
Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy Area	Anti-Bullying Policy
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Anti-bullying Policy

1. In accordance with the requirements of BCFRC Antibullying Policy and the code of behaviour guidelines issued by Board of Management of torc.CFRC CLG the following antibullying policy has been adopted within the framework of the Organisations overall code of behaviour. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures* which were published in September 2013.
<https://assets.gov.ie/24429/3b6f3db2de154ebaa1f69a0856c97c8e.pdf>
2. The Aim of this policy is to ensure that all children and young people, service users and staff are protected from bullying behaviour. It is hoped that the policy will reduce the number of incidents of people experience bullying.

The policy aims to ensure that incidents of bullying will be dealt with consistently and in a fair manner by setting out the procedures for dealing with such instances.

Objectives

- To raise awareness of bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour with staff/volunteers, children and young people and parents and guardians.
 - To develop an ethos which encourages all children and young people, service users, staff and volunteers to report incidents of bullying.
 - To develop systems for recording and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
 - To involve children and young people in promoting Youth Work Ireland anti-bullying policy, through class projects, poster making etc.
 - To develop clear procedures for investigating and dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour.
 - To develop support services for those affected by bullying and for those involved in bullying behaviour.
 - To ensure comprehensive supervision and monitoring measures are employed for all activities for all children and young people, service users, staff, and volunteers.
3. The Board of Management recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of all children and young people, service users, staff and volunteers and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:
 - A positive culture and climate which-
 - is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity.
 - encourages all children and young people, service users, staff and volunteers to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and

- promotes respectful relationships across the FRC Childcare Service and all FRC Service and Activities Programmes.
- Effective leadership.
- A service wide approach.
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact.
- Implementation of BCFRC prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that build empathy, respect and resilience in children and young people ; and explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying.
- Effective supervision and monitoring of children and young people.
- 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.

Definition of Bullying

“Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical which is conducted by an individual or group against others”.

Types of Bullying

There are many different types of bullying that can occur:

- Verbal Bullying: can leave children and young people feeling angry, frightened, and powerless. If they are unable to share their feelings with someone else, verbal bullying can leave them emotionally bruised and physically exhausted. Their powers of concentration can suffer, adversely affecting their capacity for learning. Verbal attacks can be of a highly personal and sexual nature. They can be directed at the child’s or young person’s family, culture, race, or religion. Malicious rumours are particularly insidious forms of verbal bullying.
- Physical Bullying: often written off as “horseplay”, “pretend” or “just a game” when challenged. While children can and do play roughly, in the case of bullying be aware that these “games” can be a precursor to vicious physical assaults. Both boys and girls indulge in physical bullying, boys perhaps more so as they have a greater tendency towards physical aggression.

- Gesture Bullying: there are many different forms of non-verbal threatening gestures which can convey intimidatory and frightening messages, for example gesturing a gun to a head or gesturing slitting a throat.
 - Exclusion Bullying: this is particularly hurtful because it isolates the child or young person from his/her peer group, and it is very hard for the child or young person to combat as it directly attacks their self-confidence and self-image.
 - Extortion Bullying: younger children are particularly vulnerable to extortion bullying. Demands for money, possessions, equipment etc. may be made, often accompanied by threats. Children or young people may also be dared or forced to steal from others leaving them at the mercy of the bully and open to further intimidation.
 - E-Bullying: in an ever-more technologically advanced world, a new strain of bullying has emerged amongst children and young people, which utilised web pages, e-mails, and text messaging to abuse, intimidate and attack others, either directly or indirectly (for example rumour mongering).
4. All staff and volunteers who work for torc.CFRC are committed to creating an environment that is safe and supportive to all children and young people. We believe that all children and young people with whom we work have the right to be protected from bullying and abusive behaviour. **Bullying in any form is unacceptable in torc.CFRC centre and in all programmes.**

Bullying contains 7 key features. These are:

1. An intention to be hurtful.
2. This intention is carried out.
3. The behaviour harms the target.
4. The bully overwhelms the target with his/her power.
5. There is often no justification for the action.
6. The behaviour repeats itself again and again.
7. The bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the target.

The more extreme forms of bullying would be regarded as physical or emotional abuse.

5. Bullying can only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so.
 - Reassure the child or young person that being bullied is the responsibility of bullies and they are not to blame themselves.

Policies and Procedures for Dealing with Bullying

- In any incident of bullying, a staff member should speak separately to the children or young people involved to get both sides with due regard to the rights of each person involved.
- All reports of bullying will be recorded, investigated, and dealt with by an appropriate staff member.

- The staff member will interview all involved in a calm manner and will seek answers to what, where, when, who and why.
- The child or young person should be praised for their courage in coming forward to report the bullying incident and/ or behaviour.
- Reassure the child or young person of the support of staff in Youth Work Ireland in ensuring that the bullying doesn't happen again.
- If the staff member dealing with the complaint concludes that bullying has taken place, then the perpetrator will be met with to discuss the bullying behaviour. They will be informed of the disciplinary action that will be taken as a result of this bullying behaviour and will be supported in undertaking any relevant training and interventions to address their inappropriate behaviour.
- Staff members will at all times be sensitive to the needs of the young person, who may not wish it to be made known that they reported an incident of bullying. Such incidents will be dealt with in group work and/or key working sessions.
- Parents will be informed of the incident of bullying and of the outcome of the investigation.
- For less serious incidents of bullying, the child or young person will be asked to apologise to the victim and asked not to engage in any further bullying behaviour. Examples may include slagging, name calling, gestures etc.
- Staff /volunteer would then closely monitor the behaviour of the child or young person.
- For serious incidents of bullying, the perpetrator will be suspended or excluded from activities, depending on the nature of the incident(s). Examples may include assaults or threats of physical assaults, exclusion, racist remarks, homophobic comments etc. and may require referral to Tusla.
- All serious incidents of bullying should be discussed with the Designated Person.
- The examples given above are not exhaustive and as such the Anti bullying policy, along with the other sections of this document, is under constant review.
- A series of anti-bullying posters are displayed throughout various sections of the organisation and the topic is built into several personal and social development programmes run with young people.
- 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 BCFRC Code of Behaviour Policy.

- 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.

The relevant person for investigating and dealing with bullying is (are) as follows:

1. torc.CFRC Board of Management
2. Project Coordinator –Derek O Leary
3. Childcare Manager – Theresa O Neill

Supervision and Monitoring of Staff & Volunteers

The Board of Management of torc.CFRC 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 it will, in accordance with its obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of children/young persons or staff or the harassment of 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 was adopted by the Board of Management on _____ [date].

This policy has been made available to staff and volunteer personnel, published on the torc.CFRC website (or where none exists, is otherwise readily accessible to parents and on request). A copy of this policy will be made available to Tusla Child & Family Agency if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management every two years . Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to staff personnel, and readily accessible to parents and young persons on request.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date of next review: _____