

# Clonard Monastery Youth Centre

## Anti-Bullying Policy Statement

In Clonard Monastery Youth Centre, we recognise that bullying can be profoundly damaging to the victim in both the short and longer term, and can limit an individual's capacity to develop personally and socially.

Bullying is a conscious behaviour designed to hurt, frighten or intimidate another. It is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse, and can last for a short or a long period of time.

Bullying is unacceptable behaviour both within our centre and on any out-of-centre activity organised through us.

Bullying can take many forms. These include:

- Physical acts - hitting, kicking, tripping, spitting, theft, damage to belongings etc.
- Threats of physical harm - e.g. "I'll get you outside..."
- Verbal - name-calling (including sectarian, racist or homophobic abuse), teasing, ridicule
- Extortion - for money, sweets, property etc.
- Isolating - ganging up against another child
- Indirect forms - spreading rumours or excluding someone from social groups.

## **ANTI-BULLYING CODE**

**Clonard Monastery Youth Centre provides a place where:**

- **Every member can feel secure**
- **Name calling is not tolerated**
- **No one suffers abuse of any nature**
- **No is victimised**
- **Each member is supported and listened to**
- **It is each member's responsibility to ensure that all are treated equally**
- **Solutions to problems are the concern of all.**

## **Anti-Bullying Procedures:**

As a youth centre aiming for the personal, social and spiritual development of young people, we will strive to ensure the following steps are in place to enable us to do this to the best of our ability:

- Staff are to be vigilant at all times to the possibility of bullying occurring, and will take immediate steps to stop it happening;
- We will protect and reassure the victim and discipline the bully;
- All staff will be trained in identifying and dealing with incidents of bullying;
- The youth centre will aim to help both the victim and the bully through encouraging discussion of the problem in order to plan a way forward. However, the needs of the victim will be paramount at all times;
- Parents of both the victim and the bully will be informed when bullying behaviour has been identified;
- The parents of the bully will be invited to attend a meeting to discuss the problem and the member involved placed on a contract regarding future behaviour;
- Assurance will be sought with the person guilty of bullying, but if there is no improvement in behaviour than the centre will suspend the member;
- The action taken against the young person who bullies will depend upon the seriousness of the case, but will include the loss of any privileges or position of responsibility they hold in the youth centre;
- Every effort will be made to ensure that the needs of the victim of bullying are met and that the young person is integrated into the life of the youth centre;
- The worker-in-charge will use the incident book to record details of incidents of bullying, and will communicate such information to parents or guardians and the management committee as soon as practicable after such an entry is made; and
- Staff members will be encouraged to maintain open communication with young people in order to promote an atmosphere of trust, openness and sensitivity to the needs and experiences of individual members.