Springdale National School
Anti-Bullying Policy

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 Springdale 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 (see Appendix 1) which-
        ➢ is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
        ➢ encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and
        ➢ 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
        ➢ build empathy, respect and resilience in pupils; and
        ➢ 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:

    "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".

    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 additional educational needs.

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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 Appendix 2 of this policy and in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools.*

4. The relevant teachers for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

   ● The class teacher(s) initially
   ● The special education teacher (where appropriate)
   ● The Principal thereafter if necessary

5. The education and prevention strategies (including strategies specifically aimed at cyberbullying 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, involving 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, e.g., school concerts, annual talent show, school assemblies, coffee mornings
   ● Use of the Webwise resources (whole school), the FUSE programme (4th Class) and annual guest speakers, regarding online safety, to prevent and raise awareness of cyber bullying, by educating pupils on appropriate online behaviour and on how to stay safe while online.
   ● Teachers 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 inter-related areas of belonging and integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Stay Safe, Walk Tall and RSE programmes used with all classes are personal 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 further help to address the problems of bullying behaviour. These programmes include the Zippy's Friends Programme (Junior Infants), the FUSE programme (4th Class), the Weaving Welbeing Programme & the Lust for Life Programme.
   ● A number of staff have been trained in the FUSE, anti-bullying programme, which will be used in 4th Class each year.
   ● At various times, content from different wellbeing programmes is covered with smaller groups in the AEN setting, e.g., the Zippy's Friends programme, the Mind Me, Mind You programme, the Weaving Well Being programme and the Fun Friends programme. The AEN teachers focus on developing social skills with all children, paying particular attention to cultivating a good school culture where there is respect for everyone and helping each other is valued. The message of these programmes is supported and understood through the whole school community. The AEN teacher working with 6th Class pupils also covers lessons to help with their transition from primary to post primary school.

- Work related to the prevention of bullying is integrated across other areas such as Art, Drama, Religious Education and Physical Education. Co Operation is promoted through team sports, school clubs and societies as well as through practical subjects. All subjects offer the opportunity to promote the value of diversity, to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour.
- Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression. Coaching in sports such as GAA, rugby, hockey and cricket is offered to classes from outside agencies and teachers also encourage team sports through the PE curriculum.
- Internet Safety Week (February), Friendship Week (April) and Anti-bullying Week (November) are celebrated in Springdale NS. This helps to further raise awareness of bullying, not only among pupils but also among parents. It helps to give parents of a pupil being bullied, the confidence to approach the school and helps to send a clear message to the parents of a pupil who is engaged in bullying behaviour that they have a responsibility in addressing their child's behaviour.

6. **Procedures**

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved, rather than to apportion blame. With this is mind, the school's procedures for investigation, follow up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by this school in dealing with bullying behaviour are as follows:

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred, what type it is if it has and how best the situation might be resolved.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying, must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher(s). In that way, pupils will gain confidence in "telling". This confidence factor is of vital importance. It should be made clear to all pupils that when they report incidents of bullying, they are not considered to be telling tales but are behaving responsibly.
- Non-teaching staff such as the school secretary, special needs assistants (SNAs), after school activity co-ordinators, caretakers, cleaners etc. must be encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
- Parents and pupils are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the school in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible.
- It is very important that all involved, including each set of pupils and parents, understand the above approach from the outset.
- Teachers should take a calm, unemotional, problem solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.
- While initial investigations of bullying may be conducted in class where possible, incidents are generally best investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved.
- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils concerned. Pupils who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way.
- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher(s) should seek answers to questions of "What? Who? Where? When? And Why?" This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing with conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements.
- It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to give a written account of the incident.
- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that they may face from the group after interview by the teacher.

- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher(s) that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken. The school should give parents an opportunity to discuss ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the school and the supports for their children.
- Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the school's anti bullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied.
- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of pupils and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the school.
- Follow up meetings with the relevant parties involved should be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together at a later date if the pupil who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect.
- An additional follow up meeting with the parents of the children involved may take place after an appropriate time to ensure that the matter has been resolved satisfactorily.
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the school has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents must be referred, as appropriate, to the school's complaints procedures.
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the school's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the school must advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

7. **Recording**

   Noting and reporting of bullying behaviour is to be documented using the Templates in Appendices 3 & 4. All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. The school's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour will adhere to the following:

   - While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, he/she 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 (Teachers may use the template in Appendix 3 to make initial records if they deem it appropriate).
   - If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist in his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
   - The relevant teacher(s) must use the recording template (Appendix 4) to record the bullying behaviour in cases where he/she considers that bullying has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 20 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred.
   - The recording template 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 be noted that the timeline for recording bullying bahaviour in the recording template (Appendix 4) does not preclude the relevant teacher from consulting the Principal or Deputy Principal at an earlier stage in relation to the case.
   - At each Board of Management meeting, the Principal will provide a report setting out the overall number of bullying cases reported (by means of the bullying recording template at Appendix 4) since the previous meeting and will confirm that all cases have been/ are being dealt with in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy and the *Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools.* The minutes of the Board of Management meeting will not include any identifying details of pupils involved.
   - All incidents of bullying that have been referred to Tusla* will be reported to the Board of Management, in redacted format, as part of the Child Protection Oversight Report in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, Chapter 5, Section 5.5.1

* Incidents of bullying will be referred to Tusla when there is reasonable grounds for concern because the impact on the victim reaches a level which indicates emotional or physical neglect (see Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2017, Chapter 2, Section 2.2)

8. **Support**

    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. Therefore, various approaches and intervention strategies may be used as outlined below:

    - The AEN team/class teacher will provide children who have been bullied with opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed.
    - The AEN team/class teacher will also provide support to those pupils involved in bullying behaviour on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities will be developed to increase feelings of self-worth. They will also be supported in learning other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.
    - Through a whole school approach, pupils who observe incidents of bullying behaviour are encouraged to discuss them with teachers. The term 'bystander' is used throughout the school and pupils are taught to consider what they can do instead of being a 'bystander' when they witness incidents of bullying behaviour.
    - If appropriate, referrals to outside agencies may be suggested to parents in order to get further support for the pupils and their families if needed.

9. **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.

10. **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.

11. **Review and Evaluation**

    The effectiveness of the school's anti-bullying policy will be subject to continuous review in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered.

    Staff will review and evaluate the prevention and intervention strategies in place once a term. The implementation and effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy will be included as an agenda item for staff meetings so as to ensure that concerns about the policy or the welfare of individual pupils can be shared and effectively addressed.

    Data gathered from reports of bullying recorded using Template 4 will be regularly (at least once in every school year) collated and analysed with a view to monitoring levels of bullying behaviour and identifying any particular issues that require attention or any significant trends in behaviour. A record of this analysis will be retained and made available to the Board of Management. Appropriate responses to any issues identified will be drawn up and implemented.

12. This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 12th November, 2024.

13. This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website and provided to the Parent/Teacher Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to

the Department and the patron if requested.

14. 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, published on the school website and provided to the Parent/Teacher Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: _EBrown_

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 12/11/2024

Signed: _Lesley Cahill_

(Principal)

Date: 12/11/2024

Date of next review: September 2025

Appendix 1
Practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate

The following are some practical tips for immediate actions that can be taken to build a positive school culture and climate and to help to prevent and tackle bullying behaviour:

- Model respectful behaviour to all members of the school community at all times
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behaviour looks like, acts like, sounds like and feels like in class and around the school
- Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages
- Catch them being good – notice and acknowledge desired respectful behaviour by providing positive attention
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school – including homophobic and racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or AEN
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behaviour and language are absent
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behaviour and compliance with school rules and routines
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with school rules on mobile phone and internet use
- Follow up and follow through with pupils who ignore the rules
- Actively involve parents and/or the Parent Teacher Association in awareness raising campaigns around social media
- Actively promote the right of every member of the school community to be safe and secure in school
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas
- All staff actively watch out for signs of bullying behaviour
- Ensure that there is adequate playground/yard/outdoor supervision
- Staff can get pupils to help them to identify bullying "hot spots" and "hot times" for bullying
  - ➢ Hot spots tend to be in the playground/outdoor areas/corridors and other areas of unstructured supervision
  - ➢ Hot times tend to be at times when there is less structured supervision such as when pupils are on way in/out school, moving classrooms or in the yard
- Support the establishment and work of student councils

Types of Bullying

General behaviours which apply to all types of bullying
- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Name calling
- "Slagging"
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Offensive graffiti
- Extortion
- Intimidation
- Insulting or offensive gestures
- Isolation
- The "look"
- Invasion of personal space
- A combination of any of the types listed.

Cyber Bullying
- **Denigration**: Spreading rumors, lies or gossip to hurt a person's reputation
- **Harassment**: Continually sending vicious, mean or disturbing messages to an individual
- **Impersonation**: Posting offensive or aggressive messages under another person's name
- **Flaming**: Using inflammatory or vulgar words to provoke an online fight
- **Trickery**: Fooling someone into sharing personal information which you then post online
- **Outing**: Posting or sharing confidential or compromising information or images
- **Exclusion**: Purposefully excluding someone from an online group
- **Cyber stalking**: Ongoing harassment and denigration that causes a person considerable fear for his/her safety
- Silent telephone/mobile phone call
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls
- Abusive text/Whatsapp/Instagram (or similar) messages
- Abusive email
- Abusive communication on social networks e.g. Facebook/Ask.fm/ Twitter/You Tube or on games consoles
- Abusive website comments/Blogs/Pictures
- Abusive posts on any form of communication technology

Identity Based Behaviours
Including any of the nine discriminatory grounds mentioned in Equality Legislation (gender including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community).

Homophobic and Transgender Bullying
- Spreading rumours about a person's sexual orientation
- Taunting a person of a different sexual orientation

- Name calling e.g. Gay, queer, lesbian...used in a derogatory manner
- Physical intimidation or attacks
- Threats

Race, nationality, ethnic background and membership of the Traveller community
- Discrimination, prejudice, comments or insults about colour, nationality, culture, social class, religious beliefs, ethnic or traveller background
- Exclusion on the basis of any of the above

Relational Bullying
This involves manipulating relationships as a means of bullying. Behaviours include:

- Malicious gossip
- Isolation & exclusion
- Ignoring
- Excluding from the group
- Taking someone's friends away
- "Bitching"
- Spreading rumours
- Breaking confidence
- Talking loud enough so that the victim can hear
- The "look"
- Use or terminology such as 'nerd' in a derogatory way

Sexual
- Unwelcome or inappropriate sexual comments or touching
- Harassment

Additional Educational Needs/Disability
- Name calling
- Taunting others because of their disability or learning needs
- Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to recognise and defend themselves against bullying
- Taking advantage of some pupils' vulnerabilities and limited capacity to understand social situations and social cues.
- Mimicking a person's disability
- Setting others up for ridicule

Appendix 3
Record of Allegation of Bullying Behaviour

Record of Allegation of Bullying Behaviour

Child/children alleged to be victims of bullying behaviour _____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

_____
_____
_____

3. Source of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*

Pupil concerned	
Other Pupil	
Parent	
Teacher	

4. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*

Playground	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Other (specify)	

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

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

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

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

Homophobic	Disability/AEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of reported behaviour

9. Details of actions taken

Individual interviews		
Name of pupil	Date of interview	See appendix B

Contacted parents (please name)	Date

Interventions		Date /dates	Brief details
Circle of concern			
Restorative Conference			
Mediation			
*Disciplinary approach			
Other (specify)			
Follow through with bystanders			
Support for children involved			

*We would always encourage children to engage firstly with RP and mediation processes. In the event that a child will not cooperate, we will resort to a more traditional approach of school imposed sanctions

Any further details:

Follow up meetings	Date

Any further details / comments:_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)   Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____

Appendix 4

Record of Bullying Behaviour

Record of Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of pupil being bullied and class group

Name _____Class_____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of pupil(s) engaged in bullying behaviour

_____
_____
_____

3. **Source** of bullying concern/report (tick relevant box(es))*			4. **Location** of incidents (tick relevant box(es))*	
Pupil concerned			Playground	
Other Pupil			Classroom	
Parent			Corridor	
Teacher			Toilets	
			Other	

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

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

Physical Aggression		Cyber-bullying	
Damage to Property		Intimidation	
Isolation/Exclusion		Malicious Gossip	
Name Calling		Other (specify)	

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

Homophobic	Disability/AEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact

10. Details of actions taken

Signed _____ (Relevant Teacher)   Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____