

Mail for TDs about Bí Cineálta concerns. Amend as needed.

SUBJECT: Urgent Review Needed of Bí Cineálta Anti-Bullying Policy in Schools

Dear Deputy NAME,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the ratification and upcoming implementation of the *Bí Cineálta* policies in all schools, and to ask that you to raise this matter at Oireachtas level with the Minister for Education, Helen McEntee.

When *Bí Cineálta* was developed (2013¹, 2022², 2024³), the findings of the Cass Review⁴ (2024) had not yet been published. As a result, the current policies risk falling short of the now best-known safeguarding standards that all of our children deserve. In fact, the *Bí Cineálta* anti-bullying policies contradict a number of the key recommendations of the Cass Review.

There are several serious issues with this policy that require immediate attention and a full review of its use in schools:

1. Cass Review Findings

The *Bí Cineálta* documents were developed prior to the publication of the Cass Review, which provides comprehensive and evidence-based insights into the care of children experiencing gender distress. The affirmation approach endorsed by *Bí Cineálta* runs contrary to the Cass Review's findings. For example, the use of preferred pronouns is identified as a non-neutral act, which may set children on a path toward medical and social transitioning. These pathways, according to the Review, can be harmful, carry a high risk of social contagion, and may be less safe than a cautious "wait and see" approach. Current school policies must be re-evaluated in light of this vital research. As things stand, the adoption of *Bí Cineálta* makes our schools less safe than before.

2. Government Policy Inconsistency

The current Programme for Government⁵ clearly commits to a clinical approach to transgender care (page 98) not the affirmation model endorsed by *Bí Cineálta*. It is imperative that, as the government advances in rolling out clinically informed care for gender-questioning young people, it does not leave children in schools exposed to ideologies and practices that have been shown to pose long-term risks. Our children, as a particularly vulnerable population, deserve the same evidence-based protections.

It is worth noting that the current Programme for Government has dropped the proposal⁶ to allow under-16s to change gender, in line with best practice set out in the Cass Review.

¹ <https://assets.gov.ie/24758/0966ef74d92c4af3b50d64d286ce67d0.pdf>

² <https://antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/cinealtas-action-plan.pdf>

³ <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/bi-cinealta-procedures-to-prevent-and-address-bullying-behaviour-for-primary-and-post-.pdf>

⁴ <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20250310143933/https://cass.independent-review.uk/home/publications/final-report/>

⁵ <https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/programme-for-government-securing-irelands-future.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/government-drops-previous-plan-to-let-under-16s-legally-change-genders/a654148902.html>

In contrast, the Bi Cineáltas policy introduces young children to trans ideology and gender identity. Given the government’s adoption of the Cass model—which advises against transitioning under-16s—the *Bí Cineálta* policy must be reviewed to protect this age group from exposure to conflicting and potentially harmful messaging.

3. Promotion of Gender Ideology and Queer Theory

The *Bí Cineálta* policy heavily promotes gender ideology and queer theory, including numerous references to transgender identities and gender identity (see slide 19⁷). Since the ratification of this policy in another local school, books aligned with these ideologies are being introduced into classrooms. This⁸ and this⁹ were circulated to families as examples of what the Department of Education recommends for classroom libraries through this policy. These raise significant safeguarding concerns for children of primary school age.

4. Parental Rights and Consent

Many parents, myself included, have expressed our intention to opt our children out of teachings that promote gender ideology and queer theory. Several of us contacted the Minister and our school management teams to request accommodations for families who fundamentally disagree with these ideas but we received no response. We do not consent to the exposure of our children to such content. If the Department insists on including this material in school, then as primary educators of our children, we must be afforded the right to provide moral and social education in line with our values—without interference from contradictory teachings at school.

5. Lack of Transparency in Policy Implementation

There are additional practical concerns. For example, *Bí Cineálta* commits schools to the full implementation of the new SPHE curriculum and toolkit, which has yet to be published. In this way schools are consenting to this unseen programme on our behalf. This is out of the question.

Many parents were unaware that the new “bullying” policy actually serves as a vehicle for introducing gender ideology into every classroom. Why was this not openly declared to parents?

6. Who is responsible for the fallout of this affirmation model?

Given the Cass Review’s clear recommendations—now widely recognised as the gold standard of care for children and young people experiencing gender distress—serious questions of liability arise. If, under the Bi Cineálta framework, a child is affirmed in a new gender identity of other identity at school and later comes to believe this caused more harm than good, who bears responsibility? The school? The Department?

Schools and the Department of Education cannot claim ignorance. The evidence is now overwhelming: the affirmation model promoted by Bi Cineálta carries significant risks. Numerous agencies all over the world have already shifted towards

⁷ <https://oide.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Bi-Cinealta-PLE-Presentation-.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRpaz-hdgg0&t=15s>

⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNGIzaPbLNU>

more cautious, clinically led approaches when working with children, while Ireland and our Department of Education is taking this high risk approach with our children.

I respectfully request that you raise these concerns with the Department of Education and your Oireachtas colleague, Minister Helen McEntee. The *Bí Cineálta* policy does not serve the best interests of children and poses serious risks associated with ideologies that have been shown to cause irreversible harm.

With the best available information that is now available, a full and transparent review of *Bí Cineálta* is essential.

*****SIGN OFF.....etc*****