Document:	Cork ETB Youthreach Anti-Bullying Policy
Procedure No:	21-01 (year and version number)
Effective Date:	August 2021
Supersedes:	Any previous Youthreach Anti-Bullying policies
Issued By:	Cork ETB
Due for Review:	September 2023
This policy should be read in conjunction with:	• Anti-Bullying-Procedures-for-Primary-and-Post-Primary-Schools • Education Welfare Act 2000 • Non-Fatal Offences Against the Person Act 1997, Section 10. • Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, 1989 • Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children

1. Aim of Policy:

The aim of the CETB Youthreach Anti-Bullying Policy is for all centres to fulfil the requirements of The Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Code of behaviour guidelines issued by the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB), by outlining our approach to preventing and tackling bullying behaviour by students in Youthreach centres. The matter of intra-staff bullying is addressed in separate ETB policies.

2. Definition 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 centre'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 centres' code of behaviour.

Additional information on different types of bullying is set out in Section 2 of the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

3. Prevention

The staff and management of Cork ETB Youthreach Centres recognise the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- A positive centre culture and climate which-
    o is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity;
    o encourages pupils to disclose and discuss incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment; and promotes respectful relationships across the centre community;
    o has a shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact;
    o implements 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 centre leadership, including;
  - effective supervision and monitoring of students;
  - 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.
  - implementation of the following policies in addition to this Anti-Bullying Policy;
    - Health & Safety Policy
    - Wellbeing Policy
    - Critical Incident Policy
    - Code of Behaviour
    - Admissions Policy
    - Attendance Policy
    - Child Protection Policy
    - RSE/SPHE Policy
    - ICT Acceptable Use Policy

- Additional supports in the centres include:
  - An ethos of care
  - Development of links with a range of external support agencies
  - Key working sessions
  - Personal counselling
  - Guidance counselling
  - SPHE and RSE
  - Staff training on SPHE, Child Protection, mental health promotion and health and safety

      o   Information sessions on mental health for students

      o   Staff made aware of the <u>Employee Assistance Programme</u>

4. Procedures

The primary aim in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame). Cork ETB Youthreach procedures for investigation, follow-up, recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies, used by centres, for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour, are as follows (see Section 6.8 of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools) :

    a. <u>Procedures for Investigating and Dealing with Bullying</u>

The centres' procedures must be consistent with the following approach. Every effort will be made to ensure that all involved (including students, parent(s)/guardian(s)) understand this approach from the outset.

    b. <u>Reporting bullying behaviour</u>

- Any student or parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring a bullying incident to any member of staff in a Youthreach centre.
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by a relevant staff member.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff such as secretaries and caretakers must report any incident of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant staff member

    c. <u>Investigating and dealing with incidents:</u> (see section 6.8.9 of DES circular)

- In investigating and dealing with bullying, the (relevant) staff member will exercise his/her professional judgement to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved;

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the centre in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible;

- Staff should take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach.

- Where possible incidents should be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved;

- All interviews should be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all concerned.

- Students who are not directly involved can also provide very useful information in this way;

- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant member of staff should seek answers to questions of **what**, **where**, **when**, **who** and **why**. This should be done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner;

- If a group is involved, each member should be interviewed individually at first. Thereafter, all those involved should be met as a group. At the group meeting, each member should be asked for his/her account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's statements;

- Each member of a group should be supported through the possible pressures that may face them from the other members of the group after the interview by the staff member; It may also be appropriate or helpful to ask those involved to write down their account of the incident(s)

- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant staff member that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the parties involved should be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and explain the actions being taken (by reference to the Cork ETB Youthreach Anti-bullying procedures. (Appendix 1). The centre should give

parent(s)/guardian(s) an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the centre and the supports provided to the students;

- Where the relevant member of staff has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it should be made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the Cork ETB Youthreach antibullying policy and efforts should be made to try to get him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the student being bullied;

- It must also be made clear to all involved (each set of students and parent(s)/guardian(s)) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter

- Accurate and factual records will be kept of all incidents and procedures that were followed. (Appendix 2)

Relevant staff members for investigating and dealing with bullying are any of the following:

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- Youthreach Coordinator

- Youthreach Resource Person

- Youthreach Teacher

- Anti-bullying Co-ordinator

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Appendix 1: Procedures to be followed on report of a bullying incident.

1. Interview all students involved with sensitivity.

2. Alleged victim and alleged perpetrator(s) spoken to and encouraged to resolve the problem.

3. Alleged victim and alleged perpetrator(s) invited to write down relevant details of incident.

4. Records kept.

5. Co-ordinator and relevant staff monitor learners involved.

6. Co-ordinator has follow-up meetings with Alleged victim and alleged perpetrator(s)*

*If incident is minor:

6. Verbal warning issued to bully stating he/she is in breach of contract and made aware of seriousness of situation.

7. Parties involved will be offered counselling.

8. Parents/guardians contacted is student is under 18 years of age.

9. Incident no longer considered if no recurrence.

10. All staff monitor victim and bully carefully for further signs of bullying.

*If recurrence of an incident or incident is deemed serious:

6. Parents/guardians contacted if student is under 18 years of age.

Appropriate discipline applied which can be:
- A contract of good behaviour
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Removal from class
- Other sanctions deemed appropriate.
- Suspension
- Expulsion

7. Victim and bully will be referred to centre counsellor, separately.

8. If required, referral to child psychologist/Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer, Restorative Justice/other agencies.

9. Board of Management contacted if not resolved at centre level.

Appendix 2: Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

1. Name of student being bullied and class group:

   Name _____Class_____

2. Name(s) and class(es) of student(s) engaged in bullying behaviour.

3. Location of incidents (tick relevant box(es)

Outdoor area	
Classroom	
Corridor	
Toilets	
Bus	
Other	

4. Source of bullying concern/report

Student concerned	
Other student	
Parent/guardian	
Teacher	
Other	

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

   _____

6. Type of Bullying Behaviour (tick relevant box(es))

Physical Aggression		Damage to Property	
Cyber-bullying		Malicious Gossip	
Intimidation		Name Calling	
Isolation/Exclusion		Other (specify)	

_____

7.   Where behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category:

LGBT+	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 Staff member)

Date _____

Submitted to Centre Co-ordinator/Resource Person /Teacher/Anti-bullying Co-ordinator on:

Date _____

Appendix 3: Additional Resources

https://antibullyingcentre.ie/

https://www.antibullyingcampaign.ie/

https://www.sticksandstones.ie/

https://antibullyingireland.nfshost.com/

https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Teenagers_coping_with_bullying_d5.pdf

http://bully4u.ie/bullying-in-schools/understanding-what-is-bullying/statistics-bullying-irish-schools/

https://www.ispcc.ie/shield-anti-bullying-programme/

http://antibullyingservices.ie/

https://tacklebullying.ie/resources/schools/