

# **Anti-Bullying Policy**

**Coláiste Bríde  
Enniscorthy  
Co. Wexford**

Ratified by the Board of Management on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2004

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary,  
Board of Management

# **Formulating School Policy**

(Review of existing anti-bullying policy, which has been in existence since 1994)

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## **1. Title/Area/Aspect** Anti-Bullying Policy

Coláiste Bríde,  
Enniscorthy,  
Co. Wexford.

"Bullying" is to be defined as repeated acts of aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group on others.

## **2. Whole School/Departmental/Subject Area**

Student Population

## **3. Relationship to School/Ethos/Mission Statement** **Aims of the School**

In our Mission Statement we state that we seek to promote a secure and caring community environment, where respect, responsibility and Christian commitment grow. We devised this policy to achieve a safe and secure environment for all our students.

## **4. Rational for this Policy**

As teachers we recognise that we have a duty of care to the students in our school

## **5. Goals of this Policy (i.e. objectives)**

- To create a safe learning environment for all students
- To promote an environment where each child feels secure and confident
- To provide the necessary support and help for students who are being bullies and also for the student who exhibits bullying behaviours
- To promote a whole school approach to counter bullying

## **6. Roles and responsibilities in developing and implementing this policy**

Board of Management:

- Recommends or ratifies sanctions where necessary
- First step in appeals procedure

Principal:

- Overall responsibility for ensuring that correct procedures are followed
- Applies sanctions
- Informs parents

Anti-Bullying Committee:

- Deals with incidents of bullying in the school

Vice Principal:

- As designated to by the Principal

Year Head:

- Pastoral and Advisory
- Liaising with Principal re sanctions

Pastoral Care/S.P.H.E. Teachers:

- Pastoral and to raise awareness around bullying
- Liase with anti-bullying committee

Guidance Counsellor:

- Counsels students if referred
- Supports parents if necessary

General Teachers:

- Support Policy
- Report incidences of bullying to Anti-Bullying Committee
- Help develop Policy

Ancillary staff:

- Report incidences of bullying

Home /School /Community liaison person:

- Arrange relevant talks for parents
- Liase with parents if necessary
- Support parents of both person accused of bullying and person being bullied

Parents:

- Attend talks to educate themselves in the area of Bullying
- Foster dialogue and "telling" with their children
- Encourage children to report bullying
- Co-operate with the discipline system
- Help develop policy

Students:

- Report any incidences of bullying that they witness or know about
- Help develop Policy

## 7. Content

Content is addressed on two levels

- Education and management of an incident

### Education:

- **S.P.H.E.** (Social/Personal/Health) programme to teach coping skills and strategies for dealing with bullying. Also to help raise self esteem.
- All students to be informed of the schools anti-bullying policy and steps involved. First year students to be informed of same during induction week.
- Policy and strategies to be explained to parents of incoming first years at the "Information night" before Summer
- Designate a week to focus on promoting a safe school and to highlight the supports available to students who have been bullied or who wish to change their bullying behaviour
- Regular in-service for teachers involved with bullying
- Each year group to get an up-date on anti-bullying committee and procedures
- Regular Talks for parents

### Management of an incident:

The procedure to be followed in dealing with a reported incidence of bullying is based on the "No Blame" strategy. Briefly this strategy states that

1. The aim of the strategy is not to lay blame but to stop the bullying behaviour
2. Investigations are to be low-key
3. Person displaying Bullying Behaviour is dealt with in a non-threatening way. This is to safeguard the person who reported incident and also to allow the opportunity to the person displaying bullying behaviour to change her behaviour
4. They are to be given a chance to change behaviour before any sanction is applied

### Steps in Managing an Incident:

- Once an incident has been reported the anti-bullying committee investigates it as soon as possible. This involves speaking to both parties and possibly periphery groups. Total discretion needed when dealing with a child.
- Persons who is accused of bullying is made aware of how upset and hurt the person who is being bullied is.
- In the interest of safety of the child being bullied no direct blame is attributed to the person accused. This approach gives the accused the opportunity to change their behaviour and gives an opportunity to clarify that the bullying has occurred as reported.
- Behaviour is monitored and if the bullying stops the incident is closed
- If the bullying does not stop the accused is made aware that there are consequences to their behaviour. The consequences may involve the matter being handed on to the Principal and then it is dealt with as a disciplinary matter. In the interest of the safety of the child who is being bullied sanctions may include

suspension and even expulsion also the matter may have to be reported to the Gardai.

- On going support through the school counselling is available to both parties
- In some instances regular review may be necessary and external referral may be required.
- If parents are reporting an incident of bullying they should write or phone the school rather than be seen calling to the school.
- In the interest consistency and fairness to all students, and to ensure correct procedures are followed only the committee should deal with incidents of bullying.

#### Who is to be informed?

- Initially only the Anti-Bullying committee
- If Bullying continues then the Principal and Year Head and Parents are informed.
- Principal and parents informed immediately of bullying if child is considered to be at serious risk.

#### Confidentiality

An appropriate level of confidentiality should be maintained and details only shared with others on a need-to-know basis.

#### Records

All incidents to be recorded by person who deals with the incident on a special record sheet.

### **1. Performance criteria (i.e. criteria by which the policy will be judged to be effective)**

Evaluation sheet to be filled out

### **2. Person(s)/Groups responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy**

Principal and Board of Management has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the policy

Co-ordinator with Anti-Bullying committee fills out evaluation sheet

### **3. Person(s)/Groups responsible for reviewing this policy (if different from monitoring group)**

Anti-Bullying committee, Principal, sub-group of staff and students

### **4. Time frame (to include review of policy)**

Policy to be finalised by September 2002

Evaluation - every year

Review - every 3 years

		Yes	No
1.	Does the Policy define what is to be understood by bullying?		
2.	Does everyone that the policy effects know the "No Blame" strategy that the policy is based on. ?		
3.	Does everyone that the Policy affects know of its contents?		
4.	Are all people who have responsibilities outlined in the policy aware of these responsibilities		
5.	Were new staff made aware of this policy?		
6.	Is the S.P.H.E. program fostering skills that are needed to enable students to cope with bullying		
7.	Were new students made aware of this policy during induction week?		
8.	Have vulnerable children support in the school		
9.	Were incidences of bullying dealt with in accordance with the steps outlined in the policy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were incidents dealt with in a discreet way?</li> <li>• Was confidentiality respected?</li> <li>• Were records kept?</li> <li>• Were the appropriate people informed?</li> </ul>		
10.	Did anyone other than a member of the anti-bullying committee deal with bullying?		
11.	Were there any talks for parents on bullying?		
12.	Did any teacher receive in-service, in relation to bullying, this year?		
13.	Did all students receive an up-date of the anti-bullying committee and it's procedures?		
14.	Was a review of policy due this year? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If yes, did review take place?</li> </ul>		

## **Recommendations**

- Junior liaison Officer from Gardaí to speak to seniors about bullying outside of school
- Mentoring system such as meitheal to be put in place
- Use outside drama groups, films etc. to raise awareness about effect of bullying
- Anti-bullying committee should meet with S.P.H.E. co-ordinator to make sure everyone is delivering the same message
- Laminated signs on corridors and classrooms to
  1. Raise awareness about bullying
  2. Show effects of bullying
  3. Define types of bullying
  4. Give names of teachers on anti-bullying committee
  5. Make students aware that a whole school approach is necessary
- Plan for awareness day at beginning of year
- Schools should co-operate with each other to help counter bullying