

Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale

This policy has regard to the DCSF Guidance on the prevention of bullying contained in Safe to Learn – Embedding anti-bullying work in schools. Bullying affects the whole school community: pupils, their families, teachers, support staff and governors. Lingfield Notre Dame School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school and alien to our school ethos and aims. By raising awareness and working together we can hope to deal with bullying more effectively and send a clear message to all concerned that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated at Lingfield Notre Dame.

Aims

We aim, as a school, to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety and measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of bullying.

This policy aims to address the following outcomes of the Every Child Matters Framework:

1. Be Healthy
2. Stay Safe
3. Enjoy and Achieve
4. Make a Positive Contribution
5. Social and Economic Well-being

More specific aims are as follows:

- Everyone in the school takes responsibility for combating bullying.
- Victims feel protected and supported.
- Those engaged in bullying are encouraged to change their behaviour and their attitudes about bullying.
- The bully will offer an apology and other appropriate consequences may take place.
- If possible the pupils will be reconciled.

Objectives

- All Governors, teachers, non-teaching staff, parents and pupils have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All Governors and teaching and non-teaching staff will know what the school policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

What is bullying?

Bullying is behaviour, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, physically or emotionally. One person or a group can bully others.

How does bullying differ from banter?

- There is a deliberate intention to hurt or humiliate
- There is a power imbalance that makes it hard for the victim to defend themselves
- It is usually persistent

In the case of cyberbullying, bystanders or 'accessories' to the bullying may have a more active role – they may forward on messages, contribute to discussions in chat room, or take part in an online poll. So even though they have not started the bullying or think of themselves as bullying, they are active participants, making the situation worse and compounding the distress for the person subjected to the bullying.

NB If two children do not like each other or just do not get on and are of equal power or strength it does not mean that bullying has occurred. It is not confined solely to relationships between young people. Verbal and emotional bullying in particular may occur between staff or staff and parents. All members of the school community have a responsibility to prevent such occurrences of bullying.

Procedure

1. Children should consult whoever they feel comfortable with, parents should consult the class teacher, staff should consult Deputy Head/Head of Year
2. Talk with the Victim – must be given time and opportunity to speak.
3. Talk to any witnesses.
4. Talk with the Perpetrator – trying mainly to find out reasons why? It is best to let some time elapse after the incident, so that the Perpetrator is less defensive.
5. Adopt a problem solving (no blame) approach. Staff should emphasise the importance of respecting the feelings and emotions of others.
6. The meeting should conclude with an agreement on how the pupil is going to behave to the Victim and others generally. An apology should be obtained from the bully/ies to victim.
7. Treat the information seriously.
8. Record the incident precisely. Be seen to do this (individual records must be based on fact and not speculation or hearsay). The children may be asked to record their own account of events.

9. Deputy Heads keep a record of bullying incidents. This is for the purpose of spotting trends and will not be used in any other way. Therefore, all cases of bullying must be reported to the Deputy Head for inclusion in the record.
10. Parents should be informed (in serious cases) and may be asked to come to a meeting to discuss the problem.
11. In serious cases, suspension or even expulsion will be considered.
12. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
13. On an individual level, a time will be set to meet the Victim and Perpetrator and review the situation, which will have been closely monitored by the Deputy Head/Year Head and Staff. The follow-up will provide an opportunity for the teacher to assess whether the particular strategies were successful or not.

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying

The school endorses all practices as outlined in the 2 cyberbullying documents issued within the Governors' report and applies the recommended principles.

Some forms of cyberbullying involve the distribution of content or links to content, which can exacerbate, extend and prolong the bullying. It is important to try and prevent the spreading of material.

Steps that can be taken

- Advise the victim not to respond or reply
- Keep all correspondence or images as evidence
- Contact parents of both victim and perpetrator
- Get the person that originally posted the material to remove it
- Contact the host to make a report to get the contact removed.
- Confiscate the mobile phone asking pupils to delete the offensive content and say who they have sent it to
- Contact the police in case of actual or suspected illegal content

Prevention

All children are given a leaflet about bullying when they start the school. This contains advice and useful website addresses and telephone numbers, e.g. Childline 0800 1111, www.childline.org.uk, www.ncb.uk/aba and www.dcsf.gov.uk/bullying. These websites also have useful advice for teachers.

- All staff should encourage self-esteem – through reward system and praise.
- We develop a classroom ethos, which promotes respect for the individual, e.g. classroom rules which outlaw anti-social behaviour.
- Implement classroom strategies: circle time, PSHCE, form period.
- Through the curriculum it is possible to explore issues about bullying
- Implement whole school strategies – assemblies, visitors such as police, code of conduct, buddy scheme in the Junior School, INSET.

- During intervals and lunch breaks staff supervise playground areas, classrooms, corridors, locker rooms and dining room. It is also encouraged to monitor isolated areas.
- A mentoring system is in place in the Senior School so that Years 12 & 13 mentor any student who believes they are experiencing bullying. Support and advice is offered and this bridges the gap between students and staff.
- A room is manned daily for 20 minutes so that students can talk to members of the mentoring team, who have been given advice and training in how to deal with such incidents by the member of staff running the system. We have resources to promote and support training the mentors.
- The Junior School has a Buddy Bench on each playground and Year 6 buddies to assist pupils with any social issues.
- To help prevent cyberbullying mobile phones are not allowed to be used during school hours and certain internet sites are restricted.

Supporting Victims of Bullying:

- Encourage the child to speak openly
- Reassure the child you will help but cannot keep anything secret.
- If a child is a perpetual 'victim' of bullying by different groups or individuals try to observe and help them change any behaviour.
- Encourage self-esteem
- Listen
- Give responsibilities so the child feels valued.
- Encourage them to do things they are good at.
- Praise achievement.
- Encourage positivity.
- In Junior School invite child to join social group.

Helping the Bullying Child:

- See if the bully has any ideas about why they bully, refer to reasons why people bully.
- Reassure them that it's the behaviour you don't like, not them and you want to help them change.
- Find way to make amends for behaviour.
- Explore steps to change behaviour.
- Praise good behaviour to raise self-esteem.
- In Junior School invite child to join social group.

Our key message will always be prevention, by teaching children that everyone in our school has the right to feel safe and happy and that bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

Cyberbullying

A whole-school community issue

Introduction

Today's children and young people have grown up in a world that is very different from that of most adults. Many young people experience the internet and mobile phones as a positive, productive and creative part of their activities and development of their identities; always on and always there. Above all, information communication technologies support social activity that allows young people to feel connected to their peers.

Unfortunately, technologies are also being used negatively. When children are the target of bullying via mobiles phones or the internet, they can feel alone and very misunderstood. They may not be able to identify that what is happening to them is a form of bullying, or be confident that the adults around them will understand it that way either. Previously safe and enjoyable environments and activities can become threatening and a source of anxiety.

As mobile phone and internet use become increasingly common, so has the misuse of this technology to bully. Current research in this area indicates that cyberbullying is a feature of many young people's lives. One study carried out for the Anti-Bullying Alliance found that 22% of young people reported being the target of cyberbullying.

This document explains how cyberbullying is different from other forms of bullying, how to respond and combat misuse through a shared responsibility, and how to promote and develop a culture of confident technology users to support innovation, e-safety and digital literacy skills.

'Cyberbullying, A whole-school community issue' is a summary of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) Guidance for schools on preventing and responding to cyberbullying, which was written in conjunction with Childnet International and published in September 2007. This document seeks to give practical advice to young people, their carers and school staff about the issue of cyberbullying.

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else. What's different about cyberbullying?

Bullying is not new, but some features of cyberbullying are different from other forms of bullying:

1. 24/7 and the invasion of home/ personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.
2. The audience can be very large and reached rapidly. 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.
3. People who cyberbully may 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.
4. The profile of the bully and target. Cyberbullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers have also been targets. Age or size are not important. Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying; for example, by passing on a humiliating image.
5. Some instances of cyberbullying are known to be unintentional. It can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of the consequences – for example saying something negative online about another pupil, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group.
6. Many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence. This is one of the reasons why it's important to know how to respond!

Cyberbullying and the law.

Education law: Bullying is never acceptable. The school community has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment. A range of Education Acts and government initiatives highlight these obligations.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. Head teachers have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off site. The EIA 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 that can apply in terms of harassing or threatening behaviour, for example, or indeed menacing and threatening communications. In fact, some cyberbullying activities could be criminal

offences under a range of different laws, including the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, which has both criminal and civil provision, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, section 127 of the Communications Act 2003, and the Public Order Act 1986.

'I felt that no one understood what I was going through. I didn't know who was sending me these messages, and I felt powerless to know what to do.' A pupil

Preventing Cyberbullying

The best way to deal with cyberbullying is to prevent it happening in the first place. The key first step is deciding who within the school community will take responsibility for the coordination and implementation of cyberbullying prevention and response strategies. It's best if this person is a member of the school's senior management team and/or the staff member responsible for coordinating overall anti-bullying activity. This person will need to have experience of making sure the whole school community contribute to, and are included in, activities.

There is no single solution to the problem of cyberbullying. These are the five key areas schools need to address together to put in place a comprehensive and effective prevention plan:

1. Understanding and talking about cyberbullying

The whole school community needs a shared, agreed definition of cyberbullying. Everyone needs to be aware of the impact of cyberbullying and the ways in which it differs from other forms of bullying. Young people and their parents should be made aware of pupils' responsibilities in their use of ICT, and what the sanctions are for misuse. Students and parents should know that the school can provide them with support if cyberbullying takes place out of school.

2. Updating existing policies and practices

Review and update the school's anti-bullying policy plus other relevant policies – for example, policies on behaviour, pastoral care and e-learning strategies. Review your existing Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) the rules that students have to agree to follow in order to use ICT in school – and publicise them to parents and students. Keep good records of any incidents of cyberbullying. Be able to conduct searches of internet use records at school. Knowing that the school is taking such steps may act as a disincentive for bullies to misuse school equipment and systems.

'Having my daughter show me text messages from nearly everyone in her class, all saying derogatory things about her, was devastating.' A parent

3. Making reporting cyberbullying easier

No one should feel that they have to deal with cyberbullying alone, but reporting any incident of bullying can be really hard for the person being bullied and for bystanders. Provide and publicise different ways of reporting cyberbullying in schools – for instance, a student council taskforce, peer reporting, anonymous reporting – and provide information about contacting service providers directly.

4. Promoting the positive use of technology

Technology is successfully being used to support engaging, positive and effective learning, and to realise and increase the potential of personalised learning by making learning more flexible, creative and accessible. Explore safe ways of using technology with learners to support self-esteem, assertiveness, participation and to develop friendships. Promote and discuss 'netiquette', e-safety and digital literacy. Show learners that the adults in the school understand the technologies they use – or get the students to teach them!

5. Evaluating the impact of prevention activities

Regular reviews are vital to make sure that anti-bullying policies are working and are up-to-date. Consider conducting an annual survey of pupils' experiences of bullying, including cyberbullying, and a parent satisfaction survey. Publicise progress and activities to the whole-school community – keep cyberbullying a live issue and celebrate your successes!

Responding to Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, and therefore all schools should already be equipped to deal with the majority of cases through their existing anti-bullying policies and procedures. This section outlines key steps to take when responding to cyberbullying.

Supporting the person being bullied

Give reassurance that the person has done the right thing by telling someone, refer to any existing pastoral support/procedures and inform parents.

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 of online cyberbullying instances).

Check the person understands simple ways to prevent it from happening again, e.g. by changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chatroom.

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 cyberbully. 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.

'Thankfully, my son's school was very helpful: they identified the child who posted the video from another video he had posted; they have disciplined the other child and had him remove the video'. A parent

Investigating incidents

All bullying incidents should be properly recorded and investigated. Cyberbullying can be a very serious matter and can constitute a criminal offence. In UK law, there are criminal laws that can apply in terms of harassment or threatening and menacing communications.

Advise pupils and staff to try and keep a record of the bullying as evidence. It can be useful to show parents, teachers, pastoral care staff and the police, if necessary, what has happened.

Take steps to identify the bully, including looking at the school systems, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary. The police will need to be involved to enable the service provider to look into the data of another user.

Working with the bully and sanctions

Once the 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 bully 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 cyberbullying behaviour could include limiting internet access for a period of time or removing the right to bring a mobile into school.

Key Safety Advice

The whole school community has a part to play in ensuring cyber safety. Understanding children and young people's online lives and activities can help adults respond to situations appropriately and effectively. Asking children and young people to show adults how technologies and services work is a useful strategy that can provide an important learning opportunity and context for discussing online safety.

For children and young people

Always respect others – be careful what you say online and what images you send.

Think before you send – whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.

Treat your password like your toothbrush – keep it to yourself. Only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends.

Block the bully – learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly.

Don't retaliate or reply!

Save the evidence – learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations.

Make sure you tell:

an adult you trust, or call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 1111 in confidence; the provider of the service; check the service provider's website

to see where to report incidents; your school – your teacher or the anti-bullying coordinator can help you.

Finally, don't just stand there – if you see cyberbullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying. How would you feel if no one stood up for you?

For parents and carers

Be aware, your child may as likely cyberbully as be a target of cyberbullying. Be alert to your child seeming upset after using the internet or their mobile phone. This might involve subtle comments or changes in relationships with friends. They might be unwilling to talk or be secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use. Talk with your children and understand the ways in which they are using the internet and their mobile phone. See the seven key messages for children to get you started.

Use the tools on the service and turn on in-built internet safety features. Remind your child not to retaliate. Keep the evidence of offending emails, text messages or online conversations.

Report cyberbullying:

Contact your child's school if it involves another pupil, so that they can take appropriate action.

Contact the service provider.

If the cyberbullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed, you should consider contacting the police.

When and How to Contact the Service Provider:

Mobile phones:

All UK mobile phone operators have nuisance call centres set up and / or procedures in place to deal with such instances. They may be able to change the number of the person being bullied. Mobile operators cannot bar a particular number from contacting a phone, but some phone handsets do have this capacity. Action can be taken against the bully's phone account (e.g. blocking their account) only with police involvement.

Contacts:

O2: ncb@o2.com or 08705214000.

Vodafone: 191 from a Vodafone phone or 08700700191 for Pay Monthly customers and 08700776655 for Pay as you Go.

3: Call 333 from a 3 phone or 08707330333.

Orange: Call 450 on an Orange phone or 07973100450 for Pay as you Go, or 150 or 07973100150 for Pay Monthly.

T-Mobile: Call 150 on a T-Mobile phone or 08454125000.

Social networking sites (e.g., MySpace, Bebo, Piczo):

It is good practice for social network providers to make reporting incidents of cyberbullying easy, and thus have clear, accessible and prominent reporting features. Many of these reporting features will be within the profiles themselves, so they are 'handy' for the user. If social networking sites do receive reports about cyberbullying, they will investigate and can remove content that is illegal or breaks their terms and conditions in other ways. They can delete the accounts of those who have broken the rules.

Contacts of some social network providers:

Bebo: reports can be made by clicking on a 'Report Abuse' link located below the user's profile photo (top left-hand corner of screen) on every Bebo profile page. Bebo users can also report specific media content (i.e. photos, videos, widgets) to the Bebo customer services team by clicking on a 'Report Abuse' link located below the content they wish to report.

MySpace: reports can be made via the 'Contact MySpace' link, which is accessible at the bottom of the MySpace homepage (<http://uk.myspace.com>), and at the bottom of every page within the MySpace site.

Piczo: reports can be made within the service (there is a 'Report Bad Content' button at the top of every member page). At the bottom of the home page and on the 'Contact Us' page there is a link to a 'Report Abuse' page. The 'Report Abuse' page can be found at:
<http://pic3.piczo.com/public/piczo2/piczoAbuse.jsp>.

Video-hosting sites:

It is possible to get content taken down from video-hosting sites, though the content will need to be illegal or have broken the terms of service of the site in other ways. On YouTube, perhaps the most well-known of such sites, it is possible to report content to the site provider as inappropriate. In order to do this, you will need to create an account (this is free) and log in, and then you will have the option to 'flag content as inappropriate'. The option to flag the content is under the video content itself. YouTube provides information on what is considered inappropriate in its terms of service. See www.youtube.com/t/terms section 5C.

Instant Messenger (e.g., Windows Live Messenger or MSN Messenger):

It is good practice for Instant Messenger (IM) providers to have visible and easy-to-access reporting features on their service. Instant Messenger providers can investigate and shut down any accounts that have been misused and clearly break their terms of service. The best evidence for the service provider is archived or recorded conversations, and most IM providers allow the user to record all messages.

Contacts of some IM providers:

MSN: When in Windows Live Messenger, clicking the 'Help' tab will bring up a range of options, including 'Report Abuse' and there is also an online feedback form at: <http://support.msn.com/default.aspx?mkt=en-gb> to report on a range of products including MSN Messenger.

Yahoo!: When in Yahoo! Messenger, clicking the 'Help' tab will bring up a range of options, including 'Report Abuse'.

Chatrooms, individual website owners / forums, message board hosts:

It is good practice for chat providers to have a clear and prominent reporting mechanism to enable the user to contact the service provider. Users that abuse the service can have their account deleted. Some services may be moderated, and the moderators will warn users posting abusive comments or take down content that breaks their terms of use.

Conclusion

Technology is great and offers fantastic opportunities for children. However, the technology can be misused, and this can be very painful for those, both children and teachers, who are the targets of cyberbullying. Adults need to help children and young people prepare for the hazards whilst promoting the many learning and social opportunities available.

Tackling cyberbullying will be an ongoing process as technology continues to develop. If you would like the full guidance produced by the DCSF and Childnet, see:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications
www.digizen.org

‘Cyberbullying is the unacceptable face of new technology, and we need concerted action across society to address it. Schools must play a key role, and this new guidance will help them to identify and tackle instances of cyberbullying more effectively, as well as providing practical advice and information on how to prevent it.’

Kevin Brennan, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children, Young People and Families

www.childnet.com

‘The internet and mobile phones have such positive potential to transform children’s lives for the better. However, when they are misused, they can cause real pain. We hope this guidance and resources which Childnet has produced will be of practical use and help us all fight cyberbullying’.

Stephen Carrick-Davies, CEO, Childnet International

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