Ériu Community College

Anti-Bullying Policy 2020-2021

Review Dates:

Staff	Nov. 2020	Reviewed
BOM	Nov. 2020	Reviewed
Student Council	Nov. 2020	Reviewed
Parents	Nov. 2020	Reviewed

Due for next review September 2022

Introduction:
Ériu Community College opened in September 2020.

Ériu Community College Mission Statement:
Ériu Community College is a state, co-educational, multi-denominational post-primary school underpinned by the core values of -excellence in education, care, respect, equality and community. This college does not discriminate.

The Foundation Pillars of Ériu Community College:
The following 4 statements outline the college's Core Professional Purpose

- Celebrating the diverse and unique identities of all students, placing them at the centre of the learning and teaching, committing to make a positive difference to the lives of all students
- Empowering students with the knowledge, skills and capability to be caring and valued members of society and leaders of learning
- Excellence in teaching and learning, providing an inclusive, high quality and holistic educational experience in a IT-driven community
- Working together in a democratic way with students, parents, staff and members of the local community area to build a learning school environment by encouraging partnership and participation at all levels.

In accordance with the requirements of the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 and the Behaviour Guidelines issued by the NEWB, the Board of Management of Ériu Community College has adopted the following Anti-bullying Policy within the framework of The College's overall Positive Behaviour Code. This policy fully complies with the requirements of the Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools which were published in September 2013 and should be read in conjunction with The College's Positive Behaviour Code, Substance Use policy, Mobile Phone policy, Suspension and Expulsion policies, Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

The Policy:

This policy applies to the bullying of students by students and must be observed:

- While in school,
- While travelling to and from school and
- While attending any school activity including trips, sporting and cultural events.

Furthermore, The College reserves the right to apply its Policy in respect of bullying that occurs at a location, activity, function or programme that is not school related if in the opinion of the Principal and/or the Board of Management the alleged bullying has created a hostile environment at The College for the victim, has infringed on the rights of the victim at The College and/or has materially or substantially disrupted the education process or the orderly operation of The College.

Definition of Bullying:

In accordance with the *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, bullying is defined as follows:

- Bullying is unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.
- Isolated or once-off incidents of intentional negative behaviour, do not fall within the definition of bullying.
- In the context of this policy, placing a once-off offensive or hurtful public message, image or statement on a social network site or other public forum where that message, image or statement can be viewed and/or repeated by other people will be regarded as bullying.

This is not to be confused with the good-natured banter that goes on as part of the normal social interchange between students or the normal professional classroom management by teachers.

Negative behaviour that does not meet this definition of bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the College's Positive Behaviour Code.

The following types of behaviour are included in the definition of bullying:

- ***Physical aggression:*** This behaviour includes pushing, shoving, punching, poking and tripping people.
- ***Humiliation:*** including name calling, reference to academic ability etc.
- ***Intimidation:*** including aggressive use of body language.
- *Verbal abuse, anonymous or otherwise.*
- *Physical abuse or threatened abuse.*
- *Aggressive or obscene language.*
- ***Offensive joke:*** whether spoken or by email, text messaging etc.
- ***Victimisation:*** including very personal remarks.
- *Exclusion and isolation.*
- *Intrusion through interfering with personal possessions or locker*
- *Repeated unreasonable assignment to duties that are obviously unfavourable.*
- *Repeated unreasonable deadlines or tasks.*
- *Threats, including demands for money.*
- *An attack by rumour, gossip, innuendo or ridicule on any individuals' reputation*
- **Intimidation**: This behaviour may be based on the use of aggressive body language with the voice being used as a weapon. A facial expression can be used to convey aggression or dislike.
- **Isolation/exclusion and other relational bullying**: This occurs where a certain person is deliberately isolated, excluded or ignored by some or all of the class group. This practice is usually initiated by the person engaged in bullying behaviour and can be difficult to detect. It may be accompanied by writing insulting remarks about the pupil in

public places, by passing around notes about or drawings of the pupil or by whispering insults about them loud enough to be heard. Relational bullying occurs when a person's attempts to socialise and form relationships with peers are repeatedly rejected or undermined. One of the most common forms includes control: "Do this or I won't be your friend anymore" (implied or stated); a group ganging up against one person (girl or boy); non-verbal gesturing; malicious gossip; spreading rumours about a person or giving them the "silent treatment".

- ***Name-calling***: Persistent name-calling directed at the same individual(s) which hurts, insults or humiliates is regarded as bullying behaviour.
  Damage to property: This may result in damage to clothing, mobile phones, school books or interference with a pupil's locker. Items of personal property may be defaced, broken, stolen or hidden.

Commitment to the key principles of best practice:

The Board of Management of Ériu Community College recognises the very serious nature of bullying and the negative impact that it can have on the lives of students and is therefore fully committed to the following key principles of best practice in preventing and tackling bullying behaviour:

- A positive school culture and climate which is welcoming of difference and diversity and is based on inclusivity
  - Encourages students to disclose incidents of bullying behaviour in a non-threatening environment
  - Promotes respectful relationships across the College community
- Effective leadership
- A school-wide approach
- A shared understanding of what bullying is and its impact

Implementation of education and prevention strategies (including awareness raising measures) that

- o Build empathy, respect and resilience in students, and
- o Explicitly address the issues of cyber-bullying and identity-based bullying including in particular, homophobic and transphobic bullying

- Effective supervision and monitoring of students
- Supports for staff
- Consistent recording, investigation and follow up of bullying behaviour (including use of established intervention strategies) and
- On-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying policy/Equality & Learning Policy.

Role of Parents.

Parents know their children best and can quickly recognise when all is not well. Parents are expected to support the College by encouraging their children to tell teachers of any problems they may be experiencing or see others experiencing. Parents should contact the College themselves if necessary.

Parents have an obligation to ensure that their children do not engage in any form of behaviour which could be regarded as bullying. Parents must also ensure that their children fully understand the consequences for them should they choose to engage in this sort of behaviour.

Parents are advised not to say or do anything to those alleged to be involved in bullying that would have the effect of inflaming the situation. This type of intervention generally makes matters worse and far more difficult to resolve. This Bullying Policy forms part of our Behaviour/Learning Policy/Code and must be accepted by parents and students as a condition of entry to the College.

Statement on Bullying

- *Every person in the College is entitled to respect and to be free of any type of bullying.*
- *The school will work proactively; as far as it can to ensure that bullying does not take place.*
- *Reporting incidents of bullying is responsible behaviour*
- *A record will be kept of all reported incidents of bullying.*
- *The matter will be dealt with seriously.*
- *The school has a programme of support for both the bully and the bullied.*
- *Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that it does not continue.*

Identity based bullying such as homophobic bullying, racist bullying, bullying based on a person's membership of the Traveller community and bullying of those with disabilities or special educational needs.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying or bullying carried out through the use of modern communication technology is particularly significant and requires careful vigilance on the part of school management & parents.

Some examples of ways people may bully online are:

- Sending someone mean or threatening messages by text, email and social media etc.
- Excluding someone from an instant messenger/ friends/ buddy list or blocking them for no reason.
- Tricking someone into revealing personal or embarrassing information and sending it to others.

Social Networking Sites

- Breaking into someone's email or social media account to send cruel or untrue messages while posing as that person.
- Creating online accounts to make fun of another person such as a classmate or teacher.
- Using online sites to rate peers as prettiest, ugliest, etc.

Online privacy and Positive Behaviour Code

Circulating, publishing or distributing (including on the internet) material associated with school activities including but not limited to material in relation to staff and students where such circulation undermines, humiliates or causes damage to another person is considered a serious breach of the College discipline and will result in disciplinary action. As part of such disciplinary action the Board of Management reserves the right to suspend or expel a student or students where it considers the actions to warrant such sanctions

Education and Prevention Strategies:

The education and prevention strategies used in the Ériu Community College are:

- We attempt to create an atmosphere of respect between all members of the College community and provide opportunities for students to develop self-confidence and become empathetic and resilient individuals. Cross curricular opportunities are made and allow for a fostering of right relationships
- There are a number of curriculum components and programmes which are particularly relevant to the prevention of bullying and the promotion of respect for diversity and inclusiveness. The SPHE programme makes specific provision for exploring bullying as well as the inter-related areas of belonging, integrating, communication, conflict, friendship, personal safety and relationships. The Relationship and Sexuality Education programme provides opportunities to explore and discuss areas such as human sexuality and relationships, which have particular relevance to identity-based bullying.
- There is space within the teaching of all subjects to foster an attitude of respect for all: to promote the value of diversity; to address prejudice and stereotyping and to highlight the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. In English, we use literature to stimulate discussion. In Geography and History we use references to colonisation, exploitation and dictatorships to illustrate the negative aspect of power. We extend the work into many other areas such as Art, Religious Education and Physical Education. We promote co-operation and group enterprise through team sports, school clubs and societies as well as through practical subjects. Sporting activities in particular can provide excellent opportunities for channelling and learning how to control aggression.
- We work to raise the awareness of bullying so that all members of the College community understand what bullying is and how the College deals with bullying behaviour. The subject is discussed with each year group at the beginning of the year, CCTV is in operation and many aspects of bullying are interwoven into the College's Learning Code. We ensure that there is adequate supervision before, during and after school.

- Encourage students to make friends and promote positive wellbeing and a supportive atmosphere in the College
- Encourage a 'telling' atmosphere, where students are behaving responsibly by telling.
- Students, parents/guardians are informed of the Anti-Bullying & Equality & Learning policy on admission. This policy is made available to all members of the college community. It is circulated to new members of staff.

  Reference is made to our policy at Assemblies and at Registration.

Education and prevention strategies to counter Cyberbullying

- Promote the positive use of technology; discuss etiquette, personal safety issues and digital literacy.
- We work to prevent Cyberbullying by educating students on appropriate online behaviour, how to stay safe while online and also on developing a culture of reporting any concerns about cyber bullying.
- Cyberbullying is treated as a whole school community issue and another form of bullying within the College's anti-bullying policies and procedures. We teach students that bullying is wrong. We help them understand that cyberbullying is hurtful and wrong and to always treat others on and offline with the respect we would like from others.
- Inform and educate students and parents of the College's Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) and the sanctions for the misuse of ICTs to cause hurt and distress to other students.
- Provide and publicise different ways of reporting cyberbullying in the College
- Teach students that the Internet is not a private place and they should guard their private information online.
- Teach students that they have rights and responsibilities online.

The following additional strategies may be used from time to time:

- Promote anti-bullying (including cyberbullying) awareness days and events.
- Parents are supported in their role by meetings organised by the availability of the Tutors, Clan Leaders, Guidance Councillors & The SLT to meet with them at any time.
- Workshops on Cyberbullying conducted along with regular updates on the correct usage of the internet

Relevant Staff

While a pupil or a parent may bring a concern of bullying to any staff member in the College the member of teaching staff who has responsibility for investigating and dealing with bullying in the first instance is a member of the Anti-Bullying Committee and the Year Head. The Deputy Principal and the Principal may be involved as the investigation progresses.

Procedures for investigating and dealing with Bullying:

The procedures for investigation, follow-up and recording of bullying behaviour and the established intervention strategies used by the College for dealing with cases of bullying behaviour are as follows:

- A pupil or parent may bring a concern of bullying to any staff member in the College who will refer it to the relevant teacher
- All staff including non-teaching staff such as secretaries, special needs assistants (SNAs), caretakers, cleaners are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying behaviour witnessed by them, or mentioned to them, to the relevant teacher.
- The primary aim for the relevant teacher in investigating and dealing with bullying is to resolve any issues and to restore, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved (rather than to apportion blame). In investigating and dealing with bullying, the teacher will exercise his/her professional judgement based on this policy to determine whether bullying has occurred and how best the situation might be resolved.
- Teachers take a calm, unemotional problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of alleged bullying behaviour reported by students, staff or parents
- All reports, including anonymous reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher. Interviews will be held with the relevant persons. Those involved will be asked to write an account of the incident.
- The Principal/Deputy Principal should be informed that an investigation is initiated.
- Parents and students are required to co-operate with any investigation and assist the College in resolving any issues and restoring, as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved as quickly as possible through Restorative Practice.
- Incidents will be investigated outside the classroom situation to ensure the privacy of all involved. All interviews are conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all students concerned. Students who are not directly involved also provide very useful information in this way. When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the relevant teacher seeks answers to questions of what, where, when, who and why. This is done in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with a conflict in a non-aggressive manner.
- In cases where it has been determined by the relevant teacher that bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the parties involved are contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to explain the actions being taken. The College gives parents an opportunity of discussing ways in which they can reinforce or support the actions being taken by the College and the supports for their students. Where the relevant teacher has determined that a pupil has been engaged in bullying behaviour, it is made clear to him/her how he/she is in breach of the College's Anti-Bullying Policy and efforts are made to enable him/her to see the situation from the perspective of the pupil being bullied. If a student is involved in bullying s/he will be warned to stop and parents will be informed as above. Professional help may be recommended for the student where it is

considered necessary by the College. The student's behaviour will be carefully monitored and recorded.

It is made clear to all involved (each set of students and parents) that in any situation where disciplinary sanctions are required, this is a private matter between the pupil being disciplined, his/her parents and the College.

- Follow-up meetings with the relevant parties involved may be arranged separately with a view to possibly bringing them together through Restorative Practice at a later date if the student who has been bullied is ready and agreeable. This can have a therapeutic effect and is engaged with through the students
- In cases where the relevant teacher considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 10 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour has occurred, it must be recorded by the relevant teacher on the form for reporting bullying behaviour and referred to the Senior Management. (Appendix 1).
- In determining whether a bullying case has been adequately and appropriately addressed the relevant teacher must, as part of his/her professional judgement, take the following factors into account: whether the bullying behaviour has ceased; whether any issues between the parties have been resolved as far as is practicable; whether the relationships between the parties have been restored as far as is practicable; and has any feedback been received from the parties involved, their parents or the College Principal or Deputy Principal.
- Where a parent is not satisfied that the College has dealt with a bullying case in accordance with these procedures, the parents may seek a meeting with the Principal to discuss the matter in full and make a complaint if necessary through the College complaints procedure.
- In the event that a parent has exhausted the College's complaints procedures and is still not satisfied, the Principal will advise the parents of their right to make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children.

Procedures for recording bullying behaviour:

All records must be maintained in accordance with relevant data protection legislation. the College's procedures for noting and reporting bullying behaviour adhere to the following:

- While all reports, including anonymous reports of bullying must be investigated and dealt with by the relevant teacher, the relevant teacher will use his/her professional judgement in relation to the records to be kept of these reports, the actions taken and any discussions with those involved regarding same.
- If it is established by the relevant teacher that bullying has occurred, the relevant teacher must keep appropriate written records which will assist his/her efforts to resolve the issues and restore as far as is practicable, the relationships of the parties involved.
- The relevant teacher must use the 'form for recording bullying behaviour' to record the bullying behaviour in the following circumstances: in cases where he/she considers that the bullying behaviour has not been adequately and appropriately addressed within 10 school days after he/she has determined that bullying behaviour occurred; and where the College has decided that in certain circumstances bullying behaviour must be recorded and reported immediately to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

Supports for students affected by Bullying:

The College's programme of support for working with students affected by bullying is as follows:

- A support structure for students who have experienced bullying is in place in the Ériu Community College. Such students may need counselling and/or opportunities to participate in activities designed to raise their self-esteem, to develop their friendship and social skills and thereby build resilience whenever this is needed. We use:
    - Restorative practice,
    - Mediation or
    - Reconciliation where appropriate.

We maintain open communications between the College, parents and outside agencies where necessary. We work together to resolve the situation and protect the victim.

- A programme of support for those students involved in bullying behaviour is also part of the College's intervention process. Students involved in bullying behaviour need assistance on an ongoing basis. For those with low self-esteem, opportunities are developed to increase feelings of self-worth. Therefore, we recognise that it is important that the learning strategies applied within the College allow for the enhancement of the pupil's self-worth. Students who engage in bullying behaviour may need counselling to help them learn other ways of meeting their needs without violating the rights of others.
- Students who observe incidents of bullying are encouraged to discuss them with teachers

Referral of serious cases to the HSE:

In relation to bullying in schools, *Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2011(Children First)* and the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* provide that in situations where "the incident is serious and where the behaviour is regarded as potentially abusive, the College must consult the HSE Children and Family Social Services with a view to drawing up an appropriate response, such as a management plan".
Serious instances of bullying behaviour (as determined in accordance with this policy) in accordance with the *Children First and the Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, are referred to the HSE Children and Family Services and/or Gardaí as appropriate.

The *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* also provide that where school personnel have concerns about a child but are not sure whether to report the matter to the HSE, the Designated Liaison Person must seek advice from the HSE Children and Family Social Services. (TUSLA)

	Anti- Bullying Procedures for Teachers
	When a student indicates directly or indirectly to you that he or she is being bullied, harassed, teased, hit or in any way mistreated by another, please follow procedures as below:

1	Refer matter to the member of the Anti-bullying Committee (ABC) responsible for that year group (unless the nature of the report dictates that you inform the year head/deputy principal/principal immediately. **The member of the ABC will fill out AN ANTI-BULLYING RECORD FORM and give to the ABC Coordinator/ Year head/ Deputy Principal**
2	The ABC Coordinator will inform the relevant tutors and year head. Tutor observes the students involved and relays and concerns to year head for the duration of the investigation of the event(s) and for a time after its conclusion.
3	The Anti-bullying Coordinator may need to follow up Steps 4-10 unless the nature of the events require that a member of the senior leadership team deals directly with the matter.
4	Incident(s) are investigated discretely
5	Parents of student who has been targeted are informed.
6	Parents of student who has engaged in the behaviour are informed.
7	Student who had been targeted fills out an Incident Form.
8	Student engaged in the behaviour fills out an Incident Form.
9	Students who then engage in a Restorative practice session do so with the Anti-bullying Coordinator.
10	All records are retained/filed by the Anti-bullying Coordinator with a copy going to the Principal.
	ALL BULLYING COMPLAINTS MUST BE DEALT ADDRESSED WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE FIRST REPORT.

Anti-Bullying Record Form *Appendix 1*

Source of Bullying Report *(Fill in name of person/people making report)*

Source	Name(s)	Clan group/Class
Student about whom report is being made		

Student(s) accused of the behaviour		
Reported by		
Other parties (please specify)		

Location of incidents *(please tick appropriate box(es))*

Yard	Corridors	Toilets	In class	Bus	On way to/from school	Other

Type(s) of Bullying Behaviour *(tick relevant box(es))*

Physical Aggression	Cyberbullying	Damage to Property	Intimidation	Isolation/ Exclusion	Malicious Gossip	Name Calling	Other *Specify*

Identity-based bullying *(Indicate the relevant category if applicable)*

Homophobic	Disability/ SEN related	Racist	Membership of Traveller community	Religion Related	Other *(Specify)*

Brief Description of Bullying Behaviour and its Impact:

Details of Actions Taken

	Action	*Please tick*	Date	Result
1.	Referred to member of ABC			
2.	Referred to ABC Coordinator			
3.	Referred to Deputy Principal, Principal or Clan Leader.			
4.	Parents of student who has been targeted by the behaviour have been informed.			
5.	Parents of student who has been accused of the behaviour have been informed			
6.	Student who had been bullied has filled out an Incident Form			
7.	Student engaged in bullying has filled out an Incident Form			
8.	Sanction if appropriate has been given (Specify)			
9.	Students may engage in Restorative practice session with Anti-bullying Coordinator if they choose			

Signed _____(Relevant Member of ABC)

Date _____

Date submitted to Anti-Bullying Coordinator _____

Date submitted to Clan Leader _____

Date submitted to Deputy Principal _____

Date submitted to Principal _____

Bullying Incident Form *Appendix 2*

Name of Student; _____ Date; _____

Teacher; _____.

Details of the incident being reported in your own words.

Anti-Bullying Survey

Name: _____ Class: _____

1. Can you describe the atmosphere in your class when teachers are there/not there?

_____

_____

2. Who are you friends with?

_____

_____

3. Are you being bullied in any way? (if the answer is yes, gather details and reassure the pupil that the problem will be addressed)

_____

_____

4. Are you aware of students name-calling/laughing being directed at a particular student(s)? What type of name-calling? (Racial, homophobic etc…)

_____

_____

5. Are you aware if anyone in the class has been left out or ignored?

_____

_____

6. Are you aware if anyone in the class has been spreading rumours about others?

_____

_____

7. Are you aware of anyone being threatening or being physical with others?

_____

_____

8. Are you aware if anyone in the class has been using social media, in a way that makes anyone feel bad about themselves?

_____

_____

9. Is there a group of students that the rest of the class are fearful of or are intimidated by? If so, who is in that group and how do they intimidate?

_____

_____

10. Are pupils from other classes giving anyone in this class a hard time? Examples?

_____

_____

11. What can you do to help students who are being bullied?

_____

12. Is there an adult you could report to? If so, who is it?

_____

13. Have you been accused of bullying anyone? How do you feel about this?

_____

_____

Who is displaying bullying behaviour?	**What is the Behaviour?**	**Who is it directed at?**

The Board of Management confirms that:

•Appropriate supervision and monitoring policies and practices are in place to both prevent and deal with bullying behaviour and to facilitate early intervention where possible.

This policy has been made available to school personnel, published on the College website and provided to the Parents' Association. A copy of this policy will be made available to the Department and the DDLETB if requested.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every school year. Written notification that the review has been completed will be made available to College personnel, published on the College website and provided to the Parents' Association. A record of the review and its outcome will be made available, if requested, to the patron and the Department.

Signed: John Walsh Date: 11/12/20

(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Signed: Michael J. Flynn Date: 26th Nov. 2020

(Principal)

Date for next review: