ST. EDWARD'S
OXFORD

School policy on cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a type of aggression defined by Childnet International as 'the sending or posting of harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices'. The Anti-Bullying Association has identified seven types of cyberbullying ranging from abusive text messages, emails and phone calls, to bullying in internet chatrooms, social networking sites and instant messaging:

1. Text messages:-	Unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
2. Pictures/video clips via mobile phones:-	Images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
3. Mobile phone calls:-	Silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.
4. Emails:-	Threatening or bullying emails, often sent using somebody else's IT account.
5. Instant messaging:-	Unpleasant or unkind messages sent as young people conduct realtime conversations online.
6. Chatroom bullying:-	Menacing or upsetting responses when young people are in a web-based chatroom.
7. Bullying via websites:-	Use of defamatory blogs, personal website and online polling sites to intimidate and upset others.

Cyberbullying is insidious; it can be conducted 24 hours a day, seven days a week, following young people into their private space and outside school hours. It can be anonymous. The audience is large and can be reached rapidly. Unlike other forms of bullying, a single individual can experience a multiple attack – a video or picture posted to a website can be copied to many different sites. Bystanders can be accessories by passing on humiliating messages. Messages on social networking sites remain there to damage social life and friendships and, in the case of teaching staff, reputation and credibility.

Protecting pupils

Pupils will be protected from cyberbullying by educating them:

- Education in ICT and PSHE lessons on the safe use of the internet and other digital technologies;

- Pupils will also learn to appreciate the impact of cyberbullying on the emotional welfare of other young people;

- By creating a culture, through education, whereby any incident of cyberbullying is reported;

- All e-communications sent using the School network will be monitored and, where possible, all offensive emails and other documents will be filtered and prevented from reaching the intended recipient;

- Pupils need to be aware that under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Warden has the legal right to discipline pupils who cyberbully others, when living away from the School, for example during the holidays;

- Pupils need to understand that cyberbullying could be a criminal offence under a number of laws, including:

  a) Protection from Harassment Act 1997
  b) Malicious Communications Act 1988
  c) Communications Act 2003
  d) Public Order Act 1986
  e) Obscene Publications Act 1959
  f) Sexual Offences Act 2003
  g) Defamation Acts 1952 and 1996.

Dealing with cyberbullying

- The School is committed to promoting the health and welfare of all pupils and therefore will not tolerate any form of cyberbullying.

- Any incident of cyberbullying must be reported to the Pastoral Deputy, who will coordinate a thorough investigation.

- Pupils have a duty to report whenever he or she receives any unkind or intimidating message, email or image. Creating an open community where all types of cyberbullying are not tolerated by both pupils and staff will go a long way to tackling this type of antisocial behaviour.

- If any member of staff suspects a pupil is using a mobile phone to intimidate another pupil or a teacher, she or he is empowered, under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, to confiscate the mobile phone. A pupil can be requested to reveal a message or content on their phone to establish if bullying has occurred.

Responding to incidents of cyberbullying

- The School has a duty to support and help the victims of cyberbullying.
- Cyberbullying, in all its forms, is a serious breach of School discipline and perpetrators should expect to be punished. There are a wide range of possible responses which may include:
  ➢ Removal, for a fixed period of time, of the mobile phone of the bully
  ➢ Removal, for a fixed period of time, of access to the School's email and/or internet service
  ➢ A period of gating
  ➢ Fixed-term or permanent exclusion from the School.
- The Warden will decide on the appropriate response on hearing the evidence and interviewing the pupils involved.

- Furthermore, the school will treat bullying as a safeguarding concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. In such a case, the DSL will judge whether to contact the Police and/or children's social care in line with the School's safeguarding policy.

- After discussion with the HM and Deputy Head Pastoral it may be decided to request that the perpetrator sees the councillors for two sessions.