



## **Anti – Cyber Bullying Policy**

In addition to the expectations and sanctions outlined in the School's Bullying policy, the School recognises that Cyber Bullying is an increasingly common and serious phenomenon. The purpose of this policy is to make clear the School's response to a report of cyber bullying.

### Definitions

Cyber Bullying is different to other forms of bullying because it can happen at any time of day outside of the School grounds in places previously regarded as safe e.g. home. The audience for electronically circulated messages can be large and circulation is hard to control. The bully and the bullied may never be in the same physical space so Cyber Bullying can appear anonymous.

Cyber Bullying can take place between people of different ages and generations including teachers and being a bystander makes someone an accessory to bullying although it is recognised that in some instances this will be unintentional.

Cyber Bullying includes the malicious use of:

- Mobile phones
- Instant messaging
- Chat rooms and message boards
- Video hosting sites such as You Tube
- Social networking sites such as Facebook
- Webcams
- Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs)
- Gaming sites, consoles and virtual worlds

Cyber Bullying potentially falls foul of a number of laws, including those concerning harassment, threatening behaviour, and defamation. In addition the Headmaster and the Head of the Preparatory School have powers under the 2006 Education and Inspections Act to reasonably regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site and to confiscate (for a limited period) items such as mobile phones.

### What the School will do

The School is proactive in preventing Cyber Bullying through the inclusion of the topic in PSHE lessons for each year group, its Pupil Acceptable Use Agreement (PAUA) for ICT, its monitoring of ICT use in school and its internet safety awareness programme. Pupils are encouraged to report anything which concerns them. The School is aware that the technologies available to pupils are constantly changing and, as a result, the School's provision to prevent Cyber Bullying is reviewed annually.

All incidences of Cyber Bullying will be investigated by the School and the investigation carefully recorded with evidence being retained.

On receiving a report of Cyber Bullying either in or outside of School, the School will:

- Reassure the person making the disclosure that the issue will be investigated with discretion.
- Advise the person making the complaint on how to prevent further instances and also how to keep the relevant evidence.
- Investigate the allegation, collecting as much information as possible.
- Take action to prevent the further circulation of the material e.g. if the person responsible is a pupil in School then the School through the member of SLT responsible for overseeing staff Cyber Bullying issues will supervise the immediate removal of content.

When the bully has been identified, the School will (depending of the severity of the incident) follow a number of steps:

In the first instance:

The bully will be seen by their Hm and the member of SLT responsible for overseeing staff Cyber Bullying issues, or the Head of the Preparatory School, to ensure that they understand the seriousness of their actions and the effect on the victim. Further action will then be taken to both punish the bully and ensure that their behaviour changes. Such punishment could include a verbal warning, limited internet access, prohibiting the use of mobile phones in school, detention or suspension.

In more serious cases, the school may:

Contact the parents of the bully and the victim.

Contact the host site or phone company to make a report.

Confiscate mobile phones or other devices used to Cyber Bully and ask for information on who else may be in possession of the material.

As per the Safeguarding Policy, the DSL is informed of bullying incidents when there is a reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

In most cases the School will deal with matters internally, but in very serious cases the School may refer the matter to the police and/or social care, for example when

- There is evidence of a serious criminal offence being or about to be committed.
- The victim has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious harm, including self harm.
- There is evidence or suspicion of adult involvement.
- There is evidence that a group of pupils, including pupils from another School, may be involved.
- Any of the children involved are on the Child Protection Register.

The case may also be passed to the organisation currently responsible for the welfare of boarders.

**Reviewed: September 2018**  
**Headmaster**