



Scoil Naisiúnta Rónáin Naofa Cluain Lua

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Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

The Board of Management of St.Ronan's N.S. has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

Definition of Bullying:

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as:

- Targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm.
- The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature.
- Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society.

The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures page 17.

Each school is required to develop and implement a Bí Cineálta policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour.

Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Behaviour that is not bullying behaviour:

- A one-off instance of negative behaviour towards a 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 special educational needs may have social communication difficulties which may make them communicate their needs through behaviours that can hurt themselves and others. It is **important to note** that these behaviours are not deliberate or planned, but in certain situations, are an automatic response which cannot be controlled.
- Bullying is not accidental or reckless behaviour. If the repeated harm is real for the student experiencing the behaviour, but unintended by the other student, this is not bullying. These behaviours, while not defined as bullying can be distressing. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Types of Bullying Behaviour:

There are many different types of bullying behaviour which can include the following: disablist bullying, exceptionally able bullying, gender identity bullying, homophobic/transphobic (LGBTQ+) bullying, physical appearance bullying, racist bullying, poverty bullying, religious identity bullying, sexist bullying and sexual harassment. This is not an exhaustive list.

The details of these types of bullying are provided in Chapter 2 of the Bí Cineálta procedures page 24.

Bullying can be:

- **Direct:**
 - Physical bullying behaviour – pushing, shoving, punching etc., physical assault, destruction of property etc.
 - Verbal bullying behaviour – continual name calling which insults and humiliates the student.
 - Written bullying behaviour – writing insulting remarks in public places, passing notes or drawings about the student.
 - Extortion – where something is obtained through force or threats.

- **Indirect**
 - Exclusion – where a student is deliberately and repeatedly isolated, excluded or ignored by a student or group of students.
 - Relational - when a student's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. Common forms include control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore"; a group of students ganging up against one student; nonverbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a student; giving a student the "silent treatment"; and the deliberate manipulation of friendship groups to make someone unpopular.

Online Bullying Behaviour:

Online bullying behaviour (cyber-bullying) is carried out through the use of information and communication technologies such as text or direct messaging / instant messaging, social media platforms, email, apps, digital gaming sites, gaming consoles, chat rooms and other online technologies.

This form of bullying behaviour can include:

- Sending or sharing nasty, insulting, offensive and/or intimidating messages or images via text message, emails, direct messages or other websites or apps.
- Posting information considered to be personal, private and sensitive without consent.

- Making and/or participating in fake profiles on a social network to impersonate and/or humiliate other students.
- Excluding or disrupting access to a student on purpose from online chat groups, access to accounts or from an online game.

Even though a message may be posted online just once by a student it can be considered bullying behaviour as it may be seen by a wide audience where it is intended to be shared or has a likelihood of being shared multiple times and is thus repeated.

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 online. 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, sexual orientation or membership of the Traveller community, it may be considered a hate crime under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act 1989, and those engaging in such behaviour may face criminal charges.

If bullying behaviour involves sexual harassment or sexual assault, this may also be considered criminal behaviour.

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

Section A: Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

	Date Consulted	Method of Consultation
School Staff	January 2025	Principal and Deputy Principal attended Bí Cineálta training – <i>Procedure to Prevent and address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i>
	February 2025	Stage 1: Staff Meeting where staff were provided with the opportunity to discuss the new Bí Cineálta Procedures that were sent by email by the Principal
	March 2025	Stage 2: Staff Meeting where staff watched the Oide webinar
	March 2025	Stage 3: Staff Questionnaire
	April 2025	Stage 4: Half Day school closure to engage further with the new procedures and assist in drafting the new policy and subsequent staff meeting to discuss and amend further.
	June 2025	Stage 5: Draft the new policy and subsequent staff meeting to discuss and amend further.
Students	May 2025	Pupil Questionnaire 1st - 6th
	May 2025	Student Council Focus Group discussed and generated ideas for the Pupil Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy and generated ideas.

	June 2025	All pupils involved in developing the Pupil Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy. Policy presented and discussed at June Whole School Assembly and displayed in each classroom and in the hallway.
Parents	February 2025	Email sent to parents updating them on the Bí Cineálta training and providing them with a link to the Bí Cineálta Procedures
	April 2025	Parent questionnaire
	April 2025	Parents thanked for completing the Bí Cineálta survey in the April Newsletter. Parents also informed that a draft of the new Bí Cineálta Policy will be posted on our website before the summer holidays and parental feedback will be sought. An information session for parents on the new policy and procedures for preventing and dealing with bullying behaviours will also be organised.
	May 2025	Parent Questionnaire results compiled for analysis
Board of Management	January – June 2025	Review new procedures, review new draft policy leading to consultation and final ratification once the necessary amendments were made.
Wider School Community	June 2025	Bí Cinealta policy uploaded to website - www.cloonlooschool.ie Hard copy of Bí Cinealta Policy available for visiting coaches/substitute teachers.
Date policy was approved: 17/06/2025		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Culture and Environment:

St.Ronan's N.S. provides a supportive environment for all pupils and this is particularly important with regard to the prevention of bullying. The teachers are committed to being approachable and supportive of their pupils. It can take a lot of courage for a child to speak out about bullying and it is extremely important that a child is listened to and believes that they will be listened to. Our most important strategy in dealing with bullying is creating and maintaining an environment in which bullying is prevented. **Children are encouraged to speak out and adults are willing to listen and act decisively.** The following strategies are used in an appropriate manner as necessary to help in the prevention of bullying:

- A school-wide approach to encouraging respect, trust, care, consideration and support for others both when working and playing together;
- Positive environment;
- Wellbeing area in classrooms;
- Cooperative learning is encouraged;
- Pupils are regularly encouraged to look after each other;
- Modelling positive behaviours – both staff and pupils;
- Setting expectations of behaviour with classroom rules, school rules and contracts;
- Kind, sensitive and caring behaviour is encouraged and celebrated;
- Code of Behaviour revisited regularly.
- Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra-curricular activities;
- The promotion of the value of diversity to address issues of prejudice and stereotyping, and highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour;
- Unfair and negative comparison of pupils is avoided;
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities. Pupils will be provided with opportunities to develop a positive sense of self-worth and given opportunities to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence through formal and informal interactions;
- Pupils are encouraged and praised for their various talents and skills and are given chances to show them;

- School wide awareness raising and training on all aspects of bullying, to include pupils, staff, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the wider school community;
- Monthly Pupil Survey where the children are asked if they need to speak to someone about bullying and if they know of anyone having a hard time.
- Involvement of the pupils in contributing to a safe school environment e.g. Green Schools, Amber Flag, School Council and Active Schools Committees etc. Mentoring and other student support activities aim to support pupils and encourage a culture of peer respect and support;
- Promoting lining up quietly when the bell rings, to avoid potential conflict at the end of break time;
- Implementation of annual whole school awareness measures e.g. Active Week, Wellbeing Week, Neurodiversity Week etc. (A Wellbeing Week will usually be held in the second term of each school year which will highlight what bullying is, its effects and the strategies the children can use to counter it and pupils will be consulted on their views on how bullying is being dealt with in the school;)
- Group rewards for teamwork;
- We encourage a culture of speaking out / a ‘telling environment is promoted, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. In that way pupils will gain confidence in ‘telling’. This confidence factor is of vital importance;
- Ensuring that pupils know **who to tell and how to tell**, e.g.:
 - Direct approach to teacher at an appropriate time, for example after class.
 - Hand note up with homework.
 - Make a phone call to the school or to a trusted teacher in the school.
 - Get a parent or friend to tell on your behalf.
 - Ensure bystanders understand the importance of telling if they witness or know that bullying is taking place;

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour (see Chapter 5 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

- Supervision Policy – Supervision and monitoring of classrooms, corridors, school grounds, school tours and extra- curricular activities. Staff members have a distinct responsibility to ensure that supervision of the pupils in their class is effective and consistent. Non-teaching and ancillary staff are encouraged to be vigilant and report issues to relevant teachers. Supervision also applies to monitoring student use of I.C.T. within the school;
- Staff/parents/guardians are encouraged to be vigilant in watching out for signs of bullying and to report any suspicion of bullying they may have to the relevant teacher. All reports will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher.
- Teacher yard supervision rota in operation to ensure that supervision on yard is effective and consistent. SNAs on the yard are also asked to be vigilant.

- Careful consideration is given to the layout of the playground and how activities can be used to keep pupils engaged;
- Regular staff meetings are held to keep relevant staff informed of issues that need close monitoring, shifting friendship groups/dynamics etc.

Curriculum:

- S.P.H.E. curriculum is implemented in the school.
- RSE and Stay Safe Programmes are implemented in the school;
- The school will specifically consider the additional needs of SEN pupils with regard to programme implementation and the development of skills and strategies to enable all pupils to respond appropriately;
- Special Education Teachers will reinforce the lessons taught to children with Special Educational Needs as necessary.
- School wide delivery of lessons on bullying from evidence based programmes, e.g. Stay Safe Programme, Relationships and Sexuality Education, The Walk Tall Programme;
- Continuous Professional Development for staff in delivering these programmes;
- School wide delivery of the Grow in Love programme;
- Use of a range of SPHE/Wellbeing programmes as needed/timetabled e.g. Weaving Well Being, Zippy's Friends, Friends for Life, Fun Friends, Zones of Regulation etc
- Prevention and awareness raising measures focusing on cyber-bullying by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour and how to stay safe while online using resources from www.webwise.ie
- Delivery of the Garda SPHE Programmes at senior class level when available. These lessons, delivered by Community Gardaí, cover issues around personal safety and cyber-bullying.
- School wide peer tutoring through 'Buddy Learning'
- Guidance taken from RELATE document;
- The school will implement the advice from Oide in relation to homophobic bullying "Sexual Orientation advice for primary schools" which is in the context of the school's ethos and Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) policy and with the awareness that primary school children are probably too young to engage in any detailed discussion of sexual identity.
 - Homophobic insults are treated in exactly the same way as racist or other insults – the teacher can calmly explain to the child that such insults are hurtful to the other person and are not acceptable. Depending on the context and the age group of the children, the teacher could ask a child or a class group what they mean by the word 'gay'.
 - The school response is that 'The majority of people are attracted to people of the opposite sex. This is called being heterosexual. Some people are attracted to people of the same sex. This is called being homosexual or gay.'
 - An integral part of RSE is learning to respect others; this will include respect for families or individuals who are different from the norm.

- The Equal Status Acts 2000 and 2004 provide protection against discrimination on nine grounds, one of which is sexual orientation. As such, St. Ronan's school is obliged to protect students and staff from discrimination or sexual harassment.
- Inclusive picture and story books may be used - All Kinds of Families by Anita Ganeri, The Great Big Book of Families by Mary Hoffman/Ros Asquith, Amazing Grace by Mary Hoffman, Red by Michael Hall, The Ugly Duckling by Hans Christian Anderson

Policy and Planning:

- 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;
- Bí Cineálta policy;
- Student friendly Bí Cineálta policy;
- Code of Behaviour; - All parent(s)/guardian(s) confirm that the Code of Behaviour is acceptable to them as part of the Admission Process. The Code of Behaviour is available on the school website.
- Child friendly Code of Behaviour;
- Child Safeguarding Statement;
- Acceptable Use Policy has been developed which ensures that access to technology within the school is strictly monitored. Mobile phones and pupil's own hand held devices e.g. DSs, iPods, iPads etc. are generally not allowed in school. However, if a child needs a phone for after school, permission must be sought from the principal to bring the phone to school and they must hand it up to the class teacher in the morning and collect it at the end of the day. If a pupil has a mobile phone in school without permission, it will be confiscated and the pupil's parent must collect the phone from the school office. The school operates the Schools Broadband filtering system which means that social media sites cannot be accessed.
- Supervision Policy;
- RSE Policy;
- SEN Policy;
- PE Plan and Active School Flag planning and initiatives;
- Wellbeing Policy and related guidance;
- DEIS Plan

Relationships and Partnerships:

- Student Committees (Green Schools, Active School Flag, Amber Flag, Student Council etc.);
- Assemblies (every month) – pupils are rewarded for kindness and are reminded of the importance of a 'telling environment';
- Playground leaders;

- Student Council ‘helpers’ for new pupils;
- Links with local sports clubs and initiatives e.g. Cumann na mBunscol; Community Games
- Partnership with NCSE (Behaviour support, support for children with SEN);
- Strong partnership with the Catholic Church to promote respect and compassion;
- The school’s Bí Cineálta Policy is discussed with pupils and is available to all parent(s)/guardian(s) on our website www.cloonlooschool.ie
- School wide awareness and training on all aspects of bullying which included pupils, parents, staff, BOM etc. External speakers e.g. An Garda Síochána, Foroige etc, may be invited to provide information sessions for parents and workshops for pupils on the topic of bullying, internet safety and cyberbullying , as appropriate;
- Pupil, staff and student relationships are very positive;
- Communication between school and home is frequent e.g. newsletters, website, Aladdin Connect, Seesaw, emails, text messages, phone calls etc

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

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

- The class teacher will record any incident of inappropriate behaviour in the Incident book which is kept in the Staff Room. This incident book will be used to track behaviour or patterns in behaviour in order to establish if bullying (Bí Cineálta policy) or inappropriate behaviour (Code of Behaviour policy) has occurred.
- If bullying has occurred the class teacher will oversee the recording of bullying reports for students in their own class – this includes using the procedure guidelines to investigate reports of bullying and recording bullying behaviour on the correct form (see Appendix B).
- The Principal and/or the Deputy Principal will follow up after 20 days to investigate if bullying behaviour has ceased.
- The Principal will inform the Board of Management of incidences of bullying behaviour.
- All staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour.
- The leadership and management team will be available to provide up to date information and supports, if needed, to assist class teachers in addressing any concerns.

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured.
- Seek to ensure the privacy of those involved.
- Conduct all conversations with sensitivity.
- Be fair and consistent in our approach to addressing bullying behaviour.
- Consider the age and ability of those involved.
- Listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.
- Support the student experiencing bullying behaviour, the student displaying bullying behaviour and those witnessing bullying behaviour.
- Take action in a timely manner.
- Identify the supports/actions to be taken.
- Inform parents of those involved.

Bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school

- A school is not expected to deal with bullying behaviour that occurs when students are not under the care or responsibility of the school.
- However, where this bullying behaviour has an impact in school, schools are required to support the students involved.

- Where the bullying behaviour continues in school, schools should deal with it in accordance with their Bí Cineálta policy.
- Where the student displaying the bullying behaviour is not a student in the school, but the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour is a student in the school, the school should support the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as appropriate and engage with them and their parents to determine what steps can be taken.

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

The 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 following three questions should be considered to determine if bullying has occurred:

1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
3. Is the behaviour repeated?

If the answer to each of the questions above is YES, then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and the behaviour should be addressed using the Bí Cineálta procedures.

Note: One off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single hurtful message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

If the answer to any of the questions above is NO, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

When identifying if bullying behavior has occurred the teacher should consider the following: what, where, when and why?

- Two staff members can be present when engaging with children individually or in groups initially without parent(s)/guardian(s) notification or presence.
- If a group of students is involved, each student should be engaged with individually at first. Thereafter, all students involved should be met as a group.
- At a 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 should be supported, as appropriate, following a group meeting. It may also be helpful to ask students involved to write down their account of the incident.
- Incidents can occur where behaviour is unacceptable and hurtful, but the behaviour is not bullying behaviour. Strategies that deal with inappropriate behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.
- In investigating and dealing with reports of bullying behaviour, teacher(s) will exercise their professional judgement to determine whether bullying behaviour has occurred.
- The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour is to **stop the behaviour and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame.)**

Where bullying behaviour has occurred:

School staff should know what to do when bullying behaviour is reported to them or when they witness bullying behaviour.

- Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved must be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour.
- A record will be kept of the engagement with all involved including the views of the child experiencing the bullying behaviour.
- This record will document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents.
- The record should include views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour.
- Where a Student Support File exists for a student, a note will be included in the log of actions to indicate that a record exists and is filed and stored in a locked filing cabinet.

The following principles must be adhered to when addressing bullying behaviour:

- Ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour feels listened to and reassured.
- Seek to ensure the privacy of those involved.
- Conduct all conversations with sensitivity.
- Consider the age and ability of those involved.
- Listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation.
- Take action in a timely manner.
- Inform parents of those involved.

It is important for school staff to be fair and consistent in their approach to address bullying behaviour. **Both the student experiencing bullying behaviour and the student who is displaying bullying behaviour need support.** School staff should identify the supports needed for the student who is displaying bullying behaviour to better manage relational difficulties and ensure that their needs are met.

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.

Parents may also make schools aware of bullying behaviour that has occurred and specifically request that the school take no action. Parents should put this **request in writing** to the school. However, while acknowledging the parents' request, schools may decide that, based on the circumstances, it is appropriate to address the bullying behaviour.

Determining if the bullying behaviour has ceased:

- The teacher must engage with the students and parents involved **no more than 20 school days after the initial discussion to review progress** following the initial intervention.
- Important factors to consider as part of the review are: the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved.
- The teacher should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of the students and their parents in relation to this.
- The date that has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased should also be recorded.

- Any engagement with external services/supports should be noted
- Even though the bullying behaviour may have ceased, ongoing supervision and support may be required for both the student who has experienced the bullying behaviour as well as the student who has displayed the behaviour. It can take time for relationships to settle and for supports to take effect. In some cases, relationships may never be restored to how they were before the bullying behaviour occurred.

If the bullying behaviour has not ceased:

- The teacher should review the strategies used in consultation with the students and parents and agree to meet again over an agreed timeframe (**within a week**) 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 school should consider using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school.

Complaint Process:

- If a parent is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, they should be referred to the school's Complaints Procedure.
- If a parent is not satisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Approaches:

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying involves a whole school approach. Given the complexity of bullying behaviour, no one intervention/support programme works in all situations.

Supporting students experiencing bullying behaviour:

- Ending the bullying behaviour.
- Fostering respect for pupils experiencing bullying behaviour and all pupils.
- Fostering greater empathy towards, and support for, pupils experiencing bullying behaviour.
- Indicating clearly that the bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through annual awareness-raising programmes such as Friendship Week.
- Indicating clearly that bullying is not the fault of the targeted pupil through the speedy identification of those responsible and speedy resolution of the situation.
- Making adequate support services available to pupils who need it in a timely manner (subject to available funding).
- Helping targeted pupils raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that help develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).

Supporting students displaying bullying behaviour:

- Making it clear that pupils displaying bullying behaviour, who work to reform are not blamed or punished and get a 'clean sheet'.
- Making it clear that pupils displaying bullying behaviour who reform are doing the right and honorable thing and giving them praise for this.
- Making adequate support services available to help those who need to learn other ways of meeting their needs besides violating the rights of others (subject to available funding).
- Helping those who need to raise their self-esteem by encouraging them to become involved in activities that develop friendships and social skills (e.g. participation in group work in class and in extra-curricular group or team activities during or after school).
- Using learning strategies throughout the school and the curriculum to help enhance pupils' feelings of self-worth.
- In dealing with negative behavior in general, encouraging teachers and parents to focus on, challenge and correct the behaviour while supporting the child.
- In dealing with bullying behaviour seeking resolution and offering a fresh start with a 'clean sheet' and no blame in return for keeping a promise to reform.

Supports are available to help prevent and address bullying behaviour. These include the following:
(This is not an exhaustive list)

National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)

The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) of the Department of Education provides a comprehensive, school based psychological service to all primary and post primary schools to support the wellbeing, academic, social and emotional development of all students.

NEPS staff can support schools with issues around bullying through this direct or indirect case work service. In relation to bullying, NEPS psychologists often advise schools on best practice to prevent and address bullying when issues arise in schools and/or provide training in preventative initiatives, such as developing social and emotion skills, executive function skills, promoting resilience and skills in relationship repair between peers as appropriate.

Webwise

Webwise is the online safety initiative of the Department of Education. Webwise promotes safer, better internet use through awareness raising and education initiatives targeting teachers, students and parents. Webwise develops and disseminates resources that help teachers integrate digital citizenship and online safety into teaching and learning in their schools. Webwise also provides information, advice, and tools to parents to support their engagement in their children's online lives

Oide

Oide is the Department of Education's support service for schools, and it supports professional learning for primary and post primary school leaders and teachers in recognised schools and centres for education. Oide fosters a culture of continuing professional learning among school leaders and teachers encouraging lifelong learning, reflective and enquiry based practices. The work of Oide contributes to school improvement by providing high quality professional learning experiences, supports and resources relating to curricular developments, broader educational goals and national priorities, such as wellbeing which includes preventing and addressing bullying.

National Parents Council

The NPC delivers online and in person courses to support parents of both primary and post primary students to prevent and address bullying behavior.

Dublin City University (DCU) AntiBullying Centre

The DCU AntiBullying Centre is a university designated research centre located in DCU's Institute of Education. The centre is known globally for its research in bullying and online safety. The AntiBullying Centre offers a range of modules as part of its FUSE programme for the entire school community that can be used to help to promote a positive school culture and assist in preventing and addressing bullying behaviours.

Tusla

Schools should contact Tusla directly for advice in cases where it is considered that bullying behaviour is a child protection concern.

If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Section D: Oversight

The Principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include:

- The number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting.
- The number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year.
- Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the Principal will also provide a verbal update which will include, where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information. (See Chapter 7 of the Bí Cineálta procedures.)

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

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed: Fr. Joseph Caulfield
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 17/06/2025

Signed: Maria-Goretti Surlis
(Principal)

Date: 17/06/2025

Appendix A: Student Friendly Bí Cineálta Policy

BÍ CINEÁLTA

We want everyone at St. Ronan's N.S. to feel safe and happy.

Our school has a Bí Cineálta policy to try to prevent bullying situations. This policy will be reviewed each year.

I am kind

Bullying is when someone keeps being mean or hurtful to others on purpose over and over again. It can be online or in person.

Be Kind.

If you feel you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied you should:

- Tell a grown up that you know and trust. They will know what to do to help.

If a student tells a staff member that they think they are being bullied, we will:

- > talk with the student
- > ask the student what they want to happen
- > work out a plan together
- > talk to their parents
- > talk to the other student(s) involved
- > talk with the other student's parents

Kindness MATTERS

BEE KIND

Appendix B: Record of Bullying Behaviour

St.Ronan's N.S. – Record of Bullying Behaviour

- 1. Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
- 2. Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
- 3. Is the behaviour repeated?

Where you have determined that the answer to the above questions is in each case yes, please fill in the form and place the record in the Bullying File in a locked filing cabinet.

1. Name of student experiencing bullying behaviour: _____

2. Class: _____

3. Name of student(s) allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour:

4. Class: _____

5. Other witness(es), if any:

6. Source of bullying concern / report (tick as relevant):

Student concerned	
Other student(s)	
Teacher	
Parent	
Other	

7. Form of bullying behaviour (refer to section 2.5) (tick as relevant):

Physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, pushing etc.)	
Verbal (e.g. name calling, teasing, insults etc.)	
Psychological (e.g. intimidation, manipulation etc.)	
Online/Cyberbullying (harmful messages, social media misuse, etc.)	
Relational (e.g. exclusion, spreading rumours etc.)	
Other	

8. Type of bullying behaviour (refer to section 2.7) (tick as relevant):

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

If 'other' please specify:

9. Where and when (if known):

Location:

Date / Time:

Brief description of bullying behaviour:

10. Date of initial engagement:

With student(s): _____ With parent(s)/guardian(s): _____

11. Details of agreed actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour (including views of student(s) and parent(s)/guardian(s):

12. Date of review (to determine if bullying behaviour has ceased):

- Review date:

- Outcome:

- Views of student(s):

- Views of parent(s)/guardian(s):

13. Engagement with external services/supports (if any):

- Service(s) contacted:

- Details of engagement:

14. Recording teacher:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

St.Ronan's N.S. – Record to be used if bullying has not ceased

Date of review (to determine if bullying behaviour has ceased – **within 1 week** of last review):

- Review date:

- Outcome:

- Views of student(s):

- Views of parent(s)/guardian(s):

Details of agreed/further actions to be taken to address bullying behaviour (including views of student(s) and parent(s)/guardian(s):

Engagement with external services/supports (if any):

- Service(s) contacted:

- Details of engagement:

Recording teacher:

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Guide to Providing Bullying Behaviour Update to Board of Management

Bullying Behaviour Update for Board of Management meeting of St. Ronan's NS

Having reviewed the details of the incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the previous Board of Management meeting, the principal must provide the following information at each ordinary meeting of the board of management:

Total number of new incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the last board of management meeting.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour currently ongoing.	
Total number of incidents of bullying behaviour reported since the beginning of this school 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 etc.
- the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour
- 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 school that a student has left the school because of reported bullying behaviour
- if any additional support is needed from the board of management
- if the school's Bí Cineálta policy requires urgent review in advance of the annual review

This update should not include any personal information or information that could identify the students involved.

Appendix D – Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy

**St.Ronan's N.S.
Review of the Bí Cineálta Policy**

The Board of Management of St.Ronan's N.S. (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.

Bí Cineálta Policy Review

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.

_____/_____/20____

2. Where in the school is the student-friendly Bí Cineálta policy displayed?

3. What date did the Board publish the Bí Cineálta policy and the student friendly policy on the school website? _____/_____/20____

4. How has the student friendly policy been communicated to students?

5. How has the Bí Cineálta policy and student friendly policy been communicated to parents?

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?

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:

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

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

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

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

Yes No

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

Yes No

Signed: _____ (Chairperson, Board of Management)

Signed: _____ (Principal)

Date: _____

Date of Next Review: _____

Appendix E – Notification regarding the Board of Management’s annual review of the school’s Bí Cineálta Policy

Notification Regarding the Board of Management’s Annual Review of the School’s Bí Cineálta Policy

The Board of Management of **St.Ronan's National School** 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 _____ . (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)

Signed: _____

(Principal)

Date: _____