COLÁISTE ÉANNA C.B.S.
Catholic Boys Secondary School, Ballyroan, Dublin

Anti-bullying Policy

Colaiste Eanna is a Catholic Secondary School for boys in the tradition of Blessed Edmund Rice. As a community, we aim to nurture mutual respect among all members in a safe environment. The personal, social, spiritual and academic development of all is promoted. The school is committed to providing an ordered learning environment which encourages the school community to realise its full potential

Mission Statement of Coláiste Éanna

The Edmund Rice School seeks to provide a safe and respectful working environment. The school partners seek to promote personal dignity and safety so that all members of the school community may work and learn together, free from harassment, bullying or disruption. In a true spirit of partnership, team-work is encouraged and the dignity and diversity of each individual is respected and celebrated.

Edmund Rice Schools Trust Charter, p19.

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Introduction:
The aim of this programme is to provide, in so far as we can, a safe and happy environment for our students. We believe that supporting students in this way can create an atmosphere in which their health and well being are protected.

This Anti-bullying Policy is aware of and is informed by the legislative requirements of:
The Education Act (1998)
The Education Welfare Act (2000)
The Equal Status Act (2000)

This Anti-bullying Policy is part of the Coláiste Éanna Whole School Development Planning and intersects, links and overlaps with elements of the Pastoral Care, Guidance, SPHE, RE, Code of Behaviour, Child Protection and Relationships and Sexuality Education Policies.

Definition of Bullying:

(taken from the *Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour*, Dept of Education and Skills. *1993*, and affirmed by the *Action Plan on Bullying – Report of the Anti-Bullying Working Group to the Minister for Education and Skills* DES, January 2013 and *Anti- bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools,* DES, September 2013).

Bullying is repeated* aggression conducted by an individual or a group against others - such aggressive behaviour may be verbal, psychological or physical.

*Occasionally one incident of a behaviour which has not been repeated or persistent may be deemed to be bullying if it fulfils all other descriptions of bullying. We recognise that one unkind act may be significant enough for the target as to have a long term or lasting effect. Our response to such an action may be guided by the terms of our anti-bullying policy.

For the purposes of this policy the term bullying also encompasses harassment and sexual harassment, defined as follows:

- **Harassment:** any form of unwanted conduct in relation to any of the nine grounds named in the equality legislation that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the victim.

- **Sexual harassment:** any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading or offensive environment for the victim.

The nine grounds are gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.

Types of behaviour involved

The *Guidelines* provide assistance in identifying and describing the types of behaviour involved in bullying. The means of bullying are constantly changing and the following list of types of bullying behaviour can be expanded in light of the experience of the school community:

- Physical aggression
- Damage to property
- Extortion
- Intimidation
- Gestures
- Silent telephone/mobile phone calls
- Abusive telephone/mobile phone calls
- Abusive text messages
- Abusive email/website messages
- The production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other materials aimed at intimidating another person
- Isolation & exclusion
- Harassment based on any of the nine grounds in the equality legislation e.g. sexual harassment, homophobic bullying, racist bullying etc.
- Name calling
- Slagging
- A combination of any of the types listed.

The form of bullying behaviour popularly known as cyber bullying is included in the above list and will be treated in the same manner as other forms of bullying behaviour. However this policy recognises the public nature of cyber bullying and the potential for such material to be viewed by unlimited worldwide audience and that it may not be possible to retract or remove such material from the internet. Given the nature of cyber bullying and the potential for humiliation on a grand scale it may be necessary for severe sanctions to be imposed for the first offence of this form of bullying.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive. It sets out to illustrate the kind of behaviours that will be regarded as constituting bullying and harassment

Scope of the policy:

This policy covers all within the school community. It refers to times when students are in school, in the vicinity of the school or on school trips. Given the nature of cyber bullying this policy also seeks to deal with inappropriate bullying behaviour that occurs between members of the school community outside school time.

The Coláiste Éanna Anti-bullying Policy is implemented by the entire school community under the leadership of the Principal. The Anti-bully Team is lead by a Special Duties teacher who has responsibility for leading the Anti-bullying Team, implementing the Policy and reporting to the Principal.

The anti-bullying programme in Colíaste Éanna consists of a two strand approach.

Strand One: Prevention: Knowing that bullying can occur anywhere that people come together, our priority is to work to ensure our students learn to recognise and reject the behaviour as being harmful to the health, well being and dignity of all involved and on this basis to report it so that the issue can be dealt with..

Strand Two: Intervention: In responding to bullying when it happens in school our aim is first and foremost to stop the behaviour in order to make the environment safe for the person who is being targeted.

Strand one is aimed at prevention through awareness raising.

Our team of volunteer teachers works with students to encourage them to be pro-social in their thinking and acting, to be aware of others, accepting difference and acknowledging their own difference and their right to be so.

We begin our work during students' first week in first year. Within a day or so of their entering school we survey them to get to know them and to enquire of them if they or others in their primary school class had experienced bullying. We seek their support in identifying students we should particularly watch out for and inform them of the school's stance on interpersonal behaviour and our emphasis on respect for self and others. We aim to highlight bullying as anti-social behaviour which has a damaging effect on all – the person who is targeted, the person who is bullying and the one who is looking on. The individual's power in making choices regarding behaviour is also emphasised.

Students who are entering second year are also surveyed within a week or so of their return to school. This survey seeks their view or experience of the school's anti-bullying programme during their first year.

During the course of the school year we survey all classes at least once a half term to try to inform ourselves on relations in the various class groups.

All classes are visited by members of the anti-bullying team about once a half term with awareness raising lessons. These lessons are age appropriate. Using dvd s and discussions students are encouraged to identify "bullying" as a behaviour, to consider the effects of this behaviour, to consider too their own views of such behaviour, why people behave like this towards others and what they can do if they find themselves either the target or a bystander in a bullying situation.

Senior students also participate in lessons and again the damaging effects of bullying are highlighted and discussed. Discussions with seniors regarding bullying in the workplace and society aim to reinforce the message of respect. During the last few years we have accumulated a significant number of audio and video materials with which to begin discussions. English teachers also highlight the issue in transition year in the course of their media studies module.

Strand two involves our procedures in response to allegations of bullying.

As well as the regular surveys conducted among students we also "keep our ear to the ground" by checking with teachers, students and ancillary staff – all of whom are now so familiar with our system that if any of them have any suspicion of bullying they will come to members of the team and inform them. Students too are made aware that they can tell "any" member of staff who will pass on the information in confidence. Our emphasis is on changing and stopping this behaviour and our message to students is that should they be concerned that one of their peers or even one of their friends is bullying someone then by telling we can help this student to change his behaviour. Our approach is the "No Blame Approach" of George Robinson and Barbara Maine which carries with it consequences but initially not punishments. We are also guided by the "Shared concern" philosophy of Pika, where all are encouraged to participate in the resolution of the problem.

Information will lead to an investigation and an intervention beginning with a survey of the class or classes where the situation is thought to be occurring. Once information has been received, the student(s) who is (are) alleged to be bullying is (are) interviewed. The interview is very structured involving the use of documentation. While working through these forms students are made aware of the procedure being used to investigate and of the fact that should they themselves ever find themselves on the receiving end of negative behaviour from others they too will be supported.

In the event that bullying has occurred a student may be quite aware of his behaviour and working through this procedure comes to recognise the effects on others. On other occasions the student may only come to that recognition following interview. On these occasions the student undertakes to treat the other students with respect, giving a verbal promise which is noted by the interviewing teacher or signing a promise to that effect which is also signed by the team member. Reviewing our annual figures we have found that the number of re-offenders is small.

In the event of a particularly gross incident of bullying behaviour an Anti-bullying Discipline Committee comprising of the Principal, the Anti-bullying Co-ordinator and the Year Head will convene to advise on the imposition of a significant sanction. The Anti-bullying Discipline Committee may also be convened in the case of a serious cyber bullying incident.

We regard re-offending as a choice. Students who re-offend go through the same procedure of investigation and interview. Once we are clear that bullying has occurred the student is offered an opportunity to again commit, signing a promise, to treat the target of his bullying respectfully. On this

second occasion the student's parents/guardians are also asked to sign. We suggest to students that their repeat bullying behaviour indicates that they need support from home to change their behaviour. Unless the student had informed them of the previous situation, this is the first time they are aware of this behaviour. Subsequent bullying behaviour (rare enough) will be drawn to the attention of the Principal and will be dealt with through normal discipline procedures.

Bibliography:

Dept of Education and Skills. (1993) *Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour*,
Dept. of Education and Skills (2013) *Action Plan on Bullying – Report of the Anti-Bullying Working Group to the Minister for Education and Skills*
Dept. of Education and Skills (2013) *Anti- bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools*
George Robinson and Barbara Maine. (1994) The No Blame, or Peer Support Approach to Bullying
Anatol Pika: (1987, 1998, 2001) Method of Shared Concern

S Guerin, E Hennessy (2002) - Pupils' definitions of bullying

This Anti-bullying Policy Policy was ratified by the Board of Management

on..

Signed... (Chairperson)

Signed..(Secretary/ Principal)