

# Dignity At Work Policy

October 2023

Policy Document



**Respect & Dignity in Our Work**  
**Keeping Our Workplace Positive & Effective**

**A Commitment to Dignity & Respect**

Sn an Croí Ró Naofa (Belclare) is a school which is committed to creating, maintaining and constantly striving to enhance a positive work environment where work is done in an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, openness and equality.

Behaviour which is not nice, including adult bullying and harassment in the workplace are phenomena which we as a staff at Sn an Croí Ró Naofa (Belclare) will seek to prevent. Further we declare that such unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated. As a team, we believe that all employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. As a team we recognise that we all have our part to play in modelling and promoting good behaviour, and that in the unlikely event of experiencing less than nice behaviour, we will immediately explain to our partner(s) of communication that their behaviour is offensive to us and why. If it continues, those school community members who are the management team are committed to intervening in an appropriate manner.

Accepted procedures will be used to investigate and deal with allegations of harassment, bullying and other inappropriate behaviour. It is accepted that the procedures used will depend on the context. We have identified such appropriate procedures to be those outlined in the IPPN document '*Supporting each other*', the INTO document '*Working Together*' and '*DES Circular 40/97 - Assaults on Staff in Primary Schools*'.

**Definition of what we consider Bullying & Harassment in our Community**

Our School Team has adopted the definition of adult bullying as set out by the Task Force (2001):

*'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.'*

We view harassment as '*unwanted conduct*' which '*has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person.*' It may be based on one of the nine categories identified in legislation but likewise may not be exclusively based on a person's standing within one of the nine categories specified in legislation such as gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation etc

We recognise that bullying and harassment complaints may arise among work colleagues but may also arise in relation to visitors to the school. In either case, our commitment to a positive workplace where dignity at work is respected prevails.

## **A Positive Work Environment**

We agree that we will all work to make this school a good place to work and are creating this policy to copperfasten that commitment. The school strives to create-

- A supportive atmosphere
- Good and open communication (e.g. through opportunities and regular staff meetings)
- Appropriate interpersonal behaviour
- Collaboration
- Open discussion and resolution of conflict
- Recognition, feedback and affirmation as appropriate
- Fair treatment of all staff- teachers and SNA staff alike.

Every person in the school community has a responsibility to play his/her part in contributing to our positive work environment, including a team member who may witness behaviour that is not nice. We each have a clear responsibility to raise concerns about dignity at work and threats to this, in an appropriate and timely manner. Reflecting our commitment to a positive workplace, we have agreed to review this policy each year.

## **Adult Bullying, Harassment & Not Nice Behaviour Can Be a Problem**

The school recognises that adult bullying and harassment are problems if they occur in any workplace. These behaviours generally amount to psychological abuse which causes serious pain and suffering. We believe that in addition to its unacceptable effects on our team who may be targeted, these behaviours do not help our effectiveness as a team.

Bullying may include behaviours such as (but is not limited to):

- Verbal abuse/insults, undermining remarks
- Withholding work-related information
- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Undermining the work of a colleague
- “Gossiping” about a colleague or his/her work to cause embarrassment or humiliation.

Such behaviours need not and should not be part of a workplace. This policy aims to ensure that we create a positive environment which will prevent such behaviours from occurring. Where bullying or harassment does occur, we will deal with it through the agreed procedure.

## **In the unlikely event that an allegation of bullying or harassment is made, the steps we will take are ....**

We acknowledge that any one of us have the right to take such advice or steps as they themselves may decide but accept that the Principal and Board of Management will take seriously any allegations of workplace bullying or harassment.

Supportive and effective procedures, in accordance with nationally agreed practice, are in place in the school. These procedures to address and investigate allegations focus on the earliest possible resolution and will proceed as necessary from informal to formal stages and will have a stress on confidentiality.

## **In Conclusion**

As members of the school community, we all have a duty of care to ourselves and each other. Management has a duty of care towards employees. Similarly, employees have a duty of care towards one another. In formulating this policy, the school sought out to set out principles and practices to support the exercise of that duty in our school.

Just as inappropriate and undermining behaviour among colleagues is taken seriously, so is such behaviour when perpetrated against an employee of this school by any other person.

Together we are committed to building and maintaining a work environment where respectful relationships are the norm. We are committed to having a good place to work.

- Following consultation with all staff members, the Board of Management of SN An Croí Ró Naofa has adopted this policy on \_\_\_\_\_
- The policy has been formulated in light of a number of background documents, including IPPN document '*Supporting each other*' the INTO document '*Working Together*' and '*DES Circular 40/97 Assaults on Staff in Primary Schools*', the Health & Safety Authority's '*Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work (2007)*', and the Equality Authority's *Code of Practice*, given legal effect in the Statutory Instrument entitled *Employment Equality Act 1998 (Code of Practice) (Harassment) Order 2002 (S.I. No. 78 of 2002)*.

Signed-

**Richard Broderick**  
Chairperson

**28/11/2023**  
Date

**Agnes Martyn**  
Principal

**28/11/2023**  
Date