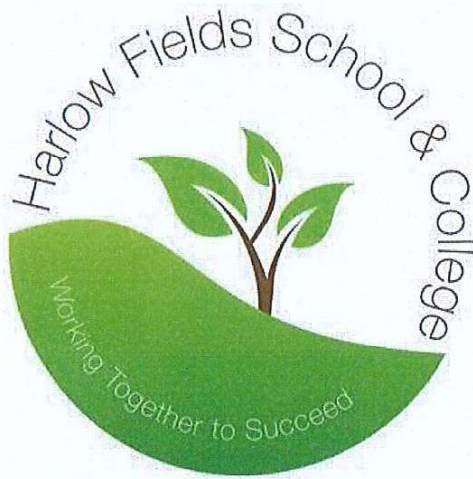


# **Harlow Fields School & College Safeguarding: Cyber Bullying Policy**



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**ADOPTED:** **September 2023**


**COMMITTEE:** C&PR

**DATE FOR REVIEW:** September 2024

**AUTHOR:** Kathleen Faherty

**POLICY NUMBER:** HFP-28

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This policy was updated, to take effect from:	<b>September 2023</b>
School staff were consulted on this document and it was accepted by the personnel committee on:	N/A
It was ratified by the C&PR on:	<i>Meeting Scheduled Autumn 2023 Term 1 where this policy will be signed off</i>
Signed by the Chair of C&PR:	



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Harlow Fields School & College  
Working Together To Succeed

## **Introduction:**

Harlow Fields School and College believes that everyone in the school community has the right to learn and to teach in a supportive and caring environment without fear of being bullied.

We recognise that technology plays an important and positive role in pupil's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the school community (pupils, staff and parents) to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip pupils with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly. (Appendix 1)

## **Policy Aims:**

To ensure that:

- Pupils, staff and parents are educated to understand what cyber bullying is and what its consequences can be
- Knowledge, policies and procedures are in place to prevent incidents of cyber bullying in school or within the school community
- We have effective measures to deal effectively with causes of cyber bullying
- We monitor the effectiveness of prevention measures

## **Definition:**

Cyber bullying is bullying by electronic means. This could be via a smart phone, computer, laptop, tablet or online gaming platform. It can take place on a range of on line or mobile services, such as text, email, social networking sites, video-hosting sites, messenger, photo sharing services, chat, webcams, visual learning environments and online games.

The DfE define cyber bullying as

‘An aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact against a victim who cannot easily defend him/herself’

It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying (such as racist bullying, homophobic bullying or bullying related to SEN and disabilities), but instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying in person, they use technology as a means of conducting the bullying (see appendix 2).

## **Cyber Bullying:**

- Cyber bullying is the use of ICT, commonly a mobile phone or the internet, deliberately to upset someone else
- It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying; an extension of face-to-face bullying
- It can also go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people
- It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted



- It can draw bystanders into being accessories
- It includes: sending or posting harmful or upsetting text, images or other messages using the internet, mobile phones or other communication technology
- It can also include messages intended as jokes, but which have a harmful or upsetting effect; silent or abusive phone calls
- It includes: threats and intimidation, harassment or cyber-stalking, vilification/defamation, exclusion or peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information or images ('happy slapping') and manipulation

In some cases this type of bullying can be a criminal offence.

### What is different about Cyber Bullying?

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

- **Invasion of home/personal space:** cyber bullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal
- **The audience can be very large and reached rapidly:** the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyber bullying 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 hard for targets to move on
- **People who cyber bully may attempt to remain anonymous or use a pseudonym:** this can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyber bullying may never be in the same physical space as their target
- **The profile of the bully and target:** cyber bullying 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
- **Some instances of cyber bullying 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 student or friend that they do not expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group

### Preventing Cyber Bullying:

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), currently the Head Teacher is responsible for overseeing the practices and procedures outlined in this policy and for monitoring its effectiveness. The policy will be ratified and reviewed by the Governing Body.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 states that all schools should have appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place. We have the following systems in place: We have a Firewall which is provided and maintained by RM and Schools Broadband. Senso safeguarding is provided by Interm IT. The DSL will receive weekly reports from senso directly. Both RM and our schools broadband are compliant with KCSIE 2023 and information relevant to this can be found on their respective websites. They are also part of the IWF (internet watch foundation).
- Any incidents of cyber bullying will be reported to the Governing Body via the DSL's termly report
- Staff will receive training in identifying cyber bullying and understanding their responsibilities (see Appendix 3)



- Pupils will be educated about the positives and negatives of technology including cyber bullying through the curriculum and in particular ICT and PHSE
- Other opportunities such as assemblies, anti-bullying week and road shows such as Crucial Crew will be used. They will have a voice through the School Council to report any issues

#### **Policies and Practices:**

- Ensure regular review and update of existing policies to include cyber bullying where appropriate
- Detailed records of all cyber bullying incidents will be kept and stored in a locked cupboard in the Head's office
- Ensure that the rules and responsibilities of both pupils and staff are policed effectively

#### **Reporting:**

- Publicise and promote the message to all that asking for help is the right thing to do and shows strength and good judgement
- Provide information on external reporting routes, e.g. Childline

#### **Responding to cyber bullying:**

Most cases of cyber bullying will be dealt with through the school's existing policies (Anti bullying, Behaviour Management), but as some features of cyber bullying differ from other forms of bullying, they may prompt a particular response.

The key differences are:

**Impact:** the scale and scope of cyber bullying can be greater than other forms of bullying

**Targets and perpetrators:** the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets

**Location:** the 24/7 and anywhere nature of cyber bullying

**Anonymity:** the person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them

**Motivation:** some pupils may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying

**Evidence:** unlike some forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence

It is possible that a member of staff may be a victim and these responses apply to them too

#### **Support and investigation:**

Pupils, staff and parents are encouraged to report all incidents of cyber bullying

Offer emotional support; reassure the target that they have done the right thing in telling and provide opportunity for the attitude and behaviour of the bully to change

Advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain

Staff and pupils should be advised to preserve evidence and a record of abuse. Save phone messages, record or save-and-print instant messenger conversation, print a screen print of social network pages etc.

If images are concerned, determine whether they may be illegal or raise child protection concerns and if so, the DSL or the Head will contact the Local Safeguarding Board and the Police

Parents will be advised to contact the Police about their concern

#### **Sanctions:**

- Will help the person harmed feel safe and be assured that the bullying will stop

- Hold the perpetrator to account, getting them to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour
- Demonstrate to all that cyber bullying is unacceptable
- Parents/carers of all pupils would be involved and consideration would be given as to the appropriateness of involving outside agencies such as Children with Disabilities Team (CWDT), local safeguarding board and possibly the Police

**Monitoring and Evaluation:**

- The School Council will be a forum to hear pupils points of views
- The school will conduct regular reviews and report findings to the Governing Body
- The Governing body will review this policy within the policy schedule

## **Appendix 1**

### **What can you do as a parent?**

- It is important that parents and carers ensure that their children are engaged in safe and responsible online behaviour
- Encourage your child to let you know if they have any problems with cyberbullying
- Parental control software can limit who your child sends emails to and who he/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
- Keep the computer in a public place in the house. Periodically check on what your child is doing. Discuss the kinds of internet activities your child enjoys
- Search for your child's name online, look at his or her profiles and postings on teen community sites, review web pages or blogs
- 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

### **What can you do as a pupil?**

- 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
- 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

### **Text/Video Messaging**

- You can turn off incoming messages for a couple of days
- If bullying persists, you can change your phone number

### **Chat Room and Instant Messaging**



- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password on line.

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 – don't leave yourself open to bullying.

### **THREE RULES TO REMEMBER**

1. Respect other people – online and off. Do not spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including phone numbers and passwords.
2. If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm and ignore them, but tell someone you trust.
3. Do as you would be done by. Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You are responsible for your own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else



## Appendix 2

**Table of Technologies and their use:**

<b>Technology:</b>	<b>Great for:</b>	<b>Examples of Misuse:</b>
<b>Mobile Phone</b>	Keeping in touch by voice or text, taking and sending pictures and films, listening to music, playing games. Useful in emergency situations and for allowing children greater independence	Sending nasty calls or text messages. Including threats, intimidation and harassment. Taking and sharing humiliating images. Sending these images or video to other phones or internet sites.
<b>Instant Messenger (IM)</b>	Text or voice chatting live with friends online. A quick and effective way of keeping in touch even while working on other things.	Sending nasty messages or content. Using someone else's account to forward rude or mean messages via their contacts list.
<b>Chat rooms and message boards</b>	Groups of people around the world can text or voice chat live about common interests. This can be an easy way to meet new people and explore issues.	Sending nasty or threatening anonymous messages. Making friends under false pretences – people pretending to be someone else or someone they're not.
<b>Email</b>	Sending electronic letters, pictures and other files quickly and cheaply anywhere in the world.	Sending nasty or threatening messages. Forwarding unsuitable content including images and video clips or viruses. Accessing someone else's account.
<b>Webcams</b>	Taking pictures or recording messages. Being able to see and talk to someone live on your computer screen. Brining far-off places to life or video conferencing.	Making and sending inappropriate content. Persuading or threatening young people to act in inappropriate ways or to manipulate them.
<b>Social Networking sites</b>	Socialising with your friends and making new ones within online communities. Allowing young people to be creative on line, even publishing online music. Personalising homepages and profiles, creating and uploading content.	Posting nasty comments, humiliating images/video. Accessing another person's account details and sending unpleasant messages, deleting information or making private information public. Creating fake profiles to pretend to be someone else in order to bully harass or get others into trouble.
<b>Virtual Learning (VLE's)</b>	School site, available from home and school, set up for tracking and recording student assignments, tests and activities with message boards.	Posting inappropriate messages or images. Hacking into someone else's account to post inappropriate comments or delete school work.

## Appendix 2

### Professional Responsibilities<sup>1</sup>

- Ensure all electronic communication with pupils, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with school policies.
- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as Facebook or YouTube.
- Do not put on line any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the whole school community or be incompatible with your professional role.
- Use school ICT systems and resources for all school business. This includes school email address, school mobile phone and school video camera.
- Do not give out your own personal details, such as mobile phone number, personal e-mail address or social network details to pupils, parents, carers and others.
- Do not disclose any passwords
- Only take images of pupils and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with school policy.
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Ensure that your online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring your organisation or professional role into disrepute.
- You have a duty to report any eSafety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or your organisation.

<sup>1</sup> Developed in conjunction with professional bodies, unions and Hertfordshire County Council.





