

All Saints Catholic Primary School



Anti Cyber Bullying Policy

Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils and staff so they can learn and work in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. In addition we understand the importance of ICT at All Saints in supporting a creative curriculum at our school. If Cyber bullying does occur, all pupils and staff should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that cyber bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

What is Cyber bullying?

- Bullying is a deliberate, conscious, repeated intention to hurt, victimise, threaten or frighten someone.
- Cyber bullying can be defined as *the use of Information and communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else.*
- 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 in several significant ways. From other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space.
- Research into the extent of cyber bullying indicates that it is a feature of many young People's lives. It also affects members of school staff and other adults: there are examples of:
- Staff being ridiculed, threatened and otherwise abused online by pupils. Cyber bullying, like all bullying, will be taken very seriously.

It is never acceptable, and a Range of Education Acts and government guidance outline schools' duties and powers in relation to bullying. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) includes legal powers that relate more directly to cyber bullying: it outlines the power of head teachers to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site and provides a defence in relation to the confiscation of mobile phones and other items.

Although cyber bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment and threatening and menacing communications.

- Schools should contact the police, if they feel that the law has been broken.
- Cyber bullying take different forms: threats and intimidation; harassment or “cyber stalking” (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages); vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images (including what are sometimes misleadingly referred to as ‘happy slapping’ images); and manipulation.
- Some cyber bullying is clearly deliberate and aggressive, but it is important to recognise that some incidents of cyber bullying are known to be unintentional and the result of simply not thinking about the consequences. What may be sent as a joke, may not be received as one, and indeed the distance that technology allows in communication means the sender may not resolve any misunderstanding or to feel empathy. It is important that pupils are made aware of the effects of their actions.
- In cyber bullying, bystanders can easily become perpetrators by passing on or showing to others images designed to humiliate, for example, or by taking part in online polls or discussion groups. They may not recognise themselves as participating in bullying, but their involvement compounds the misery for the person targeted. It is recommended that anti-bullying policies refer to those ‘bystanders’ better termed ‘accessories’ in this context, which actively support cyber bullying and set out sanctions for this behaviour. It is important that pupils are aware that their actions have severe and distressing consequences and that participating in such activity will not be tolerated.

Objectives of this Policy

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, governors, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what cyber bullying is.

- All teaching and non-teaching staff and governors should know what the school policy is on cyber bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on cyber bullying, and what they should do if cyber bullying arises.
- As a school we take cyber bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when cyber bullying is reported.
- Cyber bullying will not be tolerated.

Preventing cyber bullying

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Preventing cyber bullying

- At All Saints Primary we will work together; head teacher, ICT team, promote understanding about cyber bullying.

Activities to promote these may include:

- Ensure that learners, parents and staff are all aware of the procedures and sanctions for dealing with cyber bullying, including bullying that takes place out of school.
- Staff development activities;
- Home-school events such as special assemblies with parents.
- Information sent home to parents.
- Addressing cyber bullying within ICT curriculum (currently Years 4,5 and 6)
- Stay up to date – prevention and responding strategies require continuous review and refinement as new technologies and services

become popular. This policy similarly, will be updated periodically as technologies develop.

It is useful to publicise progress and cyber bullying prevention activities to the whole-school community. Keep cyber bullying a live issue and celebrate our successes.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being cyber bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Has a desire to remain with adults
- Shows changes in their behaviour

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Procedures for children

- Pupils are encouraged to report all incidents of cyber bullying to any member of staff.
- Tell a trained school 'Buddy' about the problem.

Procedures for parents

- Report incident to class teacher

Procedures for staff and strategies for dealing with Cyber bullying

- Give reassurance that the person has done the right thing by telling someone, refer to appropriate support/procedures and inform parents. Record incident in *Cyber bullying log* and make known to head teacher and ICT co-ordinator. Advise on next steps.
- Make sure the person knows not to retaliate or return the message.

- Ask the person to think about what information they have in the public domain.
- Help the person to keep relevant evidence for any investigation (e.g. by not deleting messages they've received, and by taking screen capture shots and noting web addresses online cyber bullying instances).
- Check the person understands simple ways to prevent it from happening again, e.g. by changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chat room.
- Take action to contain the incident when content has been circulated: If you know who the person responsible is, ask them to remove the content; Contact the host (e.g. the social networking site) to make a report to get the content taken down.
- Use disciplinary powers to confiscate phones that are being used to cyber bully. Ask the pupil to tell you who they have sent messages on to.
- In cases of illegal content, contact the police, who can determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.

Why is it important to respond to Cyber bullying?

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of cyber bullying. The person being bullied will usually have examples of texts or emails received, and should be encouraged to keep these to aid in any investigation. There are also additional reporting routes available, through mobile phone companies, internet service providers and social networking sites. Detailed information on retaining evidence, containing incidents, and contacting the relevant organisations is provided in this guidance.

Some forms of cyber bullying involve the distribution of content or links to content, which can exacerbate, extend and prolong the bullying. There are advantages in trying to contain the spread of these, and options here include contacting the service provider, confiscating phones, and contacting the police (in relation to illegal content).

- Advise those experiencing cyber bullying on steps they can take to avoid recurrence e.g. advise those targeted not to retaliate or reply; provide advice on 'blocking' or removing people from 'buddy lists'; and ask them to think carefully about what private information they may have in the public domain.
- Take steps to identify the person responsible for the bullying. Steps can include looking at the school system and computer logs; identifying and interviewing possible witnesses; and, with police involvement, obtaining user information from the service provided.

Working with the bully and sanctions

Once a person bullying is identified, steps should be taken to change their attitude and behaviour as well as ensuring access to any support that is required. Factors to consider when determining the appropriate sanctions include:

- The impact on the victim; was the bullying acting anonymously, was the material widely circulated and humiliating, how difficult was controlling the spread of the material?
- The motivation of the bully: was the incident unintentional or retaliation to bullying behaviour from others?
- Technology-specific sanctions for pupils engaged in cyber bullying behaviour could include limiting internet access for a period of time or removing the right to bring a mobile into school.

Other strategies for dealing with Cyber bullying

- Buddies are trained to be observant and report incidents of bullying to an adult.
- Give our children knowledge, skills and understanding through the ICT curriculum; e-safety taught in Years 5 and 6, PSHE.
- Develop our children's emotional literacy to enable them to communicate worries and concerns effectively.
- Provide a safe environment where children feel confident to speak openly.
- Create an anti-bullying ethos.

- Cyber bullying events held in school, include An annual Anti Bullying awareness week Assemblies Competitions

Monitoring and Review

The school keeps a record of incidents of Cyber bullying. The effectiveness of the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies are regularly monitored and evaluated by the Head teacher and Staff. The Head teacher reports to Governors about the effectiveness of the policy.

Reviewed 2015

Signed Mrs A Holleran

Dated March 2015

Cyber Bullying Policy.

