

Arklow FETC VTOS & BTEI

POLICY ON BULLYING

Definition of bullying:

Bullying can take many different forms which include:

- Physical aggression – pushing, hitting etc.
- Damage to property – stealing pens, pencils etc., breaking rulers and tearing books.
- Extortion – demands for money, food, sweets etc.
- Intimidation – verbal threats etc.
- Ridiculing a person's work or ideas.
- Horseplay, offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact.
- Name calling: hurtful or humiliating names.
- Personal remarks about a person's clothing, hygiene, family.
- Sexual/homophobic comments about another person.
- Isolation of a student and encouraging others to do likewise.
- Threats to deal with 'squealers' 'rats'.
- Making school life difficult for hardworking, highly motivated students.
- Use of mobile phones (text messages, phone calls, images etc) to intimidate or isolate a person.
- Use of Internet websites and chat rooms to intimidate or isolate a person.

Effects of bullying:

Bullying can have a very damaging effect on a person. The victim's self-esteem and self-confidence can be lowered. In extreme cases suicide can result.

A person may be vulnerable to bullying if they:

- are different in any way.
- are insecure or timid.
- are clumsy or awkward.
- have poor personal hygiene.
- are high achievers who work hard.
- are underachievers who may have learning difficulties.
- are individuals who have few friends.
- have different racial or religious backgrounds.

A person may act out bullying behaviour because they:

- like the feeling of power.
- feel insecure or inadequate.
- have been bullied themselves.
- see bullying in their own home.
- are spoilt and always expect to get their own way.
- feel angry and frustrated at some aspect of their own lives.

Guidelines for Tutors

All members of the teaching staff should be vigilant with regard to bullying.

Possible signs of bullying:

- Increased instances of absenteeism.
- Unexplained changes in mood, behaviour or attitude.
- Disimprovement in work.
- Possessions going missing.
- Unexplained cuts and bruises.
- Comments from other students.

Teachers should record incidents of bullying and report them accordingly to the course coordinator

It is possible for teachers to act out bullying behaviour:

- All teachers are asked to monitor their own behaviour on a regular basis.
- Unfairness in dealing with students cannot be tolerated or supported in any way by programme management.
- Derogatory comments made to any student cannot be tolerated or supported by programme management.

Anti-Bullying Process:

If a student is being bullied the following steps should be taken:

- A decision needs to be taken initially about the level of seriousness of the incident concerned before beginning the anti-bullying process.
- The incident should be reported to tutor or the programme coordinator.
- Both the person acting out the bullying behaviour and the victim will be addressed by programme coordinator. A bullying Incident Report Form to be completed and placed in the student's file.
- If deemed necessary relevant staff members will be informed

Guidelines for Students

If you are being bullied or suspect another student is being bullied report the incident immediately to somebody you trust e.g. class tutor or programme coordinator.

Sanctions

It is the policy of the centre to rehabilitate the persons acting out the bullying behaviour rather than punish them.

- A simple warning may be sufficient to deal with minor incidents.
- The person acting out the bullying behaviour may be advised to seek counselling
- When all other strategies have failed the person acting out the bullying behaviour may be suspended from the programme
- If serious/persistent incidents of bullying continue the centre/programme may have no option but to ask Adult Education Officer to consider indefinite suspension or termination of the person acting out the bullying behavior from the programme.

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BULLYING INCIDENT REPORT FORM

DATE OF INCIDENT: _____ PROGRAMME: _____

COURSE DETAILS: _____

STUDENTS INVOLVED: _____

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT:

ACTION TAKEN: _____

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

TUTOR/PROGRAMME COORDINATOR COMMENTS (OPTIONAL) _____

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____