Anti-bullying policy – St. Ronan's N.S.

1. In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of St. Ronan's National School has adopted the following anti-bullying policy within the framework of the school's overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* which were published in September 2013.

2. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of pupils and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

   - A positive school culture and climate which-

     o is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;

     o encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and

     o promotes respectful relationships across the school community;

   - Effective leadership;

   - A school-wide approach;

   - A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;

   - Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that-

     o build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and

     o explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based

       bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.

   - Effective supervision and monitoring of pupils;

   - Supports for staff;

   - Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour

     (including use of established intervention strategies); and

   - On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy.

3. **In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* bullying is defined as follows:**

   <u>**Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted, by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.**</u>

   The following types of bullying behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

   • deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip and other forms of relational bullying,
   • cyber-bullying and
   • identity-based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private messaging, do not fall within the definition of bullying and should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

However, in the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying behaviour.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the school's code of behaviour.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

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4. The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

● Class Teacher(s) of pupil(s) involved.
● Principal, as DLP and Deputy Principal, as DDLP

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying) that will be used by the school are as follows:

- Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils

- Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth

- Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online

- Teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner

- There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. The SPHE curriculum makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe & RSE programmes at primary level are personal safety skills programmes which seek to enhance children's self-protection skills including their ability to recognise and cope with bullying. Various other social, health and media education programmes can further help to address the problem of bullying behaviour.

6. The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

The Board of Management will ensure that the school has clear procedures for the formal noting and reporting of bullying behaviour and these must be documented in the school's anti-bullying policy. All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour must adhere to the following:

(i)	While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same;

(ii)	If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved. (iii) The relevant teacher must use the recording template at Appendix 3 to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances:

a)	in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and

b)	where the school has decided as part of its anti-bullying policy that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable.

In each of the circumstances at (a) and (b) above, the recording template at Appendix 3 must be completed in full and retained by the teacher in question and a copy provided to the Principal or Deputy Principal as applicable. It should also be noted that the timeline for recording bullying behaviour in the recording template at Appendix 3 does not in any way preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to a case.

7. The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:

- Prevention and awareness raising measures across all aspects of bullying and involves strategies to engage pupils in addressing problems when they arise. In particular, such strategies need to build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils

- Provide pupils with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth

- Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online

- Teachers can influence attitudes to bullying behaviour in a positive manner

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8. Supervision and Monitoring of Pupils

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

9. Prevention of Harassment

The Board of Management confirms that the school will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of pupils or staff or the harassment of pupils or staff on any of the nine grounds specified i.e. gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

10. This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of St. Ronan's N.S. on 22nd October 2020 and reviewed and updated on 18th November 2021.

11. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and readily accessible to parents and pupils on request. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

12. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to school personnel and published on the school website. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Date of next review: November 2022

Signed: _____   Date: _____

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: _____ (Principal)   Date: _____

St. Ronan's N.S. Anti-Bullying Campaign

- I know all my fellow pupils are different to me in many ways.

- I would not like to be treated unfairly and made to feel bad by my fellow pupils.

- I know I have a right to be different from other pupils and that this does not give anyone the right to be mean to me.

- I know I should be treated respectfully in class, in the yard and on the way to and from school.

- I also know that others have a right to be different from me and that this does not give me the right to be mean to them. I know I should treat everyone respectfully in class, in the yard and on the way to and from school, whether I like them or not.

- I know that if I break this pledge that Ms. Fitzgerald and the Board of Management will become involved.

I promise to always treat _____ fairly and with respect.

Signed _____ Pupil

Signed _____ Teacher (witness)

Date_____