas builds on the achievements and ambition of the previous Action Plan on Bullying published in 2013, taking into account the work undertaken in recent years to ensure that our schools are safe and happy places for all our children and young people.

Ireland ratified the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child in September 1992. In doing this we committed to promote, protect and fulfil the rights of children.

Bullying interferes with the following rights of the child:

- > The right to freedom of expression (Article 13)
- > The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)
- > The right to freedom of association and freedom of peaceful assembly (Article 15)
- > The right to privacy (Article 16)
- > The right to be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect (Article 19)
- > The right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health (Article 24)
- > The right to education (Article 28)
- > The right to enjoy their own culture, religion or language (Article 30)

The implementation of the actions contained in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* will help our children and young people to grow up in a society where these rights are protected.

Cineáltas is dedicated to preventing and addressing bullying online and offline, including bullying based on race, gender identity, sexual harassment, among other areas, in schools.

Cineáltas was developed by the Department of Education in collaboration with a diverse and dedicated Steering Committee led by Dr Noel Purdy of Stranmillis University College in Belfast. Cineáltas has been informed by the views of children and young people, parents, school staff, education partners and individual members of the public and succeeds in placing the students at the very heart of the plan.

*Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* has drawn on the Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2019, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) whole education approach, as well as national and international research and best practice to develop a robust strategy that places the student at the centre of the school community and at the centre of national education strategy and policy development.

The development of *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* has been informed by an extensive consultation process.

- > Over 50 presentations were made to the steering committee
- > Over 4,600 responses were received to the public consultation questionnaire
- > 78 submissions were received to the public request for submissions
- > 41 school staff and board of management members participated in school focus groups
- > 170 children and young people were consulted including children with special educational needs, Traveller and Roma children, children from Ukraine and refugees.

*Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* is rooted in the following four key principles:

- > Prevention: Through the generation of empathy and the provision of training which provides a foundation for knowledge, respect, equality and inclusion
- > Support: Tangible and targeted supports based on a continuum of needs which provide a framework for school communities to work together
- > Oversight: Visible leadership creates positive environments for children and young people and all members of our school community
- > Community: Building inclusive school communities that are connected to society, and that support and nurture positive relationships and partnerships

*Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* contains 61 actions that are aimed at helping us all to work together towards a diverse, inclusive Irish society, free from bullying in all its forms and where individual difference is valued, nurtured and celebrated and where all our children and young people can feel happy and safe in our schools. These are grouped into the four key areas for wellbeing promotion:

- > Culture and Environment
- > Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)
- > Policy and Planning
- > Relationships and Partnerships

This Implementation Plan demonstrates the Department's commitment to implementing each of the 61 actions in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* in the next 5 years.

An implementation group will be established and will publish annual implementation and evaluation reports informed by feedback from children and young people, parents, school staff, education partners, key stakeholders and relevant agencies. This feedback will enable progress to be reviewed and evaluated and adjustments to be made to the implementation plan as appropriate.



## Measuring Success

The successful implementation of *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* will be evidenced by a number of measures, which include the following:

- > Increased voice and participation of children, young people and their parents in policy development and implementation at school and national level including in relation to developing and implementing measures to prevent and address bullying in schools
- > Student councils and school staff that reflect the diversity of the school community
- > All schools engaging in a school self-evaluation approach to wellbeing promotion
- > Anti-bullying procedures for schools that support the school community in preventing and addressing bullying, provide for enhanced reporting and oversight mechanisms and support schools to review and evaluate the measures that the school has in place to prevent and address bullying
- > Provision of accessible information on supports to prevent and address bullying for children and young people, parents and school staff
- > All school staff being provided with professional development programmes to enhance their knowledge, skills and confidence to prevent and address bullying, racism, sexism, sexual harassment and to promote equity, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing
- > An up-to-date curriculum that encompasses measures to prevent and address bullying and to promote equity, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing
- > Embedding of positive cultures in schools as evidenced from published inspection reports, research, school culture and value declarations and feedback from children and young people, parents and school staff
- > Recognition of effective practices in schools to prevent and address bullying through a Cineáltas award programme
- > Collation of national data on the prevalence of bullying and measures that successfully prevent and address bullying
- > Research informed policy, professional development and awareness raising campaigns to prevent and address all forms of bullying



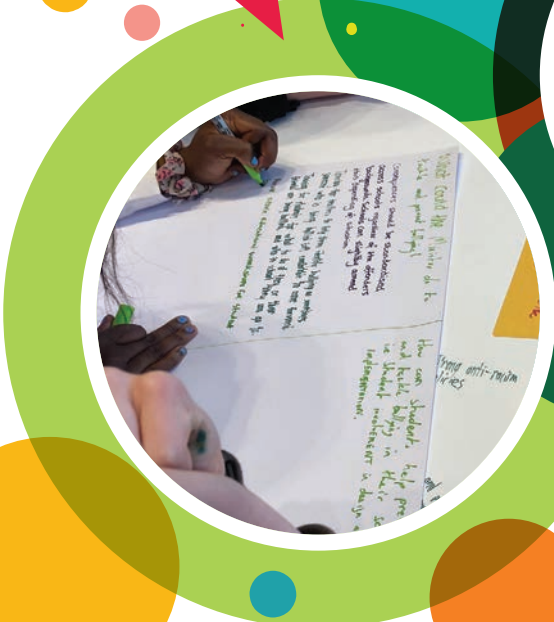


Talk about the effects of bullying

More teachers in the yard

Use previous instances of bullying/ testimonies from those affected as a guideline of identifying bullying. Have this written into the policy

An adult that can talk to you about anything



Have more educational workshops for students but also for adults – learn about each topic but also racism

Meditation every day to help calm everyone down

# Department of Education roadmap for preventing and addressing bullying

## KEY AREAS OF WELLBEING

Culture and  
Environment

Curriculum (Teaching  
and Learning)

Policy and Planning

Relationships and  
Partnerships



## PREVENTION

Education and  
empathy generation  
are the foundations  
for knowledge,  
respect and  
inclusion



## SUPPORT

Tangible and  
targeted supports  
provide a  
framework for  
school communities  
to work together





**COMMUNITY**

Inclusive school communities that are connected build positive relationships and partnerships

Accountability & Inclusion



**OVERSIGHT**

Visible leadership inspires positive environments for children and the school community



# 1 | Culture and Environment

Creating a positive and inclusive school culture and environment provides a space where children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.



## 1: Culture and Environment

The implementation of the actions grouped under Culture and Environment will support the creation of a positive and inclusive school culture and environment where children, young people and school staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.

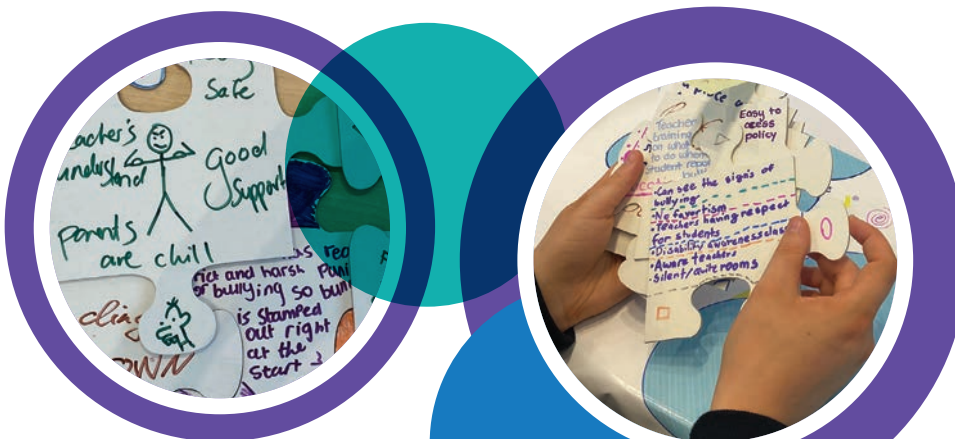
Our values can help us all to work together towards an equal, inclusive Irish society free from bullying in all its forms and where individual difference is valued and celebrated. The development of an accessible School Culture and Values Declaration, a Cineáltas Charter, with input from the whole school community will support schools to embrace a positive value system that underpins the creation of a safe, connected and supportive school culture and environment. A recognition process, such as a Cineáltas flag, will increase awareness of the importance of embedding the School Culture and Values Declaration in all aspects of school life.

Student support teams play a very valuable role in supporting the welfare and wellbeing of students in post-primary schools. Cineáltas contains clear commitments to support all post-primary schools to establish student support teams, to develop guidance for the establishment of student support teams in larger primary schools and to ensure that student support teams actively seek the voice and participation of children, young people and their parents. The implementation of these actions will greatly enhance the role that children, young people and their parents play in supporting the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people in primary and post-primary schools.

The important and valuable role that school staff can play in preventing and addressing bullying was highlighted by many stakeholders during the development of Cineáltas. This role includes modelling behaviour based on the ethical values of respect, integrity, care and trust and establishing respectful relationships with children and young people.

The Department's Inspectorate plays a key role in supporting schools to prevent and address bullying through school self-evaluation advisory visits and programmes of inspection. From January 2023 all inspection models at primary and post-primary level include anti-bullying checks that focus on compliance and the promotion of a positive school culture and environment. To build on this the Inspectorate is developing an inspection model that will evaluate the extent to which a school has appropriate strategies in place to promote wellbeing, prevent and address bullying, and promote a positive and inclusive school culture.

In line with the Department's commitment to promoting the participation of children and young people in policies and decisions that impact them, data gathered from the new inspection model to evaluate the promotion of wellbeing in schools will facilitate the publication of an annual report on the views of children, young people and their parents on how their school prevents and addresses bullying, using both survey and focus group data.



## Culture and Environment

**Objective:** To create a positive and inclusive school culture and environment which provides a space where children, young people and staff experience a sense of belonging and feel safe, connected and supported.

Number	Action	Implementation
1.1	Schools will be required to produce an accessible School Culture and Values Declaration, a Cineáltas Charter, which outlines the school's culture and values and how they can help to prevent and address bullying, in an age appropriate manner. The Declaration will include, for example, a school's focus on welcome, inclusion and wellbeing. The Department of Education will provide guidance to schools on the development and implementation of this declaration with input from the whole school community.	<p>Q4 2023</p> <p>Guidance to be issued to schools on the development and implementation of the Cineáltas Charter.</p> <p>Q2 2024</p> <p>All schools to develop and publish their School Culture and Values Declaration.</p>
1.2	The Department of Education will develop a recognition process, such as a Cineáltas flag, for schools who engage in measures to prevent and address bullying.	<p>Q1 2024-Q2 2024</p> <p>Conduct a scoping exercise on a recognition process.</p> <p>Q3 2024-Q4 2027</p> <p>Implement a recognition process for schools.</p>
1.3	All post-primary schools will be required to have Student Support Teams in place as part of the school's wellbeing promotion process. Their remit will include preventing and addressing bullying.	<p>Q1 2023-Q4 2027</p> <p>Support all post-primary schools to establish Student Support Teams.</p>
1.4	Student Support Teams will be encouraged to avail of continuous professional development (CPD) to support their effective practice to prevent and address bullying.	<p>Q1 2023-Q4 2027</p> <p>Provide post-primary schools with CPD and/or in school support by National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) psychologists to support and/or develop their Student Support Teams.</p>

Culture and Environment		
Number	Action	Implementation
1.5	The Department of Education will provide specific guidance to schools on how Student Support Teams will actively seek the voice and participation of children, young people and their parents.	Q3 2023-Q3 2024 Develop guidance for post-primary school Student Support Teams on how to actively seek the voice and participation of children, young people and their parents.
1.6	The Department of Education will develop guidance for the establishment of a Student Support Team model in larger primary schools.	Q3 2023-Q4 2024 Conduct pilot of student support teams in larger primary schools to inform the publication of guidelines for primary schools. Q4 2024-Q4 2025 Consult with key stakeholders on the development of guidance. Q4 2025 Publish guidelines for larger Primary schools.
1.7	The Department of Education will support schools to assign the role of a designated person to promote wellbeing, and in particular, to lead on measures to prevent and address bullying in schools as part of the school leadership team in accordance with the relevant Department circulars for post holders.	Q1 2023-Q4 2027 Support school leaders and designated post holders to lead on measures to prevent and address bullying.



Culture and Environment		
Number	Action	Implementation
1.8	The Department of Education will support schools to engage in a school self-evaluation approach to wellbeing promotion, which includes preventing and addressing bullying, in line with the Department's <i>Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice</i> .	Q1 2023-Q4 2027 Provide supports and resources to schools to assist them as they review their wellbeing promotion process through NEPS and the Wellbeing Office. Support schools' engagement with School self-evaluation (SSE) to promote Wellbeing, including measures to prevent and address bullying.
1.9	The Department of Education will encourage all schools to avail of Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) Wellbeing CPD, to support them as they engage in a whole school approach to wellbeing promotion as outlined in the Department's <i>Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice</i> .	Q1 2023-Q4 2025 Continue to roll out CPD to support the implementation of the <i>Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice</i> in all schools by 2025.
1.10	Whole-school evaluations (WSEs) will include an assessment of the key aspects of the anti-bullying procedures for schools, which include assessing whether the school has appropriate initiatives in place to promote a positive and inclusive school culture. The Inspectorate will follow up with schools where issues of non-compliance arise until the school becomes compliant.	Q1 2023-Q4 2027 Conduct specific oversight checks in whole-school inspections on the implementation of the anti-bullying procedures. Record and follow-up on all instances of non-compliance with the anti-bullying procedures until the matter is resolved and full compliance is achieved.



Culture and Environment		
Number	Action	Implementation
1.11	The Department's Inspectorate will prepare an annual report on the views of children, young people and parents on how their school prevents and addresses bullying, using both survey and focus group data including examples of best practice and areas where an increased focus may be required by schools.	Q4 2023 Publish a report on the outcomes of inspection findings, including data from surveys of children, young people and their parents in relation to preventing and addressing bullying. Q1 2024-Q4 2027 Publish an annual report on the views of children, young people and their parents on how their school prevents and addresses bullying, using both survey and focus group data gathered from the new inspection model to evaluate the promotion of wellbeing in schools.
1.12	The Department of Education will develop a plan to support the promotion, implementation and evaluation of the Department's <i>Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice</i> , which will include a focus on school culture and preventing and addressing bullying.	Q1 2023-Q4 2023 Commence development of a new inspection model to assess whether a school has appropriate strategies in place to promote wellbeing, prevent and address bullying, and promote a positive and inclusive school culture. Q1 2024 Roll-out the new inspection model to evaluate the promotion of wellbeing in schools.
1.13	The Department of Education will ensure that guidelines for the design of school buildings incorporate measures that minimise the potential for bullying, with particular attention to the development of shared and collaborative learning and recreational spaces.	Q4 2024-Q4 2025 Review the suite of Design Guides for Schools to ensure the provision of education environments that promote equality, provide safe spaces, are flexible, inclusive and adaptable to changing needs as they arise. The views of children and young people will be sought as part of the review.



Culture and Environment		
Number	Action	Implementation
1.14	The Department of Education will work collaboratively to highlight the important role and responsibility that school staff have in modelling behaviour based on the ethical values of respect, integrity, care and trust.	<p>Q1 2023-Q4 2023</p> <p>Engage with the Teaching Council regarding the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers and how it aligns with the principles in Cineáltas.</p> <p>Q1 2023-Q4 2023</p> <p>Consider how the role and responsibility of teachers in this area can be highlighted and included in communications issued to all registered teachers.</p>
1.15	The Department of Education will continue to support the work of Webwise and increase awareness of the range of resources it provides as the Irish Internet Safety Awareness Centre.	<p>Q1 2023-Q4 2027</p> <p>Continue to provide annual funding to Webwise to support its work.</p> <p>Q3 2023</p> <p>Webwise to launch a new Junior Cycle Unit of learning promoting respect, empathy and inclusion online.</p>
1.16	The Department of Education will continue to support the Stand Up Awareness Campaign.	<p>Q1 2023-Q4 2027</p> <p>Continue to provide funding to support the Stand Up Awareness Campaign.</p>
1.17	The Department of Education will work with relevant groups to develop a diverse programme of awareness raising initiatives to prevent and address bullying in schools, including raising awareness of different forms of bullying (for example online bullying, racist bullying, disablist bullying) and highlighting the important role of bystanders.	<p>Q2 2023-Q4 2027</p> <p>Establish an advisory group which will include children and young people to develop a diverse annual programme of awareness raising initiatives to prevent and address bullying in schools.</p>

# 2 | Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

An inclusive and supportive curriculum for our children and young people with training and development for all school staff provides consistent support and opportunities for inclusive learning and empathy generation.



## 2: Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

The implementation of the actions grouped under Curriculum (Teaching and Learning) will provide consistent support and opportunities for inclusive learning and empathy generation. This will be achieved through the provision of an inclusive and supportive curriculum for our children and young people and the provision of training for all school staff on measures to prevent and address bullying.

Cineáltas contains a commitment to provide training to student teachers, newly qualified teachers, school leaders and all school staff on measures to prevent and address bullying, racism, sexism and sexual harassment, and the promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing.

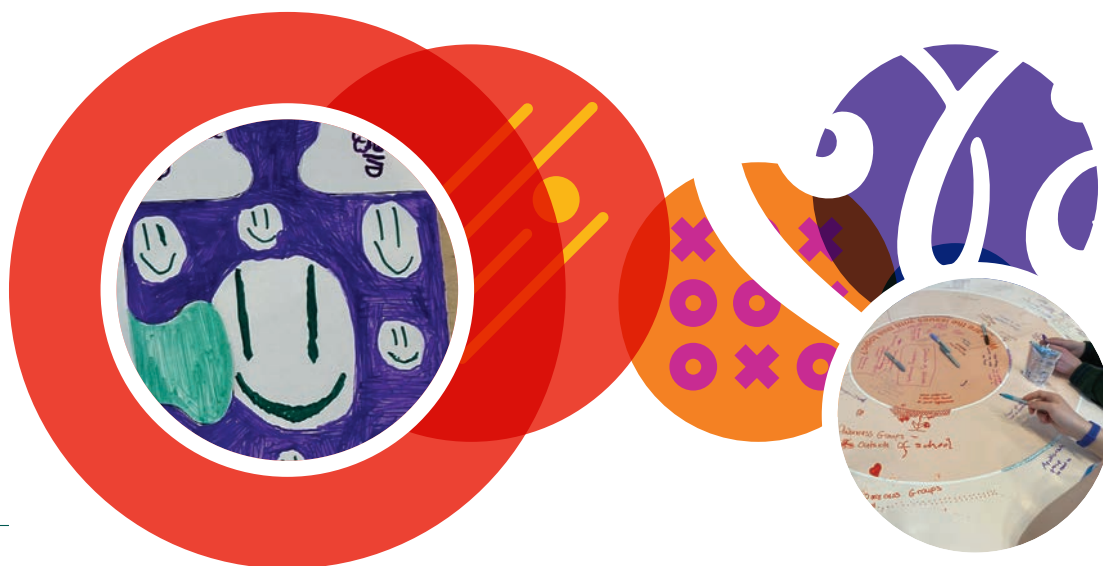
Cineáltas contains a commitment to expanding the recently developed Level 9 Graduate Diploma in Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) for post-primary teachers which commenced in January 2023. Funded by the Department, this course provides a pathway for teachers to build capacity and leadership within the teaching profession in relation to teaching SPHE and RSE.

The Department is cognisant of the key role that parents play in keeping their children safe and dealing with bullying behaviour. Cineáltas aims to support their role by ensuring that they have access to up-to-date and accessible training. The Department will also support boards of management in their important oversight role by providing updated training.

Children and young people play a pivotal role in preventing and addressing bullying, and it is vital that they are supported to carry out their role. For this reason, Cineáltas aims to ensure that all schools have access to the FUSE anti-bullying and online safety programme and that additional modules of this programme are developed.

In terms of curriculum development, the Junior Cycle SPHE/RSE curriculum has been reviewed and both senior cycle and primary SPHE, RSE and wellbeing related curricula are under review. These reviews aim to address learning needs as age appropriate in the areas of consent; healthy, positive sexual expression and relationships; safe use of the internet and social media and its effects on relationships and self-esteem; and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) identities and will help to prevent and address bullying. The primary curriculum framework has also recently been published.

In addition to this, Cineáltas contains a commitment to seeking to ensure that the literature and textbooks used by schools in teaching the wider school curriculum positively represents the diversity of society and promotes equality and inclusion.



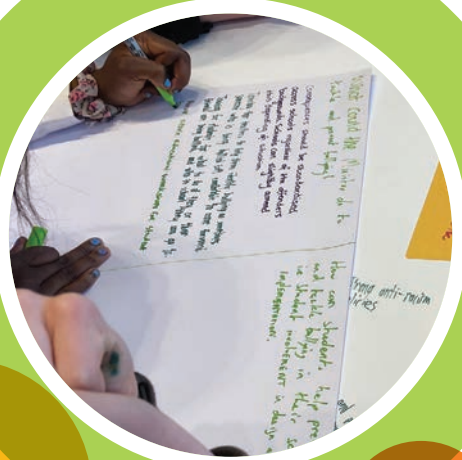
**Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)**

**Objective:** To ensure an inclusive and supportive curriculum for our children and young people with training and development for all school staff which provides consistent support and opportunities for inclusive learning and empathy generation.

Number	Action	Implementation
2.1	The Department of Education, will engage with the Teaching Council and the initial teacher education (ITE) higher education institutions (HEIs) to ensure that the revised Standards for Initial Teacher Education (Céim) support a renewed focus on equipping student teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively prevent and address bullying, racism, sexism and sexual harassment and to promote equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing. The Department of Education will work collaboratively with the Teaching Council and HEIs to implement changes as required.	Q1 2024-Q4 2025 Engage with the Teaching Council and HEIs, through the review process for Céim to ensure that student teachers will be equipped with the knowledge and skills to prevent and address bullying, racism, sexism and sexual harassment.
2.2	The Department of Education will ensure that the implementation of relevant actions under its ITE Policy Statement takes account of preventing and addressing bullying, racism, sexism and sexual harassment and the promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing.	Q3 2023 Publish the ITE policy statement. Q4 2023 Engage with the ITE HEIs to brief them on Cineáltas.
2.3	The Department of Education will review existing resources available to newly qualified teachers (NQTs), to identify and develop any additional up-to-date resources required to support NQTs' learning in areas such as measures to prevent and address bullying, racism, sexism and sexual harassment and the promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing. The Department of Education will work to address any needs identified.	Q1 2024 Engage with relevant stakeholders to review existing resources for NQT's. Q2 2024-Q4 2024 Develop resources to address any gaps in provision for NQT's.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)		
Number	Action	Implementation
2.4	The Department of Education will review its existing leadership programmes to continue to ensure that these programmes include up-to-date content on measures to prevent and address bullying, racism, sexism and sexual harassment and the promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing. The Department will work to address any needs identified.	Q1 2024 Engage with relevant stakeholders to review existing resources for school leaders. Q2 2024-Q4 2024 Develop resources to address any gaps in provision for school leaders.
2.5	The Department of Education will continue to roll-out and expand a post-graduate qualification for post-primary SPHE teachers to help equip teachers with the content knowledge, confidence and skills to plan and deliver SPHE and Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) and to facilitate student learning relevant to all aspects of the specification including preventing and addressing bullying.	Q1 2023 Commence provision of a postgraduate programme for SPHE/RSE for post-primary teachers. Q3 2023-Q4 2027 Continue delivery of postgraduate programme for SPHE/RSE for post-primary teachers.
2.6	The Department of Education will ensure that all school staff have access to appropriate up-to-date training on measures to prevent and address bullying, racism, sexism and sexual harassment and the promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing.	Q1 2024 Engage with relevant stakeholders to review existing resources for school staff. Q2 2024-Q4 2024 Develop resources to address any gaps in provision for school staff.
2.7	The Department of Education will continue to roll out CPD to support the implementation of the <i>Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice</i> in all schools by 2025.	Q1 2023-Q4 2024 Commence full day seminars for a new (third) cohort of schools in the 2023/2024 school year.

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)		
Number	Action	Implementation
2.8	The Department of Education will encourage primary and post-primary teaching staff to avail of the new Department of Education online courses on the topic of online bullying (cyber bullying) in order to provide school staff with the knowledge, resources and confidence needed to teach about cyberbullying and also to deal with cyberbullying incidents as they arise.	Q1 2023-Q4 2027 Commence delivery of online cyberbullying courses (one for primary and one for post-primary) by PDST and promote across platforms including, websites, newsletters, and social media.
2.9	The Department of Education will update the anti-bullying training for boards of management to support their oversight role in relation to bullying and to support them in addressing parental concerns in relation to alleged bullying behaviour.	Q2 2023-Q4 2023 Engage with relevant stakeholders to review and update existing training for boards of management.
2.10	The Department of Education will ensure that up-to-date, accessible training for parents and guardians is available to inform and support them in dealing with bullying, particularly in relation to online bullying (cyber bullying) and keeping their children safe online.	Q2 2023-Q3 2023 Support the National Parents Council (NPC) to review and update existing training for parents of children in primary schools and to develop resources for parents of young people in post-primary schools.  Q1 2023-Q4 2027 Continue to provide annual funding to the NPC to help support the delivery of training for parents.



Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)		
Number	Action	Implementation
2.11	The SPHE/RSE curriculum across primary and post-primary schools will be reviewed and updated to ensure that it includes, in an age appropriate manner, the areas of consent; healthy, positive sexual expression and relationships; safe use of the Internet and social media and its effects on relationships and self-esteem; and LGBTQ+ identities.	<p>Q3 2023</p> <p>Implement the new Junior Cycle SPHE/RSE specification in post-primary schools.</p> <p>Q3 2023</p> <p>Finalise the draft Senior Cycle SPHE/RSE specification for public consultation.</p> <p>Q1 2024</p> <p>Finalise the draft primary SPHE/RSE specification for public consultation.</p> <p>Q3 2024</p> <p>Implement the new Senior Cycle SPHE/RSE specification in post-primary schools.</p> <p>Q3 2025</p> <p>Implement the new primary SPHE/RSE specification in primary schools.</p>
2.12	The updated Junior Cycle SPHE programme will include content on navigating friendships online, including how to recognise and respond to online bullying.	<p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Publish the new Junior Cycle SPHE/RSE specification and commencement of CPD.</p> <p>Q3 2023</p> <p>Implement the new Junior Cycle SPHE/RSE specification.</p>
2.13	The review and redevelopment of the primary school curriculum will support age and stage appropriate learning in all aspects of the curriculum including preventing and addressing bullying and racism, and the promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing, including online safety. Adequate curricular time will be provided for this.	<p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Publish the Primary Curriculum Framework.</p> <p>Q1 2024</p> <p>Finalise the draft primary Wellbeing specification (to include SPHE/RSE) for public consultation.</p> <p>Q3 2025</p> <p>Introduce the new primary Wellbeing specification (to include SPHE/RSE).</p> <p>Q3 2025</p> <p>Introduce the new primary school curriculum with the exception of the Primary Mathematics Curriculum which will be introduced in the 2023/24 school year.</p>



Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)		
Number	Action	Implementation
2.14	The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) will progress their work in supporting teaching and learning about Traveller culture and history within the curriculum.	<p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Publish a Research Report on Traveller culture and history.</p> <p>Q3 2023-Q4 2023</p> <p>Publish a resource containing examples of practice of teaching and learning about Traveller culture and history gathered from early childhood settings, primary and post-primary schools to support teachers, practitioners and students in understanding and appreciating Traveller culture and history.</p>
2.15	The NCCA will review and update the Intercultural Guidelines for primary and post-primary schools to support the further integration of intercultural education in the curriculum.	<p>Q4 2023</p> <p>Publish a report on the review of the intercultural guidelines for primary and post-primary schools.</p>
2.16	The NCCA will ensure that literature which positively represents the diversity of society and promotes equality and inclusion will be included in the text lists from which post-primary schools choose texts to support teaching and learning.	<p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Brief the NCCA on Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying.</p> <p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Publish revised Leaving Certificate English text lists.</p> <p>Q3 2023</p> <p>Publish revised Junior Cycle Irish text lists.</p> <p>Q4 2023</p> <p>Commence work on revised Leaving Certificate Irish text lists.</p> <p>Q1 2023-Q4 2023</p> <p>Publish support materials as part of the SPHE/RSE online toolkits.</p> <p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Publish a research report on procedures for reviewing and updating text lists.</p> <p>Q3 2023</p> <p>Publish a research report on how best to support the participation of students in reviewing and updating text lists.</p>

Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)		
Number	Action	Implementation
2.17	The NCCA, on behalf of the Department, will engage with school textbook publishers to inform them of the importance of ensuring that the content of their textbooks reflects the diversity of society and promotes equality and inclusion.	Q1 2023 Brief the Irish Educational Publishers' Association (IEPA) on <i>Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying</i> . Q2 2023 The NCCA and IEPA to engage on implementation of this action.
2.18	The Department of Education will work with the Dublin City University (DCU) Anti-Bullying Centre to arrange for the FUSE anti-bullying and online safety programme to be available and promoted to schools. The programme will continue to be updated by the DCU Anti-Bullying Centre based on research and feedback.	Q2 2023-Q4 2023 Engage with the Anti-Bullying Centre to develop a plan for implementation of this action. Q4 2024 Ensure that the FUSE anti-bullying and online safety programme will be more widely available and promoted to schools.
2.19	The Department of Education will fund the development of additional modules of the FUSE anti-bullying and online safety programme for each year of post-primary school and the appropriate years at primary school.	Q2 2023-Q3 2023 Support the development of additional modules of the FUSE programme for 6th class and 1st year. Q4 2023 Conduct pilot of additional modules. Q2 2024 Make additional modules available to schools. Q1 2024 Consider the development of other additional modules.
2.20	In the development of their anti-bullying work, schools will be required to adhere to best practice guidance for primary and post-primary schools in the use of programmes and/or external facilitators in promoting wellbeing consistent with the Department of Education's <i>Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice</i> .	Q1 2023-Q4 2027 Support schools to adhere to best practice guidance in the use of programmes and/or external facilitators in promoting wellbeing.

# 3 | Policy and Planning

Adaptive and responsive policies and planning where children and young people, their families, education partners and key stakeholders are active participants working together with Government, acknowledges and enriches the role we all play in preventing bullying in Irish schools.

### 3: Policy and Planning

The implementation of the actions grouped under policy and planning will support the development and implementation of adaptive and responsive policies where everyone can work together with Government to prevent and address bullying in our schools.

Cineáltas contains a commitment to update the anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools to take account of gender identity bullying, cyber bullying, racist bullying, sexist bullying and sexual harassment. The updated procedures will provide support and guidance for schools on preventing and addressing bullying behaviour and will provide for enhanced reporting, oversight and review mechanisms. The procedures will be developed and updated based on input from all members of the school community and informed by a risk assessment. The collation of national data on the prevalence of bullying and measures that successfully prevent and address bullying will inform policy both at a school and a national level, research, professional development and awareness raising campaigns.

The updating of the *Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools* 2008 and resources to support LGBTQ+ pupils and students in schools will help ensure alignment across other related policies.

An Online Safety Commissioner was appointed in January 2023 following the commencement of the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act in late 2022. Cineáltas contains a commitment for the Department to engage with the Online Safety Commissioner and participate in the National Advisory Council for Online Safety (NACOS) to support their work to prevent and address bullying.

A key commitment contained in Cineáltas is the establishment of an Implementation and Evaluation Group to oversee implementation of the actions and the publication of annual implementation and evaluation reports. These annual reports will be informed by feedback from children and young people, parents, school staff, education partners, key stakeholders and relevant agencies. This feedback will enable progress to be reviewed and evaluated and adjustments to be made to the implementation plan over its lifetime as appropriate.



## Policy and Planning

**Objective:** To develop and implement adaptive and responsive policies and planning where children and young people, their families, education partners and key stakeholders are active participants working together with Government to prevent and address bullying in Irish schools.

Number	Action	Implementation
3.1	The Department of Education will examine how schools can record alleged incidents of bullying behaviour in an anonymised manner, which will include information on the nature of the behaviour, the approach taken to address the behaviour and the outcome. Schools will regularly review their records of alleged incidents of bullying behaviour to discern emerging trends, to identify key learning and to consider what measures could be taken to prevent re-occurrence.	Q3 2023 Publish updated anti-bullying procedures for schools which will include guidance on recording alleged incidents of bullying behaviour.
3.2	The Department of Education will progress the development of a national database to facilitate data being collated in an anonymised manner to facilitate the development of an annual national report on bullying in schools.	Q3 2023-Q4 2023 Undertake a scoping exercise and develop the database. Q1 2024-Q2 2024 Conduct pilot of the database. Q3 2025 Publish first annual report on data from school year 2024/2025.
3.3	The anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools will be updated to take account of gender identity bullying, cyber bullying, racist bullying, sexist bullying, and sexual harassment. These procedures will also provide guidance as to when an incident of bullying becomes a Child Protection Concern, will ensure appropriate oversight at school level, and will ensure that a school's anti-bullying policy is developed and reviewed in consultation with the whole school community.	Q1 2023-Q3 2023 Develop and publish updated anti-bullying procedures for schools. Q3 2023-Q4 2023 Provide CPD and implement updated anti-bullying procedures in schools.

Policy and Planning		
Number	Action	Implementation
3.4	The Department of Education will develop mandatory anti-bullying template documents to assist schools in developing and implementing their anti-bullying procedures.	Q1 2023-Q3 2023 Develop and publish anti-bullying template documents.
3.5	Schools will be required to ensure that their anti-bullying policy is accessible and made available to the whole school community.	Q3 2023-Q4 2023 Commence phased implementation of updated anti-bullying procedures.
3.6	The Department of Education will review and update the <i>Being LGBT in School Resource</i> .	Q1 2024-Q4 2024 Develop and publish updated <i>Being LGBT in School Resource</i> .
3.7	Tusla will review and update the 2008 <i>Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools</i> to reflect current Department of Education policies and procedures for schools including <i>Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying</i> and to ensure that schools have sufficient tools to address bullying issues as they arise.	Q2 2023-Q4 2023 Develop and publish updated Tusla document <i>Developing a Code of Behaviour Guidelines for Schools</i> .
3.8	The Department of Education will identify and initiate further research on preventing and addressing bullying in order to support the dissemination of good practice and provide evidence for further policy development and decision-making.	Q1 2024-Q4 2027 Review the implementation and evaluation reports for <i>Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying</i> to identify and initiate further research on preventing and addressing bullying.
3.9	The Department of Education will engage with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in relation to the role of the Online Safety Commissioner.	Q3 2023 Engage with the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media in relation to the role of the Online Safety Commissioner and to brief them on relevant Department policies including <i>Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying</i> .

Policy and Planning		
Number	Action	Implementation
3.10	The Department of Education will engage with the Online Safety Commissioner, once appointed, particularly with regard to the ways that social media companies can support measures to prevent and address bullying among children and young people in schools and online.	Q3 2023  Engage with the Online Safety Commissioner to brief the Commissioner on relevant Department policies including <i>Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying</i> and to agree a schedule of periodic engagement.
3.11	The Department of Education will continue to be represented on the National Advisory Council for Online Safety (NACOS) whose remit includes providing advice to Government on online safety policy issues and inputting to the development of online safety guidance materials for all internet users.	Q1 2023-Q4 2027  Continue to contribute to the work of the National Advisory Council for Online Safety.
3.12	The Department of Education will establish an implementation group to oversee the implementation of <i>Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying</i> . A programme of evaluation and review, including the publication of regular progress reports, will be developed as part of the implementation plan.	Q2 2023 Establish an implementation group and working groups as appropriate.  Q1 2024 Publish the first annual implementation and evaluation report which will include feedback from children and young people, parents, school staff education partners and other key stakeholders.



# 4 | Relationships and Partnerships

Promoting the development of the relationships and partnerships between children and young people, their families and the school community enhances our networks and understanding of each others experiences in Irish society





## 4: Relationships and Partnerships

The implementation of the actions grouped under relationships and partnerships will enhance our understanding of each other's experiences and perspectives by promoting and providing opportunities for the development of relationships and partnerships between children and young people, their families and the school community.

Cineáltas contains a number of actions which are focused on ensuring that children and young people can participate in a meaningful way in the development and implementation of policy both at a school and national level. The commitment to establish a dedicated unit in the Department to promote the participation of children and young people in the development and implementation of Department policy is a key action in Cineáltas which will ensure that children and young people have meaningful participation into all areas of Department policy.

The progression of the Charter Bill and the establishment of student councils that are truly representative of the student population in a school will help ensure that children and young people can have meaningful participation at school level.

Cineáltas supports schools to learn from each other and to work together to prevent and address bullying by promoting the use of school clusters to facilitate the sharing of effective strategies and initiatives.

Through the implementation of Cineáltas, our children and young people will have greater access to initiatives to improve wellbeing and mental health through a range of measures including access to counselling supports in selected primary schools, access to NEPS psychologists and increased awareness raising and provision of information on available supports.

Cineáltas commits to updating the [tacklebullying.ie](http://tacklebullying.ie) website to focus on the provision of accessible information to children and young people, parents and school staff. This will help ensure that the information on the website meets the needs of the different audiences in an accessible way.

Cineáltas commits to continuing to support the work of the National Anti-Bullying Centre. This will ensure that the Department can continue to rely on up-to-date research and insights about the experiences of Irish children, young people, parents and school staff, as well as insights from international research.



## Relationships and Partnerships

**Objective:** To promote the development of relationships and partnerships between children and young people, their families and the school community which enhance our networks and understanding of each other's experiences in Irish society.

Number	Action	Implementation
4.1	Schools will be required to engage with their pupils and students to support and promote pupil and student led anti-bullying and wellbeing initiatives. The Department of Education will provide guidance to schools to facilitate this in accordance with the <i>National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making</i> .	Q2 2024 Provide guidance to schools on engaging with their pupils and students to support pupil and student led anti-bullying initiatives.
4.2	The Department of Education will encourage schools to establish student councils that are representative of the pupils and students in the school.	Q3 2023-Q2 2024 Review and update the 2002 <i>Student Councils: A voice for students'</i> resource to support the establishment of student councils in primary and post-primary schools.
4.3	The Department of Education will establish a dedicated unit to promote the voice of children and young people and to ensure that they have meaningful input into the development of Department policy.	Q2 2023 Establish a dedicated unit to promote the participation of children and young people in the development and implementation of Department policy. Q2 2023 Establish an Expert Group to support and advise on the work of the unit. Q4 2023 Publish report from Expert Group.

Relationships and Partnerships		
Number	Action	Implementation
4.4	The Department of Education will progress the Charter Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas and will develop Charter Guidelines that will strengthen the voice and participation of children and young people and their parents in the development and implementation of school policies including their anti-bullying policy.	Q2 2023 Continue to engage with stakeholders regarding the Charter Bill with a view to progressing the legislation.
4.5	The Department of Education will encourage schools to come together with their school community, including representative groups, to form clusters to progress wellbeing related initiatives and to share good practice and innovations with a particular focus on preventing and addressing bullying, racism, sexism and sexual harassment and the promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing.	Q3 2024 Conduct pilot of wellbeing clusters. Q3 2025 Review and evaluate pilot model.
4.6	The Department of Education will pilot a programme of counselling supports for primary schools.	Q2 2023-Q4 2023 Pilot a programme of counselling supports. Q1 2024 Evaluate pilot.
4.7	The Department of Education will continue to work closely with the Department of Health to explore ways to improve wellbeing and mental health supports for children and young people, including raising awareness, promoting help-seeking behaviour and sign-posting of available services.	Q1 2023-Q4 2027 Engage regularly with the Department of Health. Q2 2024 Develop a protocol on the liaison process that should be in place between schools and mental health services in collaboration with the Department of Health and HSE.

Relationships and Partnerships		
Number	Action	Implementation
4.8	The Department of Education will increase the number of NEPS Psychologists available within the school sector and take proactive measures to promote the study of educational psychology.	<p>Q1 2023</p> <p>Commence recruitment.</p> <p>Q1 2023-Q2 2023</p> <p>Implement interim solutions to support workforce planning in NEPS.</p> <p>Q1 2023-Q4 2027</p> <p>Continue to work with HEI's to increase numbers on existing training courses and to raise the profile of the educational psychology profession among undergraduate psychology student and Psychological Society of Ireland career events.</p>
4.9	The Department of Education will progress the objectives of the National Access Plan 2022–2028 to increase the number of students from under-represented groups entering initial teacher education so that the teaching profession reflects the diversity of Irish society.	<p>Q2 2023-Q4 2024</p> <p>Develop further baseline data on diversity in initial teacher education programmes from priority groups under the National Access Plan.</p> <p>Q2 2023-Q4 2024</p> <p>Review the impact of Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH1) projects on students from priority groups and their ability to access ITE including meeting entry requirements and overcoming barriers to access in collaboration with the Department of Further Higher Education Research Innovation and Science (DFHERIS).</p>
4.10	The tacklebullying.ie website will be updated so that its content becomes more accessible to children and young people, parents and school staff and contains examples of best practice at school level. Once updated, an awareness campaign will be developed to promote the website and the information available on it.	<p>Q2 2023-Q4 2023</p> <p>Conduct a user scoping exercise to identify user requirements.</p> <p>Q2 2023</p> <p>Establish an advisory group to rebrand and update the website to ensure content meets the needs of the different users and is accessible.</p>

Relationships and Partnerships		
Number	Action	Implementation
4.11	The Department of Education will update the list of wellbeing resources available to children and young people, parents and school staff to include resources in the area of preventing and addressing bullying, racism, sexism and sexual harassment and the promotion of equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing.	Q3 2023 Publish an updated list of wellbeing resources. Conduct an ongoing programme of review.
4.12	The Department of Education will continue to support the work of the National Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre in DCU.	Q1 2023-Q4 2027 Continue to provide annual funding to the Anti-Bullying Centre to support its work.



## Abbreviations

CPD	Continuous professional development
DCU	Dublin City University
DFHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
HEI	Higher education institution
IEPA	Irish Educational Publishers' Association
ITE	Initial teacher education
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer
NACOS	National Advisory Council for Online Safety
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service
NQT	Newly qualified teacher
PATH	Programme for Access to Higher Education
PDST	Professional Development Service for Teachers
RSE	Relationships and Sexuality Education
SPHE	Social Personal and Health Education
SSE	School self-evaluation
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WSE	Whole-school evaluation

# Notes

