Newtown Linford Primary School

Cyber bullying Policy

Date: April 2024

Rationale

Children have widespread access to technology which can provide a medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience and more accessories as people forward content at a click. Children are taught that cyber bullying is:

"Cyber bullying is any type of bullying that happens through the use of technological devices, including mobile phones."

Cyber bullying can happen in a number of different ways including deliberately posting nasty or embarrassing content (most likely pictures) on social media without permission, sending inappropriate e-mails, prank telephone calls, writing nasty comments on social media or sending inappropriate text messages.

These behaviours can occur on a number of online forums including a range of social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), apps on smartphones (e.g. Whatsapp, iMessage, Facebook Messenger), online gaming platforms (e.g. Fortnite), video sharing platforms (e.g. YouTube) and other forms of communication such as e-mail.

Advice for Parents

• 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 cyber bullied.

• Encourage your child to talk to you if they have any problems with cyber bullying. 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.

• 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.

Suggestions for parents to stay involved

• Keep the computer or other electronic devices in a public place in the house. Periodically check on 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 teen 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 behaviour as you approach your child when they are online, such as rapidly switching screens, changing passwords and for attempts to hide online behaviour, such as an empty history file.

Advice for Pupils

• 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 cyber bullying. For example, www.stopcyberbullying.org and www.wiredsafety.org have some useful tips.

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, eg.abuse@hotmail.com

Chat Room & Instant Messaging

• Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online. It's a good idea to use a nickname. Do not give out photos of yourself either.

• 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.

Think carefully about what you write   REMEMBER: Always tell an adult