



Anti-Bullying Policy

Please see also the Behaviour Policy.

Principles

The Learning Circle will not accept bullying in any form. This policy exists to help prevent and combat bullying so far as is reasonably practicable, to promote welfare and allow members of the school community to live safely together. The school recognises that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

What Is Meant by Bullying?

- Bullying may be understood as the persistent or systematic use of superior strength or influence to intimidate someone, such that the repeated treatment received causes, or is likely or intended to cause, hurt or harm. Such hurt or harm includes the physical, sexual, psychological and social (for example besmirching a person's reputation).
- It follows that bullying can take many forms, including verbal, gestural, taking property belonging to another, and 'cyber' (see below), and can involve extortion, humiliation, spreading rumours and exclusion.
- The intimidating treatment of a person on the basis of a person's group identity is unacceptable; for example, sexual orientation, race, age, gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, beliefs, particular learning needs, disability, physical appearance.
- Whatever form bullying takes, the effect on its victim is the main concern. The school recognises, and tries to educate pupils about, the fine line that

sometimes exists between what one party may regard as 'harmless teasing', a 'joke' or a 'prank' and what another may feel is genuinely hurtful and perceive as bullying.

Policy Aims

- To create an environment that prevents bullying from occurring.
- To prevent and/or deal with any behaviour that might constitute bullying.
- To promote an awareness of the need to ensure everyone is entitled to live in the school community free from intimidation.
- To respond to any incident of bullying in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent manner.
- To safeguard and provide appropriate support to any pupil who has been the victim of bullying.
- To apply measures (including disciplinary sanctions, in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy), to any pupil who is found to be responsible for bullying, in addition to providing them with appropriate help and guidance on how they can take steps to repair the harm caused. Strong sanctions, including exclusion, may be appropriate in cases of severe and persistent bullying.

The School aims to:

- Create an ethos of respectful behaviour in relation to other pupils and staff by staff modelling such behaviour at all times.
- To promote a climate of openness in which bullying is understood to be unacceptable and it is widely perceived as 'right' to report any instance of improper treatment.
- To provide and publicise a clear and effective reporting system for dealing with bullying and suspected bullying.
- To create opportunities to discuss bullying by pupils and staff within the School's PSHE and pastoral programmes, assemblies, and curricular openings (e.g. through empathy work in History and English).
- To incorporate anti-bullying principles and policy in the induction of new staff.
- To implement effective procedures, including supervision, to combat bullying at the times and places where it is most likely to occur, namely before formal school activities begin, during breaks both inside and outside, in school toilets.
- To ensure that pupils are aware of the Anti-bullying Policy.

- To ensure that pupils have access to an adult in school to whom they may talk in confidence and know that that adult will deal with the matter urgently and with discretion.
- To make pupils aware of National Anti-Bullying Helpline: (0845 22 55 78), the number is prominently displayed in and around the School.
- To follow up every incident of bullying so as (a) to take any initial precautionary steps to ensure that a pupil who says (s)he has been bullied feels protected and reassured (b) to establish by investigation those facts which are knowable (c) to provide support for the victim and perpetrators, where bullying has indeed taken place (d) to ensure that false allegations are identified as such and dealt with appropriately and (e) to help prevent any recurrence of bullying where it has occurred.
- To make clear to pupils and parents that bullying is unacceptable and that the School will not tolerate such behaviour.
- To be aware that although bullying itself is not a specific criminal offence, some types of harassing or threatening behaviour – or communications – can amount to a criminal offence.
- The School may seek assistance from the police in appropriate circumstances.

Reporting bullying

- New pupils are informed as to who they can report any incident of possible bullying to staff.
- Following a report of possible bullying, a member of staff will investigate the incident in order to check the facts, assess its seriousness and decide how best to proceed. Consideration will be given to whether or not to contact parents, and at what stage; also, whether or not the matter should be brought to the attention of the School Meeting.

See the Behaviour Policy for steps taken in the event of bullying and for recording incidents.

Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy

- To review and update (as necessary) this policy and its procedures annually and to circulate a copy of any updated version of it to staff
- To involve parents and guardians by making a copy of this policy available via the School's website.

- To seek feedback from children on the effectiveness of the policy via the School Meeting
- To seek feed-back form parents on the effectiveness of the policy through PT meetings and informal meetings.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying may be defined as ‘the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit being the victims of cyberbullying’. It can take different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or ‘cyber-stalking’ (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), sexting (e.g. sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones) vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and ‘trolling’ (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online). It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

However, it differs from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:

- by facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and
- the potential for anonymity on the part of the perpetrator.
- the potential for the bully to play very rapidly to a larger audience so the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.
- through the knowledge that the data is in the world-wide domain, disproportionately amplifying the negative effect on the victim, even though the bully may feel his / her actual actions had been no worse than conventional forms of bullying.
- the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages as more people get drawn in as accessories. By passing on a humiliating picture or message a bystander becomes an accessory to the bullying.
- the profile of the bully and target can be different from other forms of bullying as cyberbullying can take place between peers and across generations. Teachers can be victims.

- many cyberbullying incidents can act as evidence, so it is important the victim saves the information.

Law:

- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. Lead teachers have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off the school
- The Act also provides a defence for staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from
- There is not a specific law which makes cyberbullying illegal, but it can be considered a criminal offence under several different acts including Protection from Harassment Act (1997), Malicious Communications Act (1988), Communications Act (2003) Obscene Publications Act (1959) and Computer Misuse Act (1990).

Preventing Cyberbullying

- As with all forms of bullying the best way to deal with cyberbullying is to prevent it happening in the first place. There is no single solution to the problem of cyberbullying, but the school will do the following as a minimum to impose a comprehensive and effective prevention strategy:

Government guidance

- [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying Advice for Headteachers and School Staff 121114.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf)

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Lead teacher will take overall responsibility for the co-ordination and implementation of cyberbullying prevention and response strategies. They will
- ensure that all incidents of cyberbullying both inside and outside school are dealt with immediately and will be managed and/or escalated in line with the procedures set out in the school's Anti-bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection
- ensure that all staff know that they need to report any issues concerning cyberbullying.

- provide training (using [Channel online awareness training module](#)) so that staff feel confident to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to make a referral when a child is at risk.
- ensure that parents/carers are informed, and attention is drawn annually to the cyberbullying policy so that they are aware of the school's responsibility relating to safeguarding pupils and their welfare. The Cyberbullying Policy is available on the school website
- ensure that pupils know how to report a concern (to Childline or the think know website: thinkuknow.co.uk)

Guidance for Staff

Guidance on safe practice in the use of electronic communications and storage of images is contained in the Code of Conduct. The school will deal with inappropriate use of technology in line with the Code of Conduct which could result in disciplinary procedures. The protocol outlined below will be followed.

Mobile Phones

- Ask the pupil to show you their mobile phone
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Tell the pupil to save the message/image
- Inform the Safeguarding Lead and pass them the information.

Computers

- Ask the pupil to show on-screen the material in question
- Ask the pupil to save the material
- Print off the offending material
- Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions
- Inform the lead teacher
- Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed.

Guidance for Students

- If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent/guardian, or a member of staff on your safety network.
- Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your parents/carers or a member of staff at school (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying)
- Do not give out personal details or contact information without the permission of a parent/guardian (personal data)
- Be careful who you allow to become a friend online and think about what information you want them to
- Protect your password. Do not share it with anyone else and change irregularly
- Always log off from the computer when you have finished or if you leave the computer for any length of time.
- Always put the privacy filters on to the sites you visit. If you are not sure how to do this, ask a teacher or your parents.
- Never reply to abusive mails
- Never reply to someone you do not know
- Always stay in public areas in chatrooms
- The school will deal with cyberbullying in the same way as other bullying. Do not think that because it is online it is different to other forms of
- The school will deal with inappropriate use of technology in the same way as other types of inappropriate behaviour and sanctions will be given in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Guidance for Parents/Carers

- It is vital that parents/carers and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. Parents/carers must play their role and take responsibility for monitoring their child's online life.

- Parents/carers can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously the school takes incidents of cyber-bullying.
- Parents/carers should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyber-bullying.
- If parents/carers believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting
- Parents/carers should contact the school as soon as possible.
- The school reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school both in and out of term

E-Safety at Home

Several sites offer helpful advice, particularly with respect to how to monitor their child's use of the computer at home. Here are some parents/carers might like to try:

- saferinternet.org.uk
- childnet.com
- anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
- nspcc.org.uk
- [DfE Advice for Parents on Cyberbullying](#)
- [Child net Cyberbullying Leaflet](#)