CIRENCESTER KINGSHILL SCHOOL

Appendix 1 – Tackling cyber-bullying

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2002, recognises the importance of online safety. In Section 134, it states: *'It is essential that children are safeguarded form potentially harmful and inappropriate online material'* and recognises that *through 'content, contact and conduct'*, pupils can be at risk of bullying or abuse by peers whilst online. This advice should be read in conjunction with the school's Acceptable Use Policy which all pupils sign on entry to the school, and the E-safety policy, revised in 2021. In addition, pupils are specifically taught how to safely use information technologies in ICT and PSHEE.

What are the different types of cyber- bullying?

Mobile phones
Sending abusive texts, video or photo messages, or sharing videos of physical attacks on individuals is another form of online bullying. Sexting, which is encouraging someone to share intimate pictures or videos of themselves and then sending these on to other people, can also constitute online bullying

Social media sites
Writing nasty or upsetting comments on someone's profile, in message threads and making jokes or comments about people on your own status updates or messages. Even if you aren't the person who made the original comment writing underneath it (commenting) can make you part of the bullying. Setting up a profile or group chat with the explicit purpose of being unpleasant to someone else is also a form of cyber bullying, particularly as the nature of social media means it can be seen by a large group of people.

Email
Sending abusive or nasty emails - including sending emails to a group of people who join in the bullying. Sending computer viruses or inappropriate videos by email is also a type of cyber bullying.

Abusing personal information
Posting photos, personal information, fake comments and blogs, or pretending to be someone online without that person's permission.

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.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images, screenshotting them if possible so that you can show them to a parent, teacher, police as evidence.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.

There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber-bullying. For example, **www.kidscape.org** and **www.wiredsafety.org** have some useful tips:

Text/video messaging
- You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning off incoming messages for a couple of days.

- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider.
- Don't 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.

Emails
- 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 Internet Service Provider (ISP) by writing abuse@ and then the host, e.g. **abuse@hotmail.com**

Social media
- 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.
- Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and social media sites and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens on social media.
- Think carefully about what you write; don't leave yourself open to bullying.
- Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account

Three steps to safety
- Respect other people - online and off. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.
- If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm – and ignore them.
- 'Do as you would be done by.' Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for your own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

<u>Advice for parents</u>

- 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).
- 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.
- 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 in a public place in the house. Periodically check on what your child is doing.
- Maintain an appropriate level of monitoring of your child's mobile phone.

- Be open 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 the internet and social media sites.
- 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 the computer, such as rapidly switching screens, and for attempts to hide online behaviour, such as an empty history file.

Pupils, parents and carers can be referred to the practical support that's available for reporting harmful or upsetting content as well as bullying and online abuse, as outlined below, and are always encouraged to report any concerns to an appropriate member of school staff.

Harmful or upsetting content

- reporting harmful online content to the [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- getting government advice and trusted resources from [Educate Against Hate](#) on safeguarding from radicalisation, building resilience to extremism, and promoting shared values

Bullying or abuse online

- get advice on reporting online abuse from the National Crime Agency's [Child Exploitation and Online Protection command](#)
- get advice and support from [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) for children who are being bullied

School actions

The school has the right to take action against pupils if they are involved in bullying behaviour towards other members of the school community (including cyber-bullying) inside or outside of school. In such cases the stages of action described in the main policy would be followed.