

Anti Bullying Policy

Crèche Cois Laoi has a duty of care towards all children who attend the crèche. Crèche Cois Laoi supports children's development in ways which foster security, confidence and independence. The prevention of bullying is a principle of this.

Aim

- To protect children from all forms of bullying
- To encourage children towards having and maintaining a positive self image
- To help children view themselves as part of Crèche Cois Laoi and to sustaining positive relationships with their peers
- To provide opportunities for children to discuss bullying with staff members and to equip staff with strategies to recognise and prevent bullying effectively
- To offer advice and support to all children and parents/carers involved in bullying incidents.

Definition

Bullying can be described as being a persistent attempt to hurt or humiliate someone over a period of time.

Types of Bullying

- Physical (hitting, kicking, pushing, spitting, threatening looks, theft and or interference with personal property)
- Verbal (name-calling, teasing, threats, racist remarks)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, exclusion from social groups)

Crèche, staff, parents and children work together to create a happy, safe caring environment. Bullying whether verbal, physical or indirect is not tolerated. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent occurrences of bullying and to deal with any incidents quickly and effectively.

Prevention of Bullying

Staff members are trained to:-

- Know the children in their group and familiarise themselves with each child's personality
- Take into account age and stage of development of the child.
- Constantly monitor children's behaviour during play and meal times
- Be vigilant and not tolerate any inappropriate behaviour either inside or outside the room
- Give support if a child is being bullied by helping a child to develop coping strategies e.g. by saying 'Stop it' and 'I don't like that'
- Encourage a child to make friends with children who give them support
- Encourage children to speak out, and to tell a parent or staff member what has happened.

- Discourage any child who displays bullying tendencies and explain to them the inappropriateness of their actions and encourage them to act more politely and constructively, pointing out the advantages of doing so. Watch for early signs of distress in children
- Listen, and act appropriately when a child or parent informs them of inappropriate behaviour

Possible signs and symptoms of bullying behaviour

- Child may display unwillingness to go to crèche
- Loss of concentration, enthusiasm and interest in going to crèche
- Unexplained changes in mood or behaviour
- Visible signs of anxiety or distress – stammering, withdrawing, nightmares, difficulty in sleeping, crying, not eating, vomiting, bedwetting

Procedures for dealing with bullying behaviour

Incidences of bullying behaviour will be reviewed in the context of the expected general behaviour for the child's age. If the bullying incident is of low severity an informal approach may be more appropriate. The group leader may discuss with other staff members and the crèche manager how best to appropriately deal with the bullying behaviour. The focus will be to try to discourage and explain to the offending child and to protect and reassure the child being targeted.

However with repeated and more serious offences, a more formal approach may be necessary. Specific incidences of bullying may be recorded in the children's records.

The group leader may discuss the situation with the parents of the child acting inappropriately and will focus on how the staff and parents can improve the behaviour together. The situation will be monitored and regular feedback will be given. Staff members are also trained to ensure that the child who has bullied someone is not isolated or stigmatised by other children, parents or staff members (e.g. "Johnny is bold again today"). If after a reasonable amount of time the situation has not improved, the child may be required to follow procedures outlined in the Behavioural Management Policy.

The parents of the child being victimised will also be informed about the situation and have explained to them how their child is being protected and supported. The parents will be assured that the situation will be carefully monitored.

Procedure if a parent or child expresses concern regarding alleged bullying behaviour

- The Crèche manager will investigate all concerns. The Crèche manager will speak to the child's team leader and key worker about the concerns raised and decide what necessary measures are to be taken to prevent re-occurrences
- Both sets of parents will be informed of the actions necessary to improve the situation
- A time frame will be set for further meetings with parents to discuss, review and modify, where appropriate, the actions being taken.
- The children will be continually monitored

Educating children about bullying

The after school programme caters for children from four years of age to twelve years of age. As part of the curriculum, age-appropriate discussions will take place regarding what the children's understanding of bullying is, why it is wrong, what can be done to discourage it and how to react if they are being bullied and how to help others who are being bullied.