Cyberbullying Policy

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CORNWALL EDUCATION LEARNING TRUST

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Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may be defined as 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying'.

It can take a number of different forms:

- threats and intimidation
- harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages)
- sexting (e.g sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones)
- vilification/defamation
- exclusion/peer rejection
- impersonation
- unauthorised publication of private information/images
- 'Trolling' (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online). It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

However it differs from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:

- by facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space
- place at any time and intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal
- the potential for anonymity on the part of the bully. This can be extremely distressing for the victim
- the potential for the bully to play very rapidly to a larger audience so the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying
- through the knowledge that the data is in the world-wide domain, disproportionately amplifying the negative effect on the victim, even though the bully may feel his / her actual actions had been no worse than conventional forms of bullying
- the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages as more people get drawn in as accessories. By passing on a humiliating picture or message a bystander becomes an accessory to the bullying
- the profile of the bully and target can be different to other forms of bullying as cyberbullying can take place between peers and across generations. Teachers can be victims and age and size are not important
- many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence so it is important the victim saves the information.

Cyberbullying and the Law

Bullying is never acceptable and the school fully recognizes its duty to protect all of its members and to provide a safe, healthy environment for everyone.

Education Law:

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. The Act also provides a defence for staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.

Civil and Criminal Law

There is not a specific law which makes cyberbullying illegal but it can be considered a criminal offence under several different acts including Protection from Harassment Act (1997), Malicious Communications Act (1988), Communications Act (2003) Obscene Publications Act (1959) and Computer Misuse Act (1990).

Preventing Cyberbullying

As with all forms of bullying the best way to deal with cyberbullying is to prevent it happening in the first place. There is no single solution to the problem of cyberbullying but the school will do the following as a minimum to impose a comprehensive and effective prevention strategy.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Assistant Head who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead will take overall responsibility for the co-ordination and implementation of cyberbullying prevention and response strategies. It has been agreed that in order to ensure that the school has a reasonable duty over online incidents, it needs to be defined what we will and will not deal with.

As a school we will:

- act upon any online incidents that have a direct impact upon the safety and orderly running of the school. This might not mean that we deal with this behaviour if we deem it serious enough to escalate to the authorities. We will always look to support and educate students where we can. As a school we will: • ensure that all incidents of cyberbullying (defined in what we are reasonably expected to deal with, See previous bullet point) are dealt with immediately and will be managed and/or escalated in line with the procedures set out in the school's Anti-bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- ensure that all policies relating to safeguarding, including cyberbullying are reviewed and updated regularly
- ensure that all staff know that they need to report any issues concerning cyberbullying to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- ensure that all staff are aware of the Prevent Duties
- provide training (using Channel online awareness training module) so that staff feel confident to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to make a referral when a child is at risk. The Deputy Head is also the Designated Prevent Lead

- ensure that parents/carers are informed and attention is drawn annually to the cyberbullying policy so that they are fully aware of the school's responsibility relating to safeguarding pupils and their welfare. The Cyberbullying Policy is available at all times on the school website
- ensure that at regular intervals, cyberbullying is revisited as part of the tutor/assembly Programme and that pupils know how to report a concern. (to someone on their safety circle, Childline or the thinkuknow website: www.thinkuknow.co.uk)
- ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities by providing clear guidance for staff on the use of technology within school and beyond. All staff should sign to say they have read and understood the Staff Code of Conduct.

The Head of ICT & Computing

The Head of ICT and Computing will ensure:

- that all pupils are given clear guidance on the use of technology safely and positively both in school and beyond including how to manage their personal data and how to report abuse and bullying online
- provide annual training for parents/carers on online safety and the positive use of
- technology
- ensure the school's Acceptable Use Policy, Guidelines for Staff when Children are using Digital Devices, Children's Use of Digital Devices and are reviewed annually
- provide annual training for staff on the above policies and procedures
- provide annual training for staff on online safety
- plan and deliver a curriculum on online safety in computing lessons which builds resilience in pupils to protect themselves and others online
- plan a curriculum and support PSE staff in delivering a curriculum on online safety which builds resilience in pupils to protect themselves and others online.

The IT Manager

The IT Manager will:

- ensure adequate safeguards are in place to filter and monitor inappropriate content and alert the Designated Safeguarding Leads or CP Team to safeguarding issues. The school uses a filtering system to filter all internet access
- ensure that visitors to the school are given clear guidance on the use of technology in school. This includes how to report any safeguarding issues to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Visitors will be given highly restricted guest accounts which will not allow any access to personal data and that any misuse of the system will result in access to the system being withdrawn.

The School Governors

The School Governors will:

- appoint a Safeguarding governor who will work with the Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding including the prevention of

cyberbullying are being implemented effectively. The current governor for safeguarding is Steve White.

Guidance for Staff

Guidance on safe practice in the use of electronic communications and storage of images is contained in the Code of Conduct. The school will deal with inappropriate use of technology in line with the Code of Conduct which could result in disciplinary procedures.

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

Mobile Phones

- Ask the pupil to show you the mobile phone
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Tell the pupil to save the message/image
- Inform the Year Team immediately and pass them the information that you have

Computers

- Ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question
- Ask the pupil to save the material
- Print off the offending material straight away
- Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions
- Inform a Year Team Leader and pass them the information that you have
- Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

Use of Technology in School

All members of the school community are expected to take responsibility for using technology positively.

- As well as training, the following is in place:
- All staff are expected to sign to confirm they have read and understood the Acceptable Use Policy
- All staff are expected to sign to confirm they have read and understood the Staff Code of Conduct.

Guidance for Pupils

If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent/guardian, or a member of staff.

- Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your parents/carers or a member of staff at school (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying)
- Do not give out personal details or contact information without the permission of a parent/guardian (personal data)
- Be careful who you allow to become a friend online and think about what information you want them to see
- Block people who are trying to cause you harm. report this to the service provider or host website
- Protect your password. Do not share it with anyone else and change it regularly
- Always log off from the computer when you have finished or if you leave the computer for any reason
- Always put the privacy filters on to the sites you use. If you are not sure how to do this, ask a teacher or your parents.
- Never reply to abusive e-mails
- Never reply to someone you do not know
- Always stay in public areas in chat rooms
- The school will deal with cyberbullying in the same way as other bullying. Do not think that because it is online it is different to other forms of bullying
- The school will deal with inappropriate use of technology in the same way as other types of inappropriate behaviour and sanctions will be given in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Guidance for Parents/Carers

It is vital that parents/carers and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyberbullying. Parents/carers must play their role and take responsibility for monitoring their child's online life.

- Parents/carers can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously the school takes incidents of cyber-bullying
- Parents/carers should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyberbullying
- If parents/carers believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving the offensive text on their computer or on their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything
- Parents/carers should contact the school as soon as possible
- If the incident falls in the holidays the school reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school both in and out of term time. This will generally involve the police

- Parents/carers should attend the school's annual training on online safety delivered by the Head of Computing. (proposed)

E-Safety at Home

Several sites offer helpful advice to parents/carers, particularly with respect to how they can best monitor their child's use of the computer at home. Here are some parents/carers might like to try:

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/

https://www.childnet.com

https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

https://www.nspcc.org.uk

https://www.cyberangels.org

Digizen.org

The following useful publications are on our website DfE Advice for Parents on Cyberbullying Childnet Cyberbullying Leaflet DfE The use of social media for on-line radicalisation