



Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy

Author	Written/ Reviewed	Passed by Governors	Next Review
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This policy reflects the values and philosophy of Shenstone Lodge School in relation to cyber-bullying and applies across both sites.

Shenstone Lodge School believes that everyone in the school community has the right to learn and to teach in a healthy and caring environment, without fear of being bullied.

ICT plays an increasingly large and important part in the school curriculum.

We understand that in the wider community, pupils can, and do, access all types of material online and use technology for social networking. It is therefore important to acknowledge that sometimes, these technologies are used for unpleasant purposes. We accept that there are unfortunate misuses of this technology and we aim to address any breaches of this nature.

We recognize the existence of cyber bullying and the severity of the issue.

Our school is committed to:

- Educating pupils, staff and parents/carers about cyber bullying and its consequences.
- Providing a productive and healthy learning environment.
- Providing a robust policy in order to prevent and, if necessary, deal with any cyber bullying should it arise at school or within the school community.
- Developing and improving the policies and procedures around cyber bullying through regular evaluation and review.
- Providing a strong anti-bullying policy and acting upon it wherever bullying arises.

DEFINITION OF CYBER-BULLYING

For the purpose of this policy, “**bullying**” is an act, which is based on unequal power relations, real or perceived. It will usually be repeated and be difficult to defend against, and is intended to hurt the recipient emotionally and/or physically. It can manifest verbally, in writing or images, and can be done physically, financially (including damage to property) or through social isolation.

For the purpose of this policy, “**cyber bullying**” includes sending or posting harmful or upsetting text, images or other messages, using the internet, mobile phones or other communication technology for the purpose of bullying.

Cyber bullying can take many forms and can go even further than face-to-face bullying by invading home and personal space, and can target more than one person. It can also take place across age groups and target pupils, staff and others.

It can draw bystanders into being accessories

Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim.

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media such as:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Harassment or “cyber stalking”
- Exclusion or peer rejection
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips via mobile phone cameras
- Silent or abusive phone calls or using the victim’s phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else’s name
- Manipulation
- Menacing or upsetting responses to someone in a chat-room
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook
- Impersonation

NB. The above list is not exhaustive and cyber bullying may take other forms.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to the following legislation, including, but not limited to:

- The Communications Act 2003
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Computer Misuse Act 1990, amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006
- The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Education Act 2002

This policy also has due regard to guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2017) ‘Preventing and tackling bullying’
- DfE (2018) ‘Keeping children safe in education’

LEGAL ISSUES

Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. There are specific laws that apply to cyberspace, for example:

It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites. Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. In addition, The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

SIGNS OF BEING CYBER BULLIED:

All members of staff will receive training on an **annual** basis on the signs of cyber bullying, in order to identify pupils who may be experiencing issues and intervene effectively.

Staff will be alert to the following signs that may indicate a pupil is being cyber bullied:

- Becoming withdrawn or shy
- Showing signs of depression
- Becoming extremely moody or agitated
- Becoming anxious or overly stressed
- Displaying signs of aggressive behaviour
- Avoiding use of the computer
- Changing eating and/or sleeping habits
- Avoiding participating in activities they once enjoyed
- Engaging in self-harm, or threatening/attempting suicide
- Changing their group of friends suddenly

Staff will also be alert to the following signs, which may indicate that a pupil is cyber bullying others:

- Avoiding using the computer or turning off the screen when someone is near
- Appearing nervous when using the computer or mobile phone
- Acting in a secretive manner when using the computer or mobile phone
- Spending excessive amounts of time on the computer or mobile phone
- Becoming upset or angry when the computer or mobile phone is taken away

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PREVENTION OF CYBER BULLYING:

The Head of School is in charge of the practices and procedures outlined in this policy and will ensure that their effectiveness is monitored.

The Head of School will ensure that our school maintains details of agencies and resources that may assist in preventing and addressing cyber bullying.

Shenstone Lodge educates its pupils both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through PSHE, in computing lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its pupils in these fast changing areas.

Shenstone Lodge staff will respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it. The school endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems.

All members of staff will be trained to identify signs of cyber bullying and will be helped to stay informed about the technologies that children commonly use, by self-study and regular updates.

Pupils will be informed about cyber bullying through curricular and pastoral activities.

The delivery of PSHE is important and will discuss keeping personal information safe and the appropriate use of the internet. In addition, pupils will be educated about e-safety through other subjects too.

Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, Shenstone Lodge reserves the right to take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying.

All bullying is damaging but cyber-bullying and harassment can be invasive of privacy at all times. These acts may also be criminal acts.

Shenstone Lodge supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts.

Shenstone Lodge will use, as appropriate, the full range of sanctions to correct, punish or remove pupils who bully fellow pupils or harass staff in this way, both in or out of school.

Shenstone Lodge will use its power of confiscation where necessary to prevent pupils from committing crimes or misusing equipment.

All members of the School community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the Head of School any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying.

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

Mobile Phones

1. Advise the victim not to respond to the message
2. Ask the pupil to show you the mobile phone
3. Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names
4. Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
5. Tell the pupil to save the message/image
6. Inform a member of the Senior Leadership team or Designated Lead for Child Protection as appropriate and pass them the information that you have.

Computers

- a) Ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question
- b) Ask the pupil to save the material
- c) Print off the offending material straight away
- d) Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions
- e) Inform a member of the Senior Leadership team or Designated Lead for Child Protection as appropriate and pass them the information that you have. Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.
- f) Inform the site used and request the comments be removed if the site is administered externally
- g) Inform parents

REPORTING

At Shenstone Lodge School, issues of cyber bullying should be reported according to the procedures in the Anti-Bullying Policy.

GUIDANCE/SUPPORT FOR PUPILS

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 at Shenstone Lodge. School will discuss the support available with the victim and therefore, their feelings and requests are paramount to the support provided.

Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them.

Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your parents/guardian or a member of staff at Shenstone Lodge (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 IT details

Never reply to abusive e-mails

Never reply to someone you do not know

Stay in public areas in chat rooms

The support available includes:

- Emotional support and reassurance from the school staff.
- Reassurance that it was right to report the incident and that appropriate action will be taken.
- Liaison with the pupil's parents/carers to ensure a continuous dialogue of support.
- Advice not to retaliate or reply, but to keep the evidence and show or give it to their parent/carer or a member of staff.
- Advice on other aspects of e-safety procedures to prevent re-occurrence.
- Discussion with the pupil's parents/carers to evaluate their online habits.
- Age-appropriate advice on how the perpetrator might be blocked online.
- Actions, where possible and appropriate, to have offending material removed.
- Discussion with the pupil's parents/carers on whether police action is required (except in serious cases of child exploitation where the police may be contacted without discussion with parents/carers).

CYBER BULLYING EDUCATION:

As part of our on-going commitment to the prevention of cyber bullying, regular education and discussion about e-safety will take place as part of the computing and PSHE curriculum

WORKING WITH THE PERPETRATOR

Work with the perpetrator, and any sanctions, will be determined on an individual basis, in accordance with the Anti-Bullying Policy, with the intention of:

- Helping the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop.
- Holding the perpetrator to account, so they recognize the harm caused and do not repeat their behaviour.
- Helping the bullies to recognize the consequences of their actions and facilitating change in their attitude and behaviour.

- Demonstrating that cyber bullying, as with any form of bullying, is unacceptable, and that school has effective ways of dealing with it.

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

It is vital that parents 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. Shenstone Lodge informs parents of the cyber-bullying policy and the procedures in place to deal with cyber-bullying.

Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously Shenstone Lodge takes incidents of cyber-bullying.

Parents should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyber-bullying.

If parents believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving an offensive text on their or their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything.

Parents should contact the school as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

If the incident falls in the holidays Shenstone Lodge reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school.

E-SAFETY AT HOME

Several sites offer helpful advice to parents, particularly with respect to how they can best monitor their child's use of the computer at home. Important and useful information can be found on the following site:

www.nextgenerationlearning.org.uk/safeguarding-learners/Safeguarding-learners-content/Parents-and-carers

NATIONAL BODIES

Further support and guidance may be obtained from the following:

www.beatbullying.org

www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk