

**Catholic University School**  
**Dignity at Work**  
**Policy and Code of Procedures**

**(required under Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005)**

**Academic Year 2010**

Dear Staff Member

The purpose of this document is to ensure that the Board of Management of Catholic University School is compliant with current legislation in relation to the Health and Safety Act 2005 and the Code of Practice on the Prevention of Workplace Bullying (May 2007).

The objective of the policy is to ensure school management is compliant with their duties under section 8 (2) (b) of the 2005 Act as regards ‘managing and conducting work activities in such a way as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the safety, health and welfare at work of his or her employees at risk’.

It also applies to employees in relation to their duties under section 13 (1) (e) of the 2005 Act to ‘not engage in improper conduct or behaviour that is likely to endanger his or her own safety, health and welfare at work or that of any other person’.

A copy of this document will be issued to each staff member of Catholic University School.

It is each employee’s responsibility to ensure that they become familiar with the contents of this document.

A copy of the Dignity at Work Charter will be displayed in a visible part of the school premises in order for management, staff, visitors and the general public to view.

In the event of a complaint in relation to bullying in the workplace in Catholic University School, the procedures contained within this policy will be followed.

This document will be subject to periodic review.

Yours faithfully,

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Secretary, Board of Management

Academic Year 2010

**Dignity at Work Charter**

**Catholic University School**

**Adopts the**

**HSA Dignity in the Workplace Charter**

**Endorsed by IBEC and ICTU and adopted by JMB and ASTI**

*JMB and ASTI “Commit ourselves to working together to maintain a workplace environment that encourages and supports the right to dignity at work. All who work here are expected to respect the right of each individual to dignity in their working life. All will be treated equally and respected for their individuality and diversity.*

*Bullying in any form is not accepted by us and will not be tolerated. Our policies and procedures will underpin the principles and objectives of this Charter.*

*All individuals, whether directly employed or contracted by us, have a duty and a responsibility to uphold this Dignity at Work Charter.*

*Supervisors, Managers, and Trade Union Representatives where applicable in the workplace have a specific responsibility to promote its provisions.”*

# Dignity in the Workplace Policy and Procedures

## Introduction:

**Type of School:** Catholic University School is a voluntary, fee paying, Catholic day primary and secondary school for boys under the trusteeship of the Marist Fathers.

**History:** Catholic University School traces its origins to St. Laurence's Day Academy for Young Catholic Gentlemen, which was established under the auspices of the Archbishop of Dublin in 1852. Its function was to prepare students for the newly formed Catholic University on St. Stephen's Green. The name Catholic University School dates from 1863 following Cardinal Newman's residence in the school. In 1867 the Marist Fathers were invited to take over the running of the school by Cardinal Cullen. The invitation was accepted and the school relocated from Harcourt Street to the present site in Leeson Street.

**Management:** Through the Articles of Management, the Trustees devolve their powers to the Board of Management, which now undertakes responsibility for the conduct, management and financial administration of the school, in accordance with the ethos of the Trustees and under their general supervision and control. (AOM 2)

**Mission Statement:** The role of Catholic University School as a Catholic educational community is particularly important at this time of increasing secularisation and individualism. Fr. Colin, the founder of the Society of Mary, described the work of education as a formation of heart, mind, character and virtue. In general the philosophy of the school addresses the challenge of forming our pupils into gentlemen who display courtesy and sensitivity to all and who can act with integrity and a sense of responsibility.

Catholic University School has always been known for the kindness and humanity with which it treats the pupils and for the high value it places on the quality of relationships. As educators, we in Catholic University School recognise our responsibility to develop the full potential of the boys, something that will be different for each and every one of them and to foster excellence in everything we do and everything we ask of the boys. Our responsibility is to engage the whole person and to remember that the overall objective is for the boys of Catholic University School to become rounded, responsible adults who can make their own way in the world.

In this regard we are also conscious that the school is more than an academic institution. Catholic University School as a school endeavors to endow the boys with an awareness of how fortunate they are. It strives to evoke in them a gratitude for what they have received that will in turn encourage them to be generous towards those in society who have been less fortunate. Our aim is to educate them to recognize and accept their responsibility in playing their part to create a more just and Christian society.

## Dignity in the Workplace

Every person in this workplace has the right to be treated with respect and courtesy and to have his or her individuality valued. While we recognise that there may be personal differences between people that work in Catholic University School, these

differences will not impinge upon good working relations in the school. All staff are valued for their professional experience, knowledge and expertise and for their contribution within the school community, whether inside or outside the classroom. All individuals who work in the school or who come into contact with its staff or students have a duty to uphold this charter and to promote its provisions.

A core employment value is the commitment to ensuring that each individual is guaranteed a working environment where s/he may expect to be treated with dignity both by management and work colleagues. This approach is a positive emphasis on the importance of each individual and the contribution s/he makes to the success of the workplace. It guarantees the optimal working conditions that allow individuals to freely maximise their role in the workforce. Sound management ethos is based on providing leadership that encourages individuals in this regard. This is best achieved in our school through the creation and maintenance of a positive working environment.

Integral to this employment value and in particular to the principle of mutual respect is the commitment to provide a workplace free from bullying. It is in such a context that the philosophy and policy statement will be realised.

### **Objectives of Dignity at Work Policy**

- To create and maintain a positive working environment in Catholic University School where the right of each individual to dignity at work is recognised and protected.
- To ensure that all are aware of and committed to the principles set out in this policy.

The Board of Management of Catholic University School is committed to providing all employees with an environment that is free from any form of workplace bullying.

The purpose of this document is to outline the Board's policy and procedures in relation to workplace bullying.

A complaint of workplace bullying will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly and in accordance with due process.

In approving this policy, the Board has agreed that:

- It be brought to the attention of all Staff
- All Staff be asked to co-operate in its implementation

### **The Policy**

The objective of the Board policy is to eliminate workplace bullying and to contribute to a supportive environment where Staff has the right to carry out the work of the College/School - *'the education of the whole person'*.

The Policy guarantees that all complaints will be taken seriously and investigated promptly, and that all parties involved will be treated with respect.

Staff will be protected from victimisation or discrimination for assisting in an investigation. Victimisation as a result of a member of Staff raising a complaint will not be tolerated.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Definition of 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.  
(Codes of Practice 2002 under the Industrial Relations Act and the Health and Safety at Work Act)

### **Harassment and Sexual Harassment:**

The Employment Equality Act, 1998 and 2004 specifically deals with harassment in the workplace. The new Code aims to give practical guidance and advice. Harassment that is based on the following nine grounds - Gender, Age, Marital Status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Race, Religion or membership of the Traveller Community is a form of discrimination in relation to conditions of employment.

### **Sexual Harassment:**

Sexual Harassment is defined in the Equality Act 2004 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 person.

The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display, or circulation of written words, pictures or other material. (Complaints relating to sexual harassment may be processed through the JMB/ASTI Sexual Harassment for Schools – separate document)

### **Harassment:**

Harassment on the other eight grounds covered by the legislation is any unwanted conduct related to any of the eight grounds (other than gender) and the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures or other material.  
(Employment Equality Act 2004)

### **What Constitutes 'Unacceptable Behaviour'/ Workplace Bullying?**

Bullying can take a number of forms. Under the Health and Safety Act there is a requirement that personnel are consulted in respect of acceptable/unacceptable behaviour and that through this consultation process, the staff will have ownership of the policy as it relates to their school/organization.

A pattern of the following behaviours are examples of types of bullying:

- Exclusion

- withholding work-related information
  - failure to deal with staff representatives i.e. post holders, class heads, management, shop steward etc.
  - school related events
  - whispering and silent treatment
  - sustained unfriendly contact
- Verbal abuse
    - insults
    - shouting
    - teasing
    - sarcasm
    - ridiculing
    - bad or inappropriate language
    - being overly critical of an individual
- Unequal Treatment
    - excessive monitoring and/or scrutiny of work
    - setting unreasonable and unrealistic targets
    - unshared workload/responsibilities
    - condescending or dismissive treatment
    - undermining behaviour
    - inappropriate overruling of a person's authority
- Physical abuse
- Menacing behaviour
    - Intimidation
    - Aggression
    - Humiliation
    - Demeaning or belittling a colleague to either other staff or students
    - Mobbing

**This list is not exhaustive.**

It is noted that a once-off incident is not considered to be bullying behaviour.

#### **Acceptable behaviour in the workplace**

- Valuing and respecting each staff member's contribution to the school and respecting the methods, skills, experience and opinions of each other
- Accepting and tolerating the strengths, limitations and personal differences of others
- Courtesy and good manners with the aim of creating a positive atmosphere in the workplace

**This list is not exhaustive.**

## **What are the Effects of Bullying?**

International research shows that the effects may be physiological, psychological and behavioral.

***Effects on the individual:*** research shows that individuals who are continually bullied lose self-confidence as self-esteem is eroded and they are at an increased risk of suffering stress. There may be serious effects on health and the person's career may be adversely affected. Psychological effects may include severe stress symptoms or anxiety, panic attacks, sleep disturbances, concentration difficulties, mistakes and accidents in work, smoking, excessive drinking and overeating. Physiological effects may include raised blood pressure and heart disease, reduced resistance to infection, stomach and bowel problems, fear or anxiety or depression leading to severe loss of confidence and self-esteem and even suicide. Behavioural changes may include becoming aggressive, irritable, vengeful, withdrawn, having an obsessive dwelling on the aggressor, becoming hypersensitive to criticism and becoming emotionally drained.

***Effects on the Organisation:*** individuals who are bullied will find it difficult if not impossible to give their best in the workplace. Among the well-documented effects are reduced efficiency, increased sickness/absenteeism, low morale, a tense atmosphere, cliques or factions, depression and an increase in cases taken to court.

## **Why might an individual be reluctant to take action?**

Because the particular workplace culture passively supports bullying i.e. staff in general are unaware of the seriousness of bullying.

Because of fear that the complaint may not be taken seriously.

Because s/he may be seen as unable for the job or/and a weak person.

If the alleged bully is a person in authority, there may be the fear management will support the alleged perpetrator(s).

Because making a complaint could result in further intimidation and increased bullying.

Because there are no witnesses to the bullying and it would be one person's word against another.

Because s/he might be seen to be lacking in credibility or/and personal status.

Where there are witnesses, these might be unwilling to come forward because they are afraid of being branded troublemakers.

## **What can I do to ensure that workplace bullying does not occur in this school?**

By being familiar with the school policy.

By participating in in-service with respect to dignity at work.

By engaging in consultation with respect to the development and review of the dignity in the workplace policy.

By being aware and educated about workplace bullying.

**What can I do to stop people bullying me?**

Tell them it has to stop! This may be more difficult for some individuals than for others. It is inappropriate for work colleagues to act out their behaviour in an unacceptable manner. If you find it impossible or difficult to make an approach, tell somebody – the Principal, a Contact Person, the ASTI Steward, a Deputy Principal, or other...GET HELP AND SUPPORT.

**What may be the consequences of not dealing with workplace bullying?**

There are consequences for the individuals who perceive themselves to be targets of bullying behaviour, for the alleged perpetrators(s), for organisational culture/ethos and for the Board of Management.

**Are there performance criteria by which the success of the Policy might be judged?**

- The existence of a policy on Dignity in the Workplace and the prevention of workplace bullying forms part of health, safety and welfare at work
- Awareness/availability of Policy
- Existence of Charter in a visible place: Dignity in the Workplace
- Dignity in the Workplace as well as inappropriate/bullying behaviour are defined in the Board Policy
- Employee’s right to complain is respected
- Informal resolution of complaints is encouraged.

**The Procedure for dealing with bullying in the workplace is set out in the school’s anti bullying policy**

**The policy is subject to periodic review.**

**Signed:** .....

**(for and on behalf of the Board of Management)**

**Date:**.....