

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

It is important that any organisation dealing with young people has a policy in place to deal with bullying. The organisation recognises the negative impact bullying has on young people, staff and the running of services. This Anti-Bullying Policy was put together at regular meetings of Coláiste na Fiann during the year 2004 - 2005.

The relationship of the policy to the Ethos of CNB

It is the goal of the organisation to nurture everyone so that they are able to develop their potential in an environment where they are cared for. Bullying behavior does not fit with this ethos because it has a negative impact on victims and undermines the high standard of the organisation's work.

Aims and Objectives

- To highlight that bullying behavior is not accepted among the organisation's staff, young people and parents/guardians.
- To reinforce the ethos of the organisation that encourages young people to discuss and expose bullying situations.
- To create a positive atmosphere and culture focused on respect for the individual.
- To implement comprehensive supervision to monitor all activities of the organisation.
- To develop procedures for investigating and dealing with cases of bullying. All cases will be fully investigated.
- To provide appropriate support for those who are bullied and those who participate in it.
- To provide training for those dealing with bullying situations.
- To assess the effectiveness of the organisation's policy and review it on a regular basis.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is abusive behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, by an individual or group against another person (or people) that is repeated over a period of time.

Types of Bullying

1. Relational Bullying - deliberate omission, malicious teasing, and gossip.
2. Cyberbullying
3. Identity-based bullying - bullying due to gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of a particular group e.g. Member of the Travelling Community.

Types of Bullying

- **Physical assault** – pushing, punching, kicking, prodding.
- **Extortion** – demands for money, clothes, jewellery, makeup 'on loan'.
- **Intimidation** – words or 'glances' that express aggression.
- **Isolation** – isolating one/a group of people deliberately.
- **Derogatory nicknames** – names that hurt or humiliate others.
- **Ridicule** – when joking goes overboard with personal statements repeatedly for one person.
- **Bullying of college personnel** – Bullying of staff through physical assault, damage to property, verbal threats.
- **Behaviour of staff** – Staff adding to bullying of a young person through sarcasm or humiliation or any expression of a threatening or embarrassing nature.

Results of Bullying

As a result of bullying, there is a lack of confidence, severe anxiety, vulnerability, changes in mood and behavior, and damage to self-confidence and self-esteem. It is therefore necessary to be aware of changes in behavior so that a sensible and considered intervention can be employed.

Signs that suggest bullying is evident

- Concerns about going to classes / swimming pool / dormitory / club etc. Reluctance or refusal to go to a particular place.
- Decreased quality of work, decreased enthusiasm and attention, and decreased interest.
- A pattern of physical illness eg. headache or loss of appetite.
- Unexplained changes in mood or behavior - these are often noticed prior to an event that is associated with bullying for the young person.
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress – restlessness, withdrawal, nightmares, difficulty sleeping, crying, not eating, being physically sick, bedwetting, desire to leave, or change location.
- Unusual talk about a young person or a member of staff.
- Missing or damaged property.
- Frequent requests for money or theft of money, clothes, make-up, jewellery.
- Reluctance and / or refusal to talk about what is hurting them.
- A young person seeking attention.

These signs do not in themselves prove that the young person is the subject of bullying. Homesickness or improper conduct may include some of the above signs (See Child protection policy). If they occur frequently or together, they should be fully investigated.

Characteristics of Bullying Behaviour

All staff members must recognise that any young person can be bullied or be the cause of bullying. Although no bullying behavior is acceptable, it is important to recognise that the bully as well as the victim require help and advice.

The Victim – Anyone can suffer from bullying.

The Bully – It is important to note that it is often a lack of confidence and low self-esteem that encourages bullying behaviour. A bully has often been bullied themselves. A bully likes attention. Bullying is often a sign that a young person is seeking help.

Where does Bullying occur? Bullying occurs often and anywhere people are together, in person or online. It is therefore vital that supervision is always in place.

Procedures for investigating bullying behaviour and how best to deal with it

- Every effort will be made to prevent incidents of bullying by keeping a close eye on the behavior of members of the organisation and intervening accordingly. Young people and staff will be encouraged to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying.
- When bullying is reported, the person is given an opportunity to tell their story. They are put at ease so that the incident can be investigated in its entirety. Everyone involved in the case is spoken to.
- The situation will be fully investigated and dealt with appropriately.
- The management team will be contacted for support and to help make a decision on how best to move forward.
- The parents on both sides will be contacted as soon as possible. Parents will be given the opportunity to speak to their child.
- Both parties will be taken care of while the case is being discussed.
- A decision will be made based on all the information gathered.
- A full report of each incident will be sent to the Head Office.

Ways to prevent Bullying

- Creation of an atmosphere that encourages respect for each other.
- Demonstration of a good example is always shown among the team.
- Bad behavior is not tolerated from anyone.
- Self-esteem is fostered among young people.
- An atmosphere is created where everyone understands that they have a duty, regardless of their status, to report any inappropriate behaviour.

Practices to help prevent bullying

- Training is provided for everyone on the team. Communication skills are emphasised. Roleplay is used to show how to deal with bullying situations. Various methods such as drama, art and craft, music and discussion are used to develop these skills.
- Feedback, formally and informally, is regularly sought from staff, parents and young people.

Roles and Responsibilities
The management team and the college team will ensure that this policy is monitored and implemented.
The policy will apply from Summer 2005.
The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis
The Management team officially confirmed the policy on 25th April 2007.
The policy was reviewed on the 26/09/2023 by Caitríona Ní Cheallaigh (Príomhfheidhmeannach) and Michelle Ní Ghialláin (DCA na hEagraíochta)

Appendix

Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary & Post-Primary Schools - September 2013

Useful information

Name	Website	Phone	Description
Barnardos	https://barnardos.ie/	01 453 0355	Works with vulnerable children and their families and campaigns for the rights of all children.
BeLongTo	https://www.belongto.org/	01 670 6223	Supports lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans young people in Ireland.
Facebook Bullying Prevention Hub	https://www.facebook.com/safety/bullying		
Hotline.ie Support	https://www.hotline.ie/		You can securely, confidentially and anonymously report suspected illegal content encountered online to Hotline.ie.
ISPCC /Childline	https://www.ispcc.ie/childline/	1800 66 66 66 (24 hrs) Text to 50101 (10am – 4am daily)	Ireland's 24-hour national listening service for all children and young people (under the age of 18) in Ireland.
Jigsaw	https://jigsaw.ie/		The National Centre for Youth Mental Health in Ireland
NPC	https://www.npc.ie/	01 887 4034	National Parent's Council
Ombudsman for Children's Office	https://www.oco.ie/	01 865 6800	A human rights institution and work to protect the rights of children and young people in Ireland.
Pieta House	https://www.pieta.ie/	Free 24/7 1800 247 247	Residential centre for the prevention of self-harm or suicide.
SpunOut	https://spunout.ie/	01 675 3554	Ireland's youth information website created by young people, for young people.
Teenline	https://www.ispcc.ie/teenline/	1800 833 634	A national active listening service for children and young people up to the age of 18 in Ireland.
Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)	https://www.teni.ie/	01 873 3575	Seeks to improve conditions and advance the rights and equality of trans people and their families.