Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Dhún na nGall

Donegal Education and Training Board

Coláiste Cranncha

Crana College

Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

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 Crana College 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.

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 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 among staff and students 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.
- 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. 39

Introduction

Bullying in Ireland is a behavioural problem which affects the lives of thousands of school children and their families. The humiliation, fear, frustration, social isolation and loss of self esteem which children experience when bullied results in absenteeism from school, poor or deteriorating schoolwork, personality changes, illness, depression and unfortunately sometimes suicide.

All staff and students of Crana College have an absolute right to work and study in an environment where they will feel safe and secure at all times. Any type of behaviour which deliberately undermines or isolates another, which takes away a person's dignity or any repeated verbal or physical aggression towards another will be dealt with in keeping with the school's code of behaviour, as will, any efforts to encourage others to be involved in this type of behaviour. The school authorities also reserve the right to address instances of bullying that occur outside the school grounds, at lunchtime, or after school hours. In the case of cyber bullying that takes place in the evening or at weekends involving students of Crana College, the school authorities will take an active role in ensuring that the matter is resolved. In short, bullying is unacceptable and it will not be tolerated in Crana College.

Aims of Policy

The Aims of this policy are to:

Establish a Charter that will underline the key elements of Crana College's approach to Bullying behaviour.

Raise awareness of the different forms of bullying behaviour that can take place in a school setting.

Promote educational and self-development programmes designed to increase student self-confidence and resilience.

Outline the education and prevention strategies used by the school to prevent bullying.

Encourage students, parents and all members of the school community to be

observant in relation to bullying behaviour and to report incidents to an appropriate person. Make it clear to students that it is always right to tell when they see something wrong.

Outline the procedures for dealing with a bullying report and supports provided for students affected by bullying.

Anti Bullying Charter

Everyone is valued in Crana College. Everyone has the right to be themselves. Everyone has the responsibility to treat others as they would like to be treated themselves.

This school regards bullying as a serious infringement of a student's/person's rights and a serious threat to their self-esteem and confidence.

Difference of any type, appearance, religion, personality, background, sexuality or interests does not make it acceptable to bully another student/person.

Silence allows people to suffer so we must speak out when we know we should. Remember you might not be the only person being bullied, but you might be the only person with the strength to speak up and so help others.

Definition and Types of Bullying

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 special educational needs.

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.

The *relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying

A pupil or parent may bring a bullying concern to any teacher in the school. Individual teachers will take appropriate measures regarding the reporting of the concern to the relevant teacher.

*The relevant teacher(s) for investigating and dealing with bullying are as follows:

Class Tutor, Year Head, Guidance Counsellor, Deputy Principal, Principal
Any teacher may act as the relevant teacher if circumstances are appropriate.

Types of Bullying

There are many types of bullying behaviour that set out to hurt another person physically or emotionally, to deliberately exclude or isolate someone, or to threaten or intimidate someone. These are some of the types of behaviour that are not acceptable in Crana College. They are mentioned so that all students are aware of them so that they can see how a bully can act in many different ways in a school. :

Physical Aggression – This obviously includes poking, shoving, punching, kicking, tripping people and more serious forms of physical assault or fighting. While boys in particular often engage in 'messing', horseplay" or "just a game" this should never be a disguise for physical harassment or inflicting pain. Physical threats are sometimes used to bully a victim into handing over money or other valuables, or a victim is forced to take something belonging to someone else and handing it over to the bully.

Damage to property - A bully will often target the personal belongings of another. Damage to a locker, school bag, books or pencil case. Stealing personal items, emptying or hiding school bag or PE gear. Breaking something of value to the other person.

Intimidation – Some bullying behaviour takes the form of open intimidation, such as mentioned above but can also include shouting at someone, using loud aggressive language. Not as obvious, but just as serious, is aggressive body language, including the so called 'look', where a bully conveys aggression or dislike through a deliberate look or facial expression. Anonymous phone calls to either staff or students are a form of intimidation.

Isolation – This type of bullying is often more common among girls. A person is deliberately ignored, isolated, left out of activities by some or all within a group. There is often a ringleader involved. This is sometimes accompanied by writing the victim's name or insulting remarks about the victim on classroom boards, in toilets, in public places or on social network sites like Facebook. Passing around notes or drawings of another or whispering about them loud enough to be heard can cause great distress.

Name Calling – persistent name calling which is intended to hurt or annoy someone

is a form of bullying. Often this name calling refers to physical appearance, size, clothes but it can also be aimed at those who are hard working and bright or those who are weak academically. Good natured banter or "slagging" is fine whenever it is not intended to hurt but there must be an awareness that too many comments about appearance, hairstyle, hygiene or references to members of another's family can overstep the limit.

<u>Cyber Bullying</u> – Modern technology has given bullies a new platform for their actions. Using technology , especially social networking including Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter, mobile phones, texting, to intimidate, exclude, spread rumours, insult, impersonate others is a serious form of bullying. No-one should post abusive or threatening comments on another's profile, set up fake profiles or web pages, block another from a popular group or community (such as a school or class group on social media). No-one should ever post images or videos intended to embarrass or humiliate someone or create a false image that would serve this purpose.

It is important to note that the school authorities reserve the right to discipline a student for actions taken off campus, such as using the Internet at weekends to bully or undermine another student or staff member. The school also reserves the right to look at the contents of a student's mobile phone/electronic device where there is a suspicion that it may contain inappropriate content.

Education and Prevention Strategies

Crana College believes in raising awareness and the education of the school community in relation to bullying and its detrimental effects. Education and prevention strategies that are used by the school are as follows:

- Discussion during form class at regular intervals. Students are made aware of how to report an incident.
- Presentations at student assembly throughout the school year.
- Student displays/posters in relation to bullying throughout the school.

- Publication of the anti-bullying policy/guidelines in the student journal and on the school website.
- The fostering and enhancing of the self-esteem of all our pupils through both curricular and extracurricular activities.
- Involvement of the student council in contributing to a safe school environment.
- Involvement of the healthy schools committee in contributing to a safe school environment and creating awareness of anti-bullying. Was a theme in a past project.
- Encouraging a culture of telling, with particular emphasis on the importance of bystanders. Crana College is a "telling" school.
- SPHE/CSPE/RSE/Stay Safe Programme class: use of education materials and discussion
- Whole school delivery of lessons on bullying
- Anti-Bullying Week/Friendship Week/Blue Day
- Talks from outside agencies i.e. An Garda Siochana (Connect with Respect)
- Circle Time with groups of students/SPHE class to discuss bullying.
- Staff in-service in relation to Bullying and school policy
- Restorative Practice/Conflict Resolution Training for staff
- Supervision and monitoring of corridors, toilets, locker areas, classroom activities, extracurricular activities, school outings and trips.
- Computer rooms are locked at break times. Access to computer rooms only under staff supervision and guidance.
- Social media sites are blocked from viewing in the school.
- Co Donegal ETB student email accounts only are used by students.
- Mobile phone/electronic device policy, states that students are not permitted to have a phone/device in or outside the classroom. If a student has a phone/device it will be confiscated and will only be returned when a parent/guardian collects it.
- Confidential questionnaires administered to students in relation to bullying
- Students can use the "Cairdeas" box outside the main office to report any concern/incident of bullying.

- Parents information night in relation to bullying and Internet Safety.
- Student Leadership Team actively observe in the morning, break and lunch time and report any issues of concern to teacher on duty.

Procedures for Dealing with a Bullying Report

<u>The school's procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the school for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:</u>

- When a report of bullying behaviour is made by a student or parent he/she will be reassured that this report will be taken seriously. <u>The investigation will be conducted by a *relevant teacher</u> and support will be given to the student making the report. All reports including anonymous reports will be investigated.

- There will be a full investigation which will attempt to gain further information and details of exactly what has happened. Other students may be contacted to seek this information.

- The school authorities will attempt to preserve some confidentiality in relation to the identity of the person making the report, but it will not always be possible or practical to disguise the source of the information.

- Any investigation will be conducted fairly and there will be no immediate assumption that someone is guilty until the facts are established. If a group is involved, each member will be interviewed individually at first. It may be appropriate to ask individuals to write down their account of the incident.

- Where it has been determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents/guardians will be informed and may be invited to meet with the Principal or his representative. Consideration will be given as to the supports and/or sanctions to be applied, following the investigation. These sanctions will be in line with the school's code of behaviour.

- Follow up meetings/restorative session with the relevant parties will be arranged if the pupil being bullied is ready and agreeable.

- An incident of bullying is recorded on the Vsware behaviour system score -3.

The school reserves the right to apply its bullying policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related if in the opinion of the principal/and or board of management the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at school for the victim, has infringed on the rights of the victim of the school and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

Support for working with pupils affected by bullying

The school's programme of support for working with pupils affected by bullying is as follows:
- All students who observe incidents of bullying behaviour are encouraged to discuss them with teachers and use the "cairdeas" box at reception.
- The student who has been affected by bullying will be given ongoing support by the class tutor, year head, deputy principal, principal and the care team.
- Counselling will be offered and provided by the school guidance counsellor/s.
- Restorative sessions with the students involved will be organised if the student is agreeable.
- Other relevant supports may be put in place where appropriate i.e. "buddy group", after school activities, extracurricular activities, home visits by the HSCL teacher.
- In all instances supports will be put in place to increase the self esteem and self worth of the student.

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.

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.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the school website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and pupils on request) and provided to the Parents' Association (where one exists). A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the patron if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management.

Policy review: 2013, January 2015
Ratified by the Board of Management:

Policy review: 20th November 2017
Ratified by the Board of Management: 19th December 2017

Template for recording 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

_____

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_____

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_____

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3. Source of bullying concern/report: Please tick

Pupil concerned

Other Pupil

Parent Teacher

Other:_____

4. Location of incidents: Please tick

School grounds outside:

Classroom:

Corridor:

Toilets:

Locker:

School Bus:

Other:

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

_____

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour: Please tick

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/SEN related

Racist

Membership of Traveller community

Other (specify)

8. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact:

9. Details of actions taken

Signed _____(Relevant Teacher) Date _____

Date submitted to Principal/Deputy Principal _____