

St. Michael's House Special National School Baldoyle is a special school providing primary education to pupils with Severe to Profound General Learning Disabilities from 4 to 18 years of age.

Dignity at Work Policy

The policy is formulated in light of the **Labour Relations Commission's Codes of Practice S.J. No.17/2002 and S.J. 208/2012** for addressing harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace, together with the **Health & Safety Authority Code of Practice (2007)** on the prevention and resolution of bullying at work.

Core Principles of the Policy

The Board of Management recognises that all employees have the right to a work place free from bullying, harassment and sexual harassment. The school is committed to a positive work environment where work is done in an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, openness and equality. This school has a zero- tolerance approach to all of the above. All employees have a responsibility to be aware of this policy.

All complaints of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment shall be fully and properly investigated in an appropriate manner by utilizing the working together document 2024 that was adopted by the Board of management in 2024.

What is Workplace Bullying and Harassment?

The Board of Management defines adult bullying as repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal or physical that is conducted by one or more persons against another or others at the place of **work** or during the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual's right to dignity at work.

Bullying is not an isolated incident, a key characteristic of bullying is that it takes place over a period of time; it is regular and persistent and is specifically targeted at one employee or a group of employees.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of types of behaviour that may constitute bullying:

- Verbal abuse/insults, undermining remarks

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- Exclusion with negative consequences
- Intimidation
- Aggression
- Humiliation, ridicule, belittling efforts
- Excessive monitoring of work
- Withholding work-related information

Harassment is any form of 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 related to any of the following grounds:

- Gender
- Civil Status
- Family Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Religious Belief
- Age
- Disability
- Race, Colour, Nationality or Ethnic/National Origin
- Member of the traveler community.

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is any act of physical intimacy, request for sexual favours, other act or conduct including spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, picture or other material that is unwelcome and could reasonably be regarded as sexually offensive, humiliating, degrading or intimidating. It is the fact that the behaviour is unwanted that makes it harassment or sexual harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Unwanted physical contact such as unnecessary touching, patting or pinching or brushing against another body, assault or coercive sexual intercourse
- Unwanted verbal advances including propositions or verbal pressure for sexual activity, offensive verbal flirtations, suggestive remarks, innuendos or lewd comments
- The display of pornographic or sexually suggestive pictures, objects, written materials including posters, emails, text-messages, social media messaging.
- Leering, whistling or making sexually suggestive gestures
- Conduct that is intimidatory or physically abusive of a person because of their sex
(This list is not exhaustive)

A Positive Work Environment

It is agreed that we will all work together to make this school a good place to work with a positive work environment which is characterised by:

- A supportive atmosphere
- Good and open communication
- Appropriate interpersonal behaviour
- Collaboration
- Open discussion and resolution of conflict
- Recognition, feedback and affirmation as appropriate fair treatment of all staff

Every person has a responsibility to play his/her part in contributing to a positive work environment. In this regard, a person who is a witness or bystander has a clear responsibility to raise concerns about inappropriate behaviour and actions in an appropriate way. All staff will receive a copy of this policy and there will be a copy for reading in every classroom.

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What happens if there is an Allegation of Bullying, Harassment or Sexual Harassment?

Without prejudice to an individual's right to seek whatever advice or take whatever steps he or she deems necessary, the Board of Management will take seriously all allegations of workplace bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment.

Supportive and effective procedures will be followed to address and investigate allegations of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment with a view to the earliest possible resolution and will proceed as necessary from informal to formal stages with an emphasis on confidentiality.

Informal Procedure

The complainant can confidentially talk to the Principal or Deputy Principal who will advise them of their options and support them in their choice. The informal procedure may involve an assisted meeting with the respondent and/or mediation. The Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme is a free and confidential counselling service available for teachers, SNA's and other staff. The free phone number is 1800 411 057 and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If there is no resolution the formal procedure can be invoked.

At any stage the complainant can skip the informal stage and move to the formal stage.

Formal Procedure

A formal complaint is written to the Board of Management. The complaint will be investigated with minimum delay and confidentially. Both parties will be shown due respect. Both parties can be represented and accompanied at any arranged interviews/meetings.

The outcome of the investigation and the extent and nature of the bullying or harassment will determine the form of disciplinary action to be taken. These actions may include a verbal warning, suspension or dismissal. Depending upon the seriousness of the offence, legal proceedings may be taken.

Summary

Management has a duty of care towards employees. Similarly, employees have a duty of care towards one another. This policy seeks to set out principles, practices and procedures to support the implementation of that duty in our school.

St Michael's House Special National School,

Willie Nolan Road, Baldoye, D13 W9R0

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Together we are committed to building and maintaining a work environment where respectful, open and equal relationships are the norm.

In summary, we are committed to cultivating and maintaining a safe place for our staff to work, where every individual's dignity is respected.

This Dignity in the Workplace Policy was ratified and reviewed by the Board of Management in December 2025.

Staff will review and read this policy annually at the beginning of each school year.

Signed: *Aislinn Melia 3/12/25*

Chairperson BOM

Signed: *A. Lombard Perito*

Principal

Date: 3rd of December 2025

