

POLICY:

CYBER-BULLYING

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: E.Dowler **MONITORING:** J.Bailey

DATE: September 2018

REVIEW DATE: September 2019

Adopted by the Governing Board on 12th December 2018.

RATIONALE

Every pupil should feel safe at home or in their own personal space. Every pupil should be able to use technology to support engaging, positive and effective learning and to realise / increase the potential of personalised learning by making learning more flexible, creative and accessible.

Electronic Communication is integral to the lives of our pupils and is a positive force for change in our world that we should support and motivate pupils to be involved in. This policy needs to be reviewed annually because of the rapid growth of this form of communication. We recognise that no matter how good something is, it has the capacity to be misused, and this policy is aimed at tackling this abuse.

PRINCIPLES

- The school will not accept cyber-bullying in any form because of the damage that it can do to pupils for whom we have a duty of care and the likelihood that it involves criminal acts
- The school will support victims and work with the police to detect individuals involved
- The school will respond seriously to correct, punish or remove pupils who bully or harass other pupils or staff in this way, in or out of school.
- The school will use its powers of confiscation where necessary to prevent pupils from misusing equipment / mobile phones.
- To ensure that all members of the school community bring to the attention of staff any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.
- To promote awareness and understanding of cyber-bullying within curriculum delivery and all aspects of PSE.
- To work in partnership with the parents / guardians of both victim and instigators. To use the school planner to provide advice for both pupils and parents on cyber-bullying and equipment misuse.
- To ensure that all pupils are aware and reminded of Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) via ICT Department – the rules that pupils have to agree to follow in order to use ICT in school.

- To engage with internet service providers regarding their care of members including our pupils.
- To be able to conduct searches of internet use records at school, both of staff and pupils.
- To keep good records of any incidents of cyber-bullying.
- In cases of illegal content, contact the police.

WORKING PRACTICE

Definition of Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-Bullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones, tablets and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. It is usually anti-social, disruptive to good order, damages the well being of pupils and has an element of illegality. Bullying is not new (this is addressed in Policy 1), but some features of Cyber-bullying are different from other forms of bullying.

It is different from other forms of bullying in that:-

- It can affect a victim 24 hours a day for 7 days a week and can be an invasion of the home / personal space
- The relationship between bully and victim can be different in that the bully may not be known to the victim.
- It can take place between peers and across generations. Teachers may be victims of this form of bullying.
- The material published on the internet or mobile phone can quickly spread and control of the material.
- Many Cyber-bullying incidents can themselves act as evidence.

There are different forms of Cyber-bullying including:-

- Text messaging that causes stress to the victim
- Phone calling that is abusive, threatening or causes distress.
- Taking of video or photographic images to cause stress and their distribution via mobile phones, instant messaging or social networking sites
- Sending e-mail that is abusive, threatening or causes distress.
- Use of social networking sites or websites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat) where material is shared with other users that causes stress to others.
- Distribution of information that is false.
- Indirect methods such as social exclusion using the internet.
- Hi-jacking of e-mail addresses or other identity theft and misuse of an individual's internet access or social networking profile.

The School's response

- Victims will be encouraged to report cyber-bullying promptly to Form Tutors, Heads of Year, or Senior Management in conjunction with the bullying policy.
- The Head of Year will review and update P.S.E schemes of work to ensure that pupils are made aware of the issues relating to cyber-bullying.
- A request should be made to the victim to bring evidence of the bullying in the form of saved communications.

- The incident will be investigated and witness statements taken from all involved. Where the instrument used to cyber bully is in school and in the possession of the culprit, this will be confiscated and only returned to the parent / carer.
- A completed Incident Form should be placed in the personal files of both the victim and bully.
- Hard copies of any evidence will be taken and then the school will insist that material is removed.
- The school will determine the appropriate consequence and whether it is necessary to involve the police. In most cases we will be guided by the wishes of the victim and their parents. Parents are of course free to involve the police themselves.
- In the case of pupils setting up hate sites about other pupils or cyber-bullying of staff, the most serious sanctions will apply.