



Anti-Cyber Bullying Guidelines

At Whitehall Junior School we believe in our motto: 'Happiness at the Heart of Learning'. It is important that our pupils feel happy in school and able to focus on their learning. All staff and pupils have the right to teach and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We believe that every individual in school has a duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person. We listen to the concerns of our pupils and act upon them.

As the use of the internet continues to change in children's lives, it is important to be aware of the risks they face and to educate them so they react appropriately. The '*Net Children Go Mobile: The UK Report*' published in 2014, states that 15% of UK 9-16 year olds have been bothered, uncomfortable or upset by something online in the past year. Online upsetting experiences are much higher among smartphone and tablet users than non-users. Taking online and offline bullying together, 1 in 5 children aged 9-16 said this had happened to them. Over half of children go online in places other than their home, with half online when out and about.

In the UK, smartphones are already more popular than laptops (used daily by 56% and 47% of 9-16 year olds). The most popular online activities are watching video clips, social networking and listening to music. Research published in the report above shows that by far the most common way of being cyber-bullied was on social networking sites (SNSs).

What is Cyber Bullying?

There are many types of cyber bullying. Research from the University of London identifies seven categories of cyber bullying.

Text Messages

This involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort. It also includes 'blue jacking' the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using 'Bluetooth' wireless technology.

Picture/Video Clip

Via mobile phone, cameras are used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people. 'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.

Mobile Phone Calls

This uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, their perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.

Email Bullying

This uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym (alternative name) for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them.

Chat Room Bullying

This involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web based chat room. This can also include messages through gaming console conversations.

Bullying through Instant Messaging (IM)

IM is an internet based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online i.e. MSN, Bebo...

Bullying via websites and SNSs

This includes the use of defamatory blogs (web blogs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also **been a significant increase in social networking sites** for young people, which can provide opportunities for cyber bullying. Pupils at our school are below the legal age to use social networking sites.

At Whitehall Junior, we take cyber bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and therefore will deal with each situation individually. An episode may result in a simple verbal warning or a parental discussion. More serious cases will produce further sanctions.

Technology allows the users to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cyber bullying leaves no physical scars so it is less evident to parents or teachers, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe and damaging.

Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology; an area that can seem a closed world to adults e.g. the numerous acronyms used by young people in chat rooms and in text messages, such as POS –Parents Over Shoulder, TUL – Tell You Later, make it difficult for adults to recognise potential threats.

What can you do as a parent?

- Don't wait for something to happen before you act. Make sure your child understands how to use these technologies safely and knows about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- Make sure they know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyberbullied.
- Encourage your child to talk to you if they have any problems with cyberbullying. If they do have a problem, contact the school, the mobile network or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.
- Parental control software can limit who your child sends emails to and who he or she receives them from. It can also block access to some chat rooms.
- Take responsibility for knowing how to operate your computer and access things like the search history. Your child may know more about computers than you do; for their safety, keep yourself up to date or seek advice to learn more.
- Moderated chat rooms are supervised by trained adults. Your ISP will tell you whether they provide moderated chat services.
- Make it your business to know what your child is doing online and who your child's online friends are.

It is important that parents and carers ensure that their children are engaged in safe and responsible online behaviour. Some suggestions for parents to stay involved are:

- Keep the computer/laptop in a public place in the home. Periodically check what your child is doing. Discuss the kinds of Internet activities your child enjoys.
- Be up front with your child that you will periodically investigate the files on the computer, the browser history files and your child's public online activities.

- Search for your child's name online, look at his or her profiles and postings on community sites, review web pages or blogs.
- Tell your child that you may review his or her private communication activities if you have reason to believe you will find unsafe or irresponsible behaviour.
- Watch out for secretive behaviours as you approach the computer/laptop, such as rapidly switching screens and for attempts to hide online behaviour, such as an empty history file.

What can you do as a pupil?

If you are being bullied, remember bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.

- Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line.
- Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.

There is plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying. For example, www.kidscape.org and www.thinkuknow.co.uk have some useful tips. The school website has other links which you can go and visit via www.whitehalljunior.org (click on the 'parents' button and then select 'e-Safety').

Text/Video Messaging

- You can turn off incoming messages for a couple of days.
- If bullying persists you can change your phone number (ask your mobile service provider).
- Do not reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages – your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.

Email

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails.
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you do not know.
- Ask an adult to contact the sender's ISP by writing abuse@and then the host, e.g. abuse@hotmail.com

Web

- If bullying is on your class Fronter page or blog, tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying was face to face.

Chat Room and Instant Messaging

- Remember the e-Safety hand (5 things). Never give out your:
 - Family name (first name is OK),
 - Family details e.g. address, phone number,
 - Emails, IDs and passwords,
 - Your photo or what you look like,
 - Your school name.
- Do not accept emails or open files from people you do not know.
- Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room.
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.
- Remember that once you upload a photo (e.g. onto Instagram) it is there for all to see – ask yourself this: Would you give that photo to a stranger on the streets? If the answer is no, don't upload the image – you are sharing it with the world!
- Think carefully about what you write – don't leave yourself open to bullying.

ALWAYS TELL AN ADULT

Three Steps to Safety

- Respect other people – online and off.
- Do not spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including phone numbers and passwords.
- If someone insults you, online or by phone, stay calm and ignore them, but tell someone you trust.

'Do unto others as you would like others to do to you.' Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You are responsible for your own behaviour. Make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

Why should we report bullying incidents?

Sometimes pupils do not want to report bullying incidents because they are frightened that this will make the situation worse.

NOT REPORTING A BULLYING INCIDENT ALLOWS THE BULLY TO CONTINUE WITH THEIR BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

This is not good for the bully, who needs help in order to change their anti-social behaviour, or for those who are the victims or those who witness such events.

Pupils can report incidents in school by talking to their teacher or an adult they trust. Once you have reported the Bullying incident in school:

- A member of staff will talk to you the same day and will record what has happened.
- The incident will be logged and the Head and Leadership Team will be informed.
- An investigation will take place. This will usually take the form of your Head or Leadership Team talking separately to the bully/bullies and to any witnesses.
- Further action will be taken. This will vary depending on the severity of the case.
- If appropriate, you and the bully may meet with the Head or a member of the Leadership Team to discuss what has been happening and to agree a way forward.
- The school may organise a meeting involving all parties. The Head or member of the Leadership Team will chair the meeting.
- Some incidents may warrant the intervention of the Community Police Liaison Officer.

The Law is on your side

The Protection from Harassment Act, the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and section 43 of the Telecommunications Act may be used to combat cyberbullying. Adults may be fined or sent to prison for up to six months.

Reference: Livingstone, S., Haddon, L., Vincent, J., Mascheroni, G. and Ólafsson, K. (2014). *Net Children Go Mobile: The UK Report*. London: London School of Economics and Political Science