



College of FET Anti-Bullying Policy

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| Policy Area | College of FET |
| Version | 2.0 |
| Date | Created: 2021 Reviewed: May 2023 Approved: June 2023 Implemented: June 2023 |
| Revision Details | 2.0 – significant update to incorporate requirements of Child Protection requirements. |
| Monitored | Ongoing |
| Responsibility | Director of FET |
| Approval | Quality Council |
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Introduction

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's College of FET Anti-Bullying Policy is part of the learner code of behaviour and discipline. The objectives of the Anti-Bullying Policy are to:

- endeavour to define bullying;
- promote awareness of the issue of bullying;
- provide an effective procedure for dealing with allegations of bullying;
- outline to learners their rights and responsibilities;
- define the ETB's College of FET rights and responsibilities to learners.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to the entire FET community in their relationships with learners, learning practitioners¹, management, administration, and ancillary staff.

This policy recognises the serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of learners. However, as there are under 18s and vulnerable adult learners within the College of FET, this policy is rooted in the themes identified by the Department of Education² in its publication *Cinealtás: Action Plan on Bullying, Ireland's Whole Education Approach to Preventing and Addressing Bullying in Schools* (December 2022). Sections of this policy referring only to under 18s and vulnerable adults for Child Safeguarding compliancy will be highlighted.

Definitions of Bullying and Harassment

For the purposes of this document and all the College of FET policies relating to behaviour and discipline, the definition of bullying and its various forms is as follows:

Bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.³

The following types of bullying behaviour are included in this non-exhaustive definition:

- deliberate exclusion, malicious gossip, and other forms of relational bullying;
- intimidation;⁴
- cyber-bullying;
- 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;
- in addition, 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.

¹ The term "Learning Practitioner" is used to cover the roles of Teacher, Trainer, Tutor, Adult Educator and Instructor.

² The Inspectorate of the Department of Education is responsible for the evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of education in a range of early learning and care (ELC) settings, schools, and centres for education, including Youthreach Centres and Community Training Centres (CTCs). Therefore, the guidelines set out by the Department of Education in its publications are comprehended within and adhered to in this policy document.

³ [Department of Education Definition of Bullying](#)

⁴ Staff safety is a paramount consideration in all situations: staff may only support an individual/family in an intimidation case when they are not considered to be at risk themselves. An Garda Síochána should be contacted where appropriate.



Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour including a once-off offensive or hurtful text message or other private message do not fall within this definition of bullying. These incidents should be dealt with, as appropriate, in accordance with the College of FET Learner Code of Conduct⁵.

A single incident can have a serious effect on a learner and may also constitute harassment which is legally prohibited in the College of FET under equality legislation and our Public Sector Duty.

Harassment is any form of unwanted conduct related to any of the nine discriminatory grounds (gender, including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, and membership of the Traveller Community).⁶

College of FET Responsibility

The ETB's College of FET has a responsibility to:

- a. promote its Anti-Bullying Policy and ensure that every person in Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board's College of FET is afforded their entitlement to respect and equality;
- b. work pro-actively, in as far as is realistic, to ensure that bullying does not take place;
- c. create a College of FET ethos which encourages disclosure and discussion of bullying incidents and behaviour;
- d. investigate all reported instances of bullying;
- e. set up support for both the bullied and the bully;
- f. record all incidents and instigate appropriate procedures;
- g. report serious incidences of bullying to Tusla⁷ or Senior Management as appropriate;
- h. ensure that appropriate records of any reported incidents of bullying will be maintained;
- i. Ensure that it takes all steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the sexual harassment of learners or staff or the harassment of learners on any of the nine discriminatory grounds (**gender, including transgender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, and membership of the Traveller Community**).⁸

Learner Responsibility

A learner who reports a case of bullying has the right to:

- a. be treated with dignity and respect;
- b. be secure in the knowledge that all incidents are taken seriously and treated consistently;
- c. be confident that all reported incidents are recorded, and the appropriate procedure followed.

Every learner who alleges that a case of bullying has occurred, has the responsibility to:

- a. report any incidents of bullying promptly to their Learning Practitioner or Provision Co-ordinator;⁹
- b. co-operate fully in the investigation of the incident.

⁵ [Learner Charter | College of FET](#)

⁶ [gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) - Anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools (www.gov.ie)

⁷ [gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) - Anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools (www.gov.ie)

⁸ Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 5.5.2- 5.5.3

⁹ Provision Co-ordinator includes: Principal, Deputy Principal, Provision Co-ordinator, FET Training Provision and Support Services Manager, FET Training Provision and Support Services Assistant Manager, or other person designated by Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board.



Procedure for Reporting and Noting Incidents and Complaints of Bullying:

The **Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour** (see Appendix 2) and the following procedure will be implemented for reporting and noting incidents and complaints of bullying:

- a. a relevant staff person¹⁰ will be identified within each Provision (see Appendix 1) to carry out investigations of bullying;
- b. the relevant staff person/appropriate personnel will interview all of those involved in an incident of bullying to ensure consistency of approach;
- c. the victim and perpetrator of the incident will be spoken to and encouraged to solve the problem;
- d. parents/guardians¹¹ will be involved in investigations where appropriate;
- e. written statements from all involved in the incident will be taken;
- f. procedures for carrying out investigations and templates for same will be consistent throughout the College of FET (see Appendix 1);
- g. College of FET Disciplinary Procedures¹² will be implemented where confirmed bullying behaviour continues;
- h. Child Safeguarding mandatory reporting of serious incidents will occur in-line with Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools¹³;
- i. All cases will be reported to the Director of FET in the first instance and to the FET Steering Group thereafter (see Appendix 4)
- j. For learners over 18, unresolved cases of bullying will be referred to the Director of FET and recorded in the report to the FET Steering Group (see Appendix 5, Summary Data report, section (e))
- k. Educational, preventative and support strategies will be implemented to promote inclusive communities that support and nurture positive relationships and partnerships as per the Cinealtás Action Plan on Bullying.

Implementation of anti-bullying strategies include:

- An annual review and completion of the mandatory checklist for the Child Safeguarding Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation (Appendix 3);¹⁴
- Staff awareness training and policy development;
- Appointment of staff person to oversee anti-bullying procedures and address reported cases;
- Anti-bullying induction programme for all incoming learners along with their parents/guardians;
- Having awareness-raising subject-specific materials on display;
- SPHE¹⁵/Well-being Programme on timetable;
- Having online safety programmes aimed at prevention of cyber-bullying in place;
- Having an Acceptable Usage Policy in place;
- Having a Child Safeguarding Statement and risk assessment in place and reviewed annually;

¹⁰ The member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying is referred to as the “relevant teacher” in 6.8.3 in gov.ie - [Anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools \(www.gov.ie\)](http://gov.ie). In Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board’s College of FET Anti-Bullying Policy, the staff person with this responsibility will be referred to as **Relevant Staff** (see Appendix 1)

¹¹ Guardianship: <https://services.courts.ie/Family-Law/arrangements-for-children>

¹² [Learner Charter | College of FET](#)

¹³ gov.ie - [Child Protection Procedures in Schools \(www.gov.ie\)](http://gov.ie)

¹⁴ Completion of this mandatory checklist is in line with the requirements of the Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools

¹⁵ As per Department of Education Inspectorate requirements for schools and centres of education [A Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections - Department of Education](#)



- All programmes and extracurricular activities take account of learners with special needs and are inclusive of all learner needs;
- Anti-bullying Policies and Procedures are on the agenda for all Provision's staff meetings;
- Annual anti-bullying awareness day takes place for relevant stakeholders;
- Anti-bullying themes such as diversity, stereotyping and prejudice are integrated into and addressed across the Provision's curriculum;
- Providing support for all parties involved in bullying incidents to include counselling, mentoring, well-being and confidence building programmes;
- A learner appeal process in place through the ETB's College of FET Complaints Procedure if the learner is dissatisfied.

Sanctions may include:

1. A verbal warning;
2. A contract of good behaviour;
3. Suspension;
4. Other sanctions as may be deemed appropriate.



Appendix 1

Record of Campus' Relevant Person for Investigating and Addressing Bullying Issues

| Record of Campus' Relevant Person for Investigating and Addressing Bullying Issues | |
|--|--|
| Campus Name: | |
| Date: | |
| Relevant staff for investigating and dealing with bullying in this campus are: | |
| Name 1: | |
| Name 2: | |
| Name 3: | |
| Name 4: | |



Appendix 2

Template for Recording Bullying Behaviour

| 1. Name of Learner being bullied and learner group: | |
|---|--|
| Name of learner: | |
| Learner group: | |
| Name of Campus | |
| Name of person noting concern: | |

| 2. Name(s) and group(s) of learners(s) engaged in bullying behaviour: | |
|---|--|
| Name and group: | |
| Name and group: | |
| Name and group: | |
| Name and group: | |
| Name and group: | |

| 3. Source of bullying | |
|------------------------|--|
| Learner concerned | |
| Another learner | |
| Parent | |
| Learning Practitioner | |
| Other (please specify) | |

| 4. Location of incidents | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Campus grounds | |
| Classroom | |
| Corridor | |
| Toilets | |
| Provision Bus | |
| Other (please specify) | |

| 5. Type of bullying behaviour (tick relevant box (es)) | | | |
|--|--|------------------|--|
| Physical Aggression | | Cyber-bullying | |
| Damage to Property | | Intimidation | |
| Isolation/Exclusion | | Malicious Gossip | |
| Name Calling | | Other (specify) | |
| | | | |

| 6. Where bullying behaviour is regarded as identity-based bullying, indicate the relevant category: | | | | |
|---|------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Homophobic | Disability/SEN related | Racist | Member of the Traveller Community | Other (specify) |
| | | | | |



7. Brief Description of bullying behaviour and its impact:

Description of bullying behaviour:

Impact of bullying behaviour:

8. Details of actions taken

Signed: _____

Relevant Staff Person/Learning Practitioner

Date: _____

Date submitted to Provision Co-ordinator: _____

***Note:** The categories listed in tables 3, 4, 5 & 6 above are suggested, and Provision may add to or amend these to suit their own circumstances.

Appendix 3

Checklist for Annual Review of the College of FET Anti-Bullying Policy and its Implementation

The Director of FET must undertake an annual review of the FET Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation. The following checklist must be used for this purpose. The checklist is an aid to conducting this review and is not intended as an exhaustive list. To complete the checklist, an examination and review involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis, as appropriate, across the various elements of the implementation of the policy will be required.

| Checklist Questions | Yes/No |
|---|--------|
| Has the Director of FET formally adopted an anti-bullying policy that fully complies with the requirements of the <i>Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools</i> ? | |
| Has the Director of FET published the policy on the FET website and provided a copy to the Parents' Association (if any)? (The latter is not applicable) | |
| Has the Director of FET ensured that the policy has been made available to staff (including new staff)? | |
| Is the Director of FET satisfied that relevant staff are sufficiently familiar with the policy and procedures to enable them to apply the policy and procedures effectively and consistently in their day-to-day work? | |
| Has the Director of FET ensured that the policy has been adequately communicated to all learners? | |
| Has the policy documented the prevention and education strategies that the ETB applies? | |
| Have prevention and education strategies that are practical been implemented? | |
| Has the effectiveness of the prevention and education strategies that have been implemented been examined? | |
| Is the Director of FET satisfied that all relevant staff are recording and dealing with incidents in accordance with the policy? | |
| Has the Director of FET received and minuted the periodic summary reports of relevant campus co-ordinators? | |
| Has the Director of FET discussed how well the campus is handling all reports of bullying, including those addressed at an early stage and not therefore included in the relevant campus co-ordinator's periodic report to the Director of FET? | |
| Has the Director of FET received any complaints from parents/guardians regarding the campus' handling of bullying incidents? | |
| Have any parents withdrawn their child from the campus citing dissatisfaction with its handling of a bullying situation? | |
| Have any Ombudsman for Children investigations into the campus' handling of a bullying case been initiated or completed? | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Has the data available from cases reported to the relevant campus co-ordinator (by the bullying recording template) been analysed to identify any issues, trends or patterns in bullying behaviour? | |
| Has the Director of FET identified any aspects of the policy and/or its implementation that require further improvement? | |
| Has the Director of FET put in place an action plan to address any areas for improvement? | |

Director of FET _____

Date _____

Appendix 4

Notification Regarding the Director of FET's Annual Review of the College of FET Anti-Bullying Policy

The Director of FET of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board wishes to inform you that:

- The Director of FET's annual review of the College of FET Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation was completed at the FET Steering Group meeting of _____
- This review was conducted in accordance with the Department's *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Signed _____
Director of FET

Date _____

Appendix 5

Checklist for preparing the Periodic Campus Summary Report to the Director of FET in accordance with sections 9.4 to 9.8 of the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2017.

This template checklist, published by the Department of Education, has been adapted for Campus settings within the College of FET.

For bullying cases concerning learners over 18, **only** section (e) of the Summary Data Template should be completed.

This template is intended to assist Senior Management in preparing for Campus Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR). The Department has also published a [FAQ](#) document to accompany the template checklist as an aid to Senior Management in preparing a CPOR available [here](#). This template checklist and the associated FAQ document must be read in conjunction with the [Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017](#) and sections 9.4 to 9.8 inclusive of Chapter 9 of the procedures.

1. This template CPOR checklist relates to the period since the last summary report to the Director of FET.
2. Since that meeting state the number of cases/reports under (a) to (e) (as applicable) under each of the four headings set out underneath.
3. Where there were no such reports/cases state this fact by inputting “Nil”.
4. The reference to procedures in this template is the [Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017](#).

Date of FET Steering Group meeting: _____

Reporting Period (Previous reporting date to today) _____

Allegations of abuse against members of Campus personnel:

| Information that shall be provided as set out in section 9.5 of the procedures | | Number |
|--|---|--------|
| (a) | State the number of reports made to Tusla since the last reporting period in respect of an allegation of abuse against a member of campus personnel. | |
| (b) | State the number of cases, since the last reporting period where the DLP (Designated Liaison Person) sought advice from Tusla in relation to an allegation of abuse against a member of campus personnel and the matter was not reported by the DLP based on the advice of Tusla. | |
| (c) | State the number of cases, since the last reporting period where an allegation of abuse has been made against a member of campus personnel and the DLP has not sought any advice from Tusla in relation to the matter and has not reported the matter to Tusla. | |
| (d) | State the number of cases, since the last reporting period where an allegation of abuse has been made against a member of campus personnel and the DLP did not report the matter to Tusla in circumstances where Tusla advised the DLP that it should be reported. | |
| (e) | Where there were no such cases at (a), (b), (c), or (d) above, state this fact by recording "NIL" → | |

Where the answer is one or more in sections (a) to (d) above the FET Steering Group must be provided with **all** the documents specified in section 9.5.2 of the procedures in respect of each such case at the FET Steering Group meeting.

Where any case at sections 9.5 (c) and (d) arise, the DLP must **immediately** inform the Director of FET in accordance with section 9.5.6 of the procedures.

Note – the requirements of sections 9.5.3 to 9.5.5 must be followed where providing documents to the FET Steering Group under this heading.

Other child protection concerns in respect of pupils in the campus (i.e., cases that do not involve any allegation of abuse against a member of campus personnel)

Specify the number of cases that have arisen since the last FET Steering Group meeting under each of the following headings:

| Information that shall be provided as set out in section 9.6 of the procedures | | Number |
|--|---|--------|
| (a) | Any case where a member of campus personnel has submitted a report to Tulsa in respect of a child in the campus in circumstances where the DLP has decided that the matter did not warrant reporting. | |
| (b) | Any case where the DLP has sought the advice of Tulsa in respect of a concern about a child in the campus and Tulsa has advised that the matter should not be reported. | |
| (c) | Any case where the DLP has sought the advice of Tulsa in respect of a concern about a child in the campus and Tulsa advised that the matter should be reported but the DLP has not reported the matter in question. | |
| (d) | Where there were no such cases at (a), (b), or (c) above, state this fact by recording “NIL” → | |

Where the answer is one or more in sections (a) to (c) above the FET Steering Group must be provided with **all** the documents specified in sections 9.6.2 of the procedures in respect of each such case at the FET Steering Group meeting.

Note – the requirements of sections 9.6.3 to 9.6.6 must be followed where providing documents to the FET Steering Group under this heading.

Child protection concerns arising from bullying behaviour amongst pupils

Specify the number of cases that have arisen since the last FET Steering Group meeting under each of the following headings:

| Information that shall be provided as set out in section 9.7 of the procedures | | Number |
|--|---|--------|
| (a) | State the number of cases where the DLP has reported a concern about a child arising from bullying behaviour amongst pupils. | |
| (b) | State the number of cases where the DLP has sought Tusla advice as to whether to report a concern about a child arising from bullying behaviour amongst pupils. | |
| (c) | Where there were no such cases at (a) or (b) above, state this fact by recording “NIL” → | |
| <p>Where the answer is one or more in sections (a) to (b) above the FET Steering Group must be provided with all the documents specified in section 9.7.2 of the procedures in respect of each such case at the FET Steering Group meeting.</p> <p><i>Note – the requirements of sections 9.7.3 must be followed where providing documents to the FET Steering Group under this heading.</i></p> | | |

Summary data in respect of reporting

Specify the number of cases that have arisen since the last FET Steering Group meeting under each of the following headings:

| Information that shall be provided as set out in section 9.8 of the procedures | | Number |
|--|--|--------|
| (a) | State the total number of reports made to Tusla by the DLP. | |
| | (i) State the number of those reports which were submitted as mandated reports | |
| | (ii) State whether any of those reports (mandated or otherwise) concerned a member of campus personnel | |
| (b) | State the total number of cases where the DLP sought advice from Tusla and because of this advice, no report was made by the DLP. | |
| | (i) State whether any of those cases at (b) concerned a member of campus personnel | |
| (c) | State the total number of cases where a member of campus personnel provided the DLP with a copy of a report submitted by that person to Tusla in relation to a matter that the DLP had considered did not require reporting or did not require reporting as a mandated report. | |

| | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------------------|
| | (i) State whether any such cases at (c) concerned a member of campus personnel | |
| (d) | Where there were no such cases at (a) (b) or (c) above state this fact by recording "NIL" → | |
| (e) | State number of unresolved bullying behaviour concerning adult learners. (All relevant documentation to be provided) | Against other adult learners: |
| | | Against Staff: |

Important Note regarding above summary data: It should be noted that the summary data under this heading relates to the overall number of cases/reports arising since the last FET Steering Group meeting and is therefore not a summary of the number of cases/reports recorded under the first three headings in the Principal's Child Protection Oversight Report (CPOR).

Signed _____

Date: _____

Senior Management on behalf of Campus