



Coachford College

Dignity in the Workplace Charter

1. General

1.1 Scope

This Charter applies to all employees of Coachford College, and to its stakeholders, volunteers and visitors. Coachford College is committed to the central importance of respecting the dignity of each individual at work. All persons who work at the College and/or who come in contact with its staff have a duty to uphold this Charter and to promote its provisions. This Charter applies to employees both in the workplace and at work associated events, such as meetings and outings, whether on the premises or offsite. It applies to bullying and harassment not only by fellow employees, but also by other persons to which an employee might reasonably expect to come into contact within the course of their employment.

1.2 Context

This Charter has been drawn up in consultation with all members of the school community and in keeping with the school's characteristic spirit. It should be read in conjunction with relevant school policy, and with the following Cork ETB policies:

- Code of Ethics;
- Code of Conduct for Staff;
- Code of Practice for Staff Interaction with Learners;
- Grievance Procedures for Staff;
- Memorandum of Understanding: Grievance Procedures;
- Disciplinary Procedure for Teachers;
- Bullying Prevention Policy and associated Guidance Notes;
- Harassment/Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and associated Guidance Notes;
- Teaching Council Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers.

The school's Mission Statement sets out the school's vision for the encouragement of the pursuit of excellence and the creation of an environment conducive to the highest standards of achievement in a community in which mutual respect is shared in a positive environment. Courtesy, tolerance, respect, co-operation, integrity, trust, generosity, kindness, fairness, inclusion and justice are among the qualities which are highly valued at Coachford College. Cork Education and Training Board and Coachford College recognise that all staff members have a right to a workplace free from bullying and harassment and/or discrimination on the basis of marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability or race, and are fully committed to ensuring that each staff member enjoys that right.

1.3 Objectives

This Charter sets out to ensure

- The creation and maintenance of a positive work environment in which each member of the school's staff is treated with dignity and respect by all members of the school community,
- That all are aware of and committed to the principles set out in this Charter;
- That complaints will be taken seriously and investigated appropriately, and that all parties will be treated with dignity and respect;
- That the school leadership is compliant with its duties under Section 8(2)(b) of the 2005 Act as regards 'managing and conducting work activities in such a way as to prevent, in so far as is reasonably practicable, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the health, safety and welfare at work of the school employees at risk';
- That Coachford College is compliant with the Health and Safety Act (2005), the Code of Practice on the prevention of Workplace Bullying (2007), the Employment Equality Acts (1998-2005) and by the Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment (2012).

1.4. Rationale

All members of the school staff are entitled to

- Carry out their work in an environment in which they feel respected and supported;
- Have their dignity and privacy as valued members of the school community recognized and protected both inside and outside of the workplace, and
- To discharge the responsibilities associated with their role in a positive environment.

2. Definitions

2.1. Bullying

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 (Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work 2007)).

2.2. Harassment

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct related to gender, age, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or membership of the travelling community which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the individual

(Section 14 (A) of the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2005, and Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment 2012).

2.3. Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is defined in the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2005 and by the Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment 2012) as any form of verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading humiliating or offensive environment for the individual.

2.4. What constitutes unacceptable behaviour/workplace bullying?

Bullying can take a number of forms, with a pattern of the following behaviours being examples:

- Verbal abuse/insults;
- Physical abuse;
- Cyberbullying;
- Purposely undermining someone;
- Targeting someone for special negative treatment;
- Manipulation of a person's reputation;
- Intrusion by pestering, spying or stalking;
- Menacing behaviour;
- Intimidation;
- Aggression ;
- Obscene language;
- Jokes which are obviously offensive to one individual by spoken word or email;
- Undermining behaviour;
- Unreasonable assignments to duties which are obviously unfavourable to one individual;
- Repeated requests with impossible deadlines or impossible tasks.

This list is not exhaustive.

3. Effects of Bullying

International research shows that the effects of bullying may be physiological, psychological and behavioural, having significant negative effects on the individual and on the organization.

4. Procedures for dealing with complaints of Bullying/Harassment/Sexual Harassment

Any staff member who experiences bullying, harassment or sexual harassment will be supported in bringing such behaviour to an end. Cork ETB and Coachford College encourage the local, informal resolution of issues wherever possible. Mediation is provided for in each of the procedures set out in 1.2 above. Cork ETB advocates the use of mediation as an effective method to resolve matters of conflict which is both impartial and confidential in its

dealings. Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process for resolving disputes wherein the parties agree to attempt to resolve the issues of the dispute with the aid of an accredited professional external mediator.

Cork ETB's complaint procedure for Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment, including the formal and informal procedures, are outlined in detail in the Bullying Prevention Policy and associated Guidance Notes and in the Harassment/Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy and associated Guidance Notes. Information is also available to staff members from trained contact persons in the HR Department. The relevant policies and procedures can be accessed at <https://www.corketb.ie/new-appointments>.

5. Staff members' responsibility

It is the responsibility of each member of the school's staff to take every step possible to ensure that bullying does not occur on the workplace by

- Ensuring familiarity with the contents of this Charter and with relevant CETB policy;
- By participating in Continuous Professional Learning with respect to dignity at work;
- By participating in the review of this Charter, and
- By being aware and educated about workplace bullying.

6. Sanctions

Breach of CETB policy may lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Nothing in this Charter overrules a person's legal and statutory rights.

This Charter was reviewed by the Board of Management of Coachford College on October 20th 2020, as signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Management and the Principal.

It is available to all members of the school community.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, and/or as deemed necessary.

Signed by:

Niamh Lehane Chairperson of the Board

Date: October 20th 2020

Aine-Maire Ni Fhaoláin Principal

Date: October 20th 2020