



Saint Catherine's National School

Ballyhack, Arthurstown, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

Eircode: Y34 KD29

Telephone: 051-389368 Roll No.: 18387D

E-mail: ballyhackschool@gmail.com

School Email: www.ballyhacknationalschool.ie

Anti-Bullying

Dignity in the Workplace

Name of School: Saint Catherine's National School

Address: Ballyhack, Arthurstown, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

Telephone No.: (051) 389368

Type: Diocesan mixed national school, under the patronage of the Bishop and funded by the Department of Education

Enrolment: 59 pupils (2022/2023)

Description: Currently comprising of 3 class teachers and 1 Special Education Teacher.

Introduction

This policy concerns internal staff relations between all employees and between employees and Board of Management.

Objective

We aspire to fulfil the commitment contained in the mission statement by fostering an atmosphere of respect, understanding and encouragement between all who teach, work and learn in St. Catherine's National School, so that the development and contribution of

every individual can be acknowledged, and all can work together to benefit personal growth and the common good.

Definition of Bullying and Harassment

For the purpose of this Dignity in the Workplace policy the definition of workplace bullying is as follows:

"Workplace Bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and / or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but, as a once off incident, is not considered to be bullying".

Bullying and Harassment is behaviour that is unprovoked, unwelcome, persistent and is intimidating or offensive to the recipient. It can take the form of a verbal, physical, sexual or psychological attack and can be openly aggressive or subtle. Generally, bullying and harassment is taken to mean repeated and persistent behaviour. The impact of bullying and harassment can be devastating; it can affect a person's work performance, health and personal life outside of work. This policy also appreciates the serious, adverse consequences for individuals who experience, witness or are aware of harassing behaviour.

Bullying can include:

- Using open aggression, threats, shouting, abuse or obscenities towards a colleague;
- Horseplay, offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact;
- Derogatory or offensive nicknames;
- Subjecting a colleague to constant humiliation, sneering, ridicule or using a person as a constant butt of jokes;
- Maligning or spreading malicious gossip about a colleague;

- Subjecting a colleague to unreasonable objectives for an employee, or constantly changing the work requirements without telling him/her and criticizing or reprimanding him/her for not meeting these impossible objectives or requirements;
- Deliberately withholding information which an employee needs to do his/her job effectively;
- Shunning or marginalizing a colleague, excluding him/her from discussions, decisions, etc. or refusing to deal directly with him/her in the workplace.

Procedures for dealing with complaints of Bullying and Harassment in the workplace

Purposes of Complaints Procedure

- To provide a fair, consistent and expeditious mechanism to process complaints of bullying and harassment against staff.
- To do so in a manner that affords all concerned full rights in accordance with natural justice.
- To outline the principles for both the employer, the staff member and their representatives in the event of complaints of bullying and harassment being made against staff.

Issues to which these procedures do not apply

- Complaints of bullying / harassment made by staff against students.
- Matters of the professional competence of teachers which cannot be dealt with at school level or which are referred to the Department of Education & Skills for investigation.
- Anonymous complaints.
- Frivolous and vexatious complaints which do not impinge on the work of the staff member.
- Complaints which are the subject of legal proceedings.

STAGE 1

1. Informal Procedures

- A staff member who feels that he/she may have been bullied or harassed should immediately ask the person harassing them to stop. It may be possible and sufficient for the employee concerned to explain clearly to the person engaging in the unprovoked conduct that the behaviour in question is unwelcome, that it offends them, or makes them uncomfortable and that it interferes with their work.

A person who wishes to make a complaint should make an appointment and discuss the matter with the staff member with a view to resolving the complaint.

It is important for the recipient of bullying/harassment to keep notes, detailing times and dates of incidents of bullying/harassment and request eye witnesses, if any, to note them also.

- If the complainant feels that he/she cannot directly address the alleged perpetrator(s) engaging in the unprovoked conduct they should ask a Designated Person to do so. This person will be the Principal or (if the Principal is the alleged perpetrator) the Deputy Principal. An employee of the school may approach the Principal or Deputy Principal are involved in the allegations the Special Duties Teacher is next in line to deal with the issue.

In this situation the approach of the complainant should be by way of a confidential, non-confrontational discussion with a view to resolving the issue in an informal low-key manner.

If the harassment complained of does not cease, or, if in the first instance, it is of a nature that the complainant (following discussion with a Designated Person) considers that it should be reported, the matter should proceed to stage 2.

The procedures stage should if possible, be concluded within 5 working days of the reporting of the matter of Designated person.

STAGE 2

2 Formal Procedures

- The complainant may consider an informal approach to be inappropriate and decide to by-pass Stage 1, or if, after the informal stage, the bullying persists, formal procedures in Stage 2 should be invoked:-
- The complainant should make a formal complaint in writing to the Principal and/or Board of Management. The complaint should be confined to precise details of actual incidents of bullying.
 - The alleged perpetrator(s) will be notified in writing that an allegation of bullying has been made against them. They should be given a copy of the complainant's statement and advised that they shall be afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the allegations(s).
 - The complaint will be subject to an initial examination by the Chairperson, Board of Management and the Principal who will report to the full Board of Management with a view to determining an appropriate course of action.
 - Every effort will be made to carry out and complete the investigations as quickly as possible and preferably within an agreed timeframe. On completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) will submit a written report to the Board of Management containing the findings of the investigation.
 - Both parties will be given the opportunity to comment on the findings before any action is decided upon the Board of Management.
 - The complainant and the alleged perpetrator(s) will be informed in writing of the findings of the investigation.

3 OUTCOME

- Should the Board of Management decide that the complaint is well founded; the alleged perpetrator(s) should be given a formal interview to determine an appropriate course of action. Such action could, for example, involve counselling and/or monitoring.
- If either party is unhappy with the outcome of the investigation, the issue may be processed through the normal industrial relations mechanisms.
- Ultimate disciplinary action is the responsibility of the Board of Management. If the problem persists the Board of Management will seek advice (e.g. from Department of Education & Skills, Solicitor or Union).

4 PROTECT AND SUPPORT

- Staff shall be protected from intimidation, victimization or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. Retaliation against a member of staff for complaining about bullying/harassment will be referred to the Board of Management for consideration.

5 ASSISTANCE IN THE EVENT OF HARASSMENT

- Every effort will be made to assist, if they so wish, persons who are victims of bullying/harassment to deal with the problem.
- Persons who bully/harass others may be requested to attend counselling to prevent further incidences of harassment occurring; there should be a minimum of three counselling sessions.
- At all stages of the Complaints Procedure a clear record should be kept of:
 - The investigation undertaken.
 - All communications to/by the complainant, the alleged perpetrator(s), the investigator(s) and the Board of Management.
 - The steps and all the decisions taken.

- Where a complaint has been rejected or deemed unfounded, a statement to that effect shall be noted in the Board of Management minutes.
- Where a statement of the outcome of the investigations confirms the allegation to be true then the statement of outcome shall be placed on the file/record of the person against whom the investigation upheld the complaint.

IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLAINTS

The Principal, staff and Board of Management are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented. All members of staff are expected to abide by the Dignity in the Workplace Policy.

SUCCESS CRITERIA

Well-being and happiness of the staff in the light of incidents of bullying behaviour encountered. Staff resignations are un-connected to workplace bullying.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This complaints procedure shall be reviewed after three years in school year 2024/2025.

Signed: Rachel Redmond
Chairperson

Date: 16/Nov 2022

Signed: Eva Murphy
Secretary

Date: 16/11/22

