Hollygirt SCHOOL

Cyberbullying Policy

2019-20

This policy aims to:

- reinforce and safeguard the wellbeing of pupils and others who use the school
- promote understanding of the impact of cyberbullying
- make reporting cyberbullying easier
- promote the positive use of technology
- outline prevention activities
- outline the management of reported incidents

This policy applies to all pupils at Hollygirt School and has been written with regards to the DfE advise from November 2014.

Definitions of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately upset someone else.

What is different about Cyberbullying?
- Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal.
- The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. Electronically forwarded content is hard to control and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for targets to move on.
- Cyberbullies can attempt to remain anonymous. This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyberbullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.
- Cyberbullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers can also be targets. Age or size is not important. Bystanders can also become accessories in the bullying, by for example, passing on a humiliating image or comment.
- Some instances of cyberbullying can be unintentional. For example, saying something negative about another pupil or friend that is forwarded or viewed outside the immediate group.

Cyberbullying and the Law

Education Law
Bullying is never acceptable. The school community has a duty to protect its members and provide a safe, healthy environment. Schools have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off site (The Education and Inspections Act 2006). This Act also provides a defence for school staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.

Civil and Criminal Law
Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law, there are laws which apply to harassing or threatening behaviour including menacing or threatening communications.

Relationship with other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Information and Communication Technology Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- ICT Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Staff with Key Responsibility for Cyberbullying

Whilst all staff to whom an incident is reported are responsible for listening, discussing and reporting the issue, the Deputy Head of Juniors and the Senior Teacher (Pastoral) will collate the evidence and speak to the individuals concerned. The Deputy Head / Head of Juniors will be informed. All incidents will be logged on the pupil's file.

Education

Key safety advice for pupils when using the internet/chat rooms/social networking sites/mobile phones and other relevant technologies, as well as age appropriate information about internet sites containing violent or adult content, grooming and the sharing of personal information/photographs will be issued via assemblies, the Issues/PSCHE programme time and ICT Schemes of Work. Regular communications will be sent to parents to alert them to the negative and potentially harmful use of such technology and encourage their support.

Hollygirt School ensures children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through the curriculum and PSHE. School practices help children to adjust their behaviours in order to reduce risks and build resilience, including to radicalisation, with particular attention to the safe use of electronic equipment and the internet. These practices are be age appropriate and delivered through the curriculum. Pupils understand the risks posed by adults or young people, who use the internet and social media to bully, groom, abuse or radicalise other people. Internet safety is integral to the school's ICT curriculum and embedded in PSHE and sex and relationships education (SRE). Any planning on these issues takes into account the resources listed below:

• The use of social media for online radicalisation
• The UK Safer Internet Centre (www.saferinternet.org.uk)
• CEOP's Thinkuknow website (www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

Staff Support and Training

Regular staff in service training will be held on changing technology and the impact it may have on pupils. Key staff will be offered training in dealing with anti-bullying strategies including cyberbullying.

Management of Cyberbullying in School

School ICT Support
Hollygirt has a filtering and monitoring proxy server, which blocks social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other chat sites, pornographic content and web-based email sites. There is complete control over the internet connection. If there is an issue with a specific site or a specific user, filters can be added as necessary. Therefore, most reported incidents are likely to have taken place off site or on pupils' own devices. Nevertheless all cyberbullying incidents will be properly recorded and investigated by key staff.

- Pupils are advised to keep evidence of emails or texts and to keep screen capture shots and note web addresses of online cyberbullying.
- Pupils are advised of simple preventative strategy for example changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chat room.
- Appropriate steps will be taken to identify the bully which may include looking at the school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses and contacting the police and service provider if necessary.
- If the person responsible is known, they will be asked to remove any offending content from the internet. If not, attempts will be made to contact the host (e.g. the social networking site) to make a report to get the content removed. Parents will be informed.
- Phones are prohibited for use in school unless under the guidance of staff for specific curriculum time.
- In cases of illegal content, the police will be informed.
- The person being bullied will be supported pastorally and parents informed where necessary.

Sanctions

Once the bully is identified, steps will be taken to change their attitude/behaviour, to encourage them to consider the impact on the victim and to understand their motivation.

Sanctions will include:
- Carrying out useful tasks to help the school
- Detention
- Withdrawal of break/lunch time privileges
- Withholding participation in education visits or sports events which are not essential to the curriculum

Persistent bullying, threatening, abusive behaviour or incidents involving racism will be considered a serious breach of discipline and will incur:

- A fixed term suspension (1 to 5 days)

or

- Permanent exclusion

In these cases parents will be informed at the first opportunity, a copy will be kept on the pupils' files and sent to the Chairman of the Trustees. Parents have a right to appeal against the decision to permanently exclude.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually in line with changing technologies, legislation and good practice.

Updated August 2019