

CYBERBULLYING POLICY

TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE INTERNET POLICY

Introduction

The School recognises that technology today plays an important and positive role in children's lives, both educationally and socially, and also recognises that there can be inherent dangers in using and misusing this technology.

We are committed to helping all members of the school community, parents, teachers and children understand both the benefits and risks of this technology and equip children with the knowledge and skills to use technology safely and responsibly.

Aims

The objectives of this policy are that pupils, staff and parents are made aware of and understand what cyberbullying is and its consequences, that measures are in place to prevent incidents and that effective measures are in place to deal with cases and monitor their ongoing effectiveness after that.

What is cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying is the use of ICT, most often a mobile phone, social media or Internet to deliberately upset someone else.
- It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying.
- It can go further in that it can invade home/personal space.
- It can take place across age groups and school staff, and other adults can also be targeted.
- It includes threats and intimidation; harassment; defamation; exclusion or peer rejection; impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images; manipulation.

Preventing cyberbullying

- At L'École de Battersea the use of mobile phones is forbidden on the premises by all children, and staff are forbidden to use them while teaching or in the presence of children.
- Any use of the Internet is supervised, children do not have access to email facilities and access to Websites is restricted.
- Staff are made aware of the possibility of cyberbullying and remain vigilant to it.
- All staff are kept up to date with the technologies that children are using.
- The School provides an Internet policy to staff and one to parents that must be signed off before Internet use is allowed.
- A good record will be kept of any cyberbullying incident.
- Ensure that all staff and children understand the importance of password security and the need to log out of accounts.

Making reporting easier

- Ensure staff can recognise non-verbal signs and indications of cyberbullying.
- Promote the message that asking for help is the right thing to do and shows strength and good judgement.
- Inform all members of the school community how cyberbullying can be reported.
- The ICT Coordinator, M Balerdi (Head of Battersea), is the first school contact.
- Remember that, unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the cyberbullying might have evidence of its occurrence.

Responding to cyber bullying

Cases of cyberbullying should be dealt with through the School's existing Anti-bullying Policy. Some features of cyberbullying differ from other forms of bullying and may prompt a particular response. The key differences are:

- Targets and perpetrators: The people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets.
- Location: the 24/7 and anywhere nature of cyberbullying.
- Anonymity: The person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them.
- Motivation: Some pupils may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying.
- Evidence: Unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence.
- It is possible that a member of staff may be a victim and these responses apply to them as well.

Investigation

- Staff and pupils should be advised to preserve evidence and a record of abuse; save phone messages, save and print text messages, print social network pages, save and print email messages.
- If images are involved, determine whether they might be illegal or raise child protection concerns. If so contact Internet Watch Foundation (www.imf.org.uk) the local police or the London Safeguarding Children Board Officer.
- Identify the bully.
- Any allegations against staff should be handled as other allegations following guidance in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*.

Legal duties and powers

- The School has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment.
- The head of the School has the power “to such extent as is reasonable” to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff. (Education and Inspections Act 2006)
- School staff may request a pupil to reveal a message or other phone content, confiscate a phone, and search the contents of the phone as stated in the School’s discipline policy.
- Some cyberbullying activities could be criminal offences under various laws, including the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

Although correct at the time of publication, this document does not form a contract between the recipient and the School. The School reserves the right to make changes at any time that it considers to be necessary for legal, administrative or educational reasons.

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