Anti-Bullying Policy - Cyber-bullying

This policy has been written taking note of the non-statutory advice: Cyberbullying: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (2014) in conjunction with Preventing and Tackling Bullying (October 2014)

The rapid development of, and widespread access to, technology has provided a new medium for 'virtual' bullying, which can occur in or outside school. Cyber-bullying is a different form of bullying and can happen at all times of the day, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

The wider search powers included in the Education Act 2011 give teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by providing a specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images (or files) on electronic devices, including mobile phones.

Cyberbullying includes:
- sending threatening or abusive text messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- 'trolling' - the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- encouraging young people to self-harm
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

Cyberbullying and the law
While there is not a specific criminal offence called cyberbullying, activities can be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including:
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- The Malicious Communications Act 1988,
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986
- The Defamation Acts of 1952 and 1996

All members of the Windermere community have rights and responsibilities in relation to cyberbullying and should work together to create an environment in which pupils can learn and develop and staff can have fulfilling careers free from harassment and bullying.

It is completely unacceptable for pupils, parents or colleagues to denigrate and bully via social media, text messages, email, etc. in the same way that it is unacceptable to do so face-to-face. At Windermere School we expect all members of the school community to use social media and messaging responsibly and in accordance with our 'Acceptable Use Policy' (AUP).

What can I do to help prevent cyberbullying as an educational professional?

1. *Understand the tools:* be aware of the reporting mechanisms (see below) on different sites and services so you can support your pupils in making a report.
2. *Discuss cyberbullying:* be proactive in discussing cyberbullying with your pupils; how it occurs, why it occurs, and the consequences of such behaviour.
3. *Know who to report to:* Depending on the severity, either report cyberbullying to the child's Tutor or Form Teacher or to the relevant DSL, in case there are further issues. Appropriate action can then be decided.

As a member of staff, what advice can I give to young people?

The internet is an amazing resource and can be used in a number of positive ways. However, content posted online can be easily misunderstood by others and taken out of context. It is important for young people to recognise the importance of 'thinking before you post' and the need to respect their friends' and peers' thoughts and feelings online. What's considered morally right and wrong offline must also be thought of in the same way online, and treating others with respect on the internet is a good way to ensure that online situations are less likely to escalate into cyberbullying situations.

1. *Don't reply:* most of the time the bully is looking for a reaction when they're teasing or calling someone nasty names. Remind young people not to reply, if they do they're giving the bully exactly what they want.
2. *Save the evidence:* encourage young people to save the evidence of any emails or text messages they receive. This is so they have something to show when they do report the cyberbullying.
3. *Tell someone:* encourage young people to tell a trusted adult if they are being cyberbullied, and to tell them as soon as they can in order to minimise their own upset or worry.

School staff

All school staff are in a position of trust, and there are expectations that they will act in a professional manner at all times. Here is some key advice for staff which may help protect their online reputation:

*   Ensure you have read and understand the school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

*   [Childnet - Using Technology](#) has more information on what to be aware of.

*   Do not leave a computer or any other device logged-on when you are away from your desk.

*   Ensure you have enabled a PIN or passcode to protect you from losing personal data and images (or having them copied and shared) from your mobile phone or device if it is lost, stolen, or accessed by pupils.

Windermere School takes its duty to support staff seriously to ensure no-one should feel victimised in the workplace. Staff should seek support from the senior management team if they ever feel they are the victim of on-line bullying. Staff should expect the school to react quickly to reported incidents or support the member of staff concerned to do so. A member of staff who is harassed in this way will receive support and information enabling them to access appropriate personal support. The school will endeavour to approach internet providers or other agencies on their behalf in order to request that the inappropriate material is removed. However, the internet provider may only accept a request from the victim and therefore the person being bullied will need to contact the service providers directly, with support from the school. This might apply, for example, in cases of identity theft, impersonation or abuse via a mobile phone service.

Staff should take steps to protect themselves and their personal information by:

- Keeping passwords secret and protecting access to their accounts.
- Not friending pupils on personal social networking services.
- Keeping personal phone numbers private and not using their own mobile phones to contact pupils or parents.
- Keeping a record of their phone's unique International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number, and keeping phones secure while on school premises.
- Not posting information about themselves publicly that they wouldn't want employers, colleagues, pupils or parents to see.
- Ensuring that rules regarding the use of technologies are consistently enforced.
- Not personally retaliating to any incident.
- Reporting any incident to the appropriate member of staff in a timely manner.
- Keeping any evidence of an incident.

The Professional Online Safety Helpline

http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/ is a free service for professionals and volunteers working with children and young people, delivered by the UK Safer Internet Centre. The helpline provides signposting, advice and mediation to resolve the e-safety issues which staff face, such as protecting professional identity, online harassment, or problems affecting young people; for example cyberbullying or sexting issues.

The Safer Internet Centre has developed strategic partnerships with the key players in the internet industry. When appropriate, this enables the Professional helpline to seek resolution directly with the policy and safety teams at Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google, Tumblr, Ask.FM, Rate My Teacher and more.

Reporting Cyberbullying
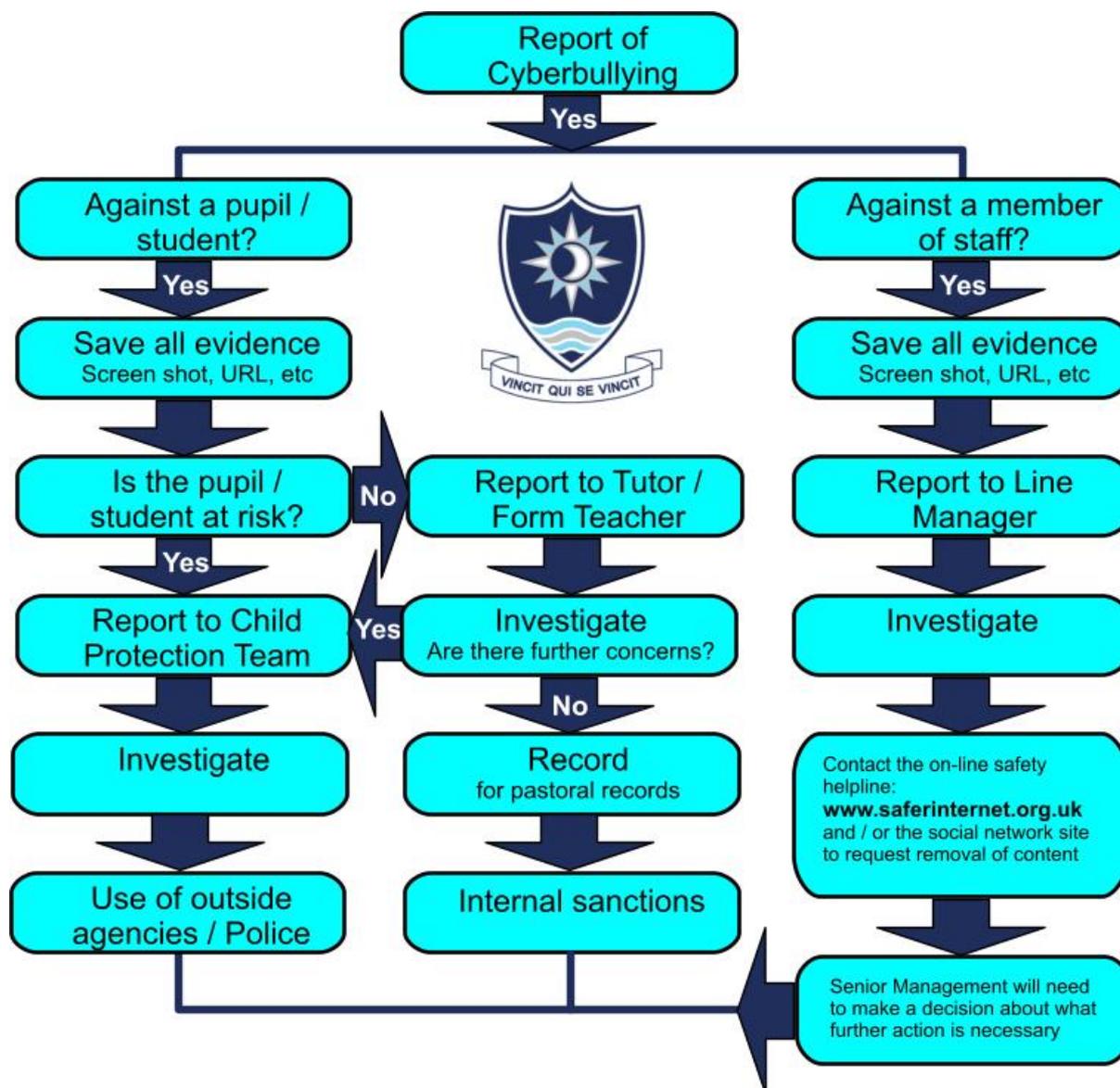
Where appropriate, we will contact the police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or other outside agencies.

If the bully is a member of the school community:
- We will work with and take steps to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully.
- The school will take care to make an informed evaluation of the severity of the incident, taking into account the ways in which cyberbullying differs from other forms of bullying.
- The school will deliver appropriate and consistent sanctions.

Useful resources
The Parent Zone has established a training programme designed to enable schools and professionals working with parents to deliver their own sessions on internet safety. They also provide innovative resources for schools to help and support parents, particularly around e-safety.

Facebook has produced Empowering Educators support sheet specifically for teachers and launched the Bullying Prevention Hub with Yale's Centre for Emotional Intelligence.

Getting offensive content taken down
If online content is offensive or inappropriate, and the person or people responsible are known, you need to ensure they understand why the material is unacceptable or offensive and request they remove it. Most social networks have reporting mechanisms in place to report content which breaches their terms. If the person responsible has not been identified, or does not respond to requests to take down the material, the staff member should use the tools on the social networking site directly to make a report.

Some service providers will not accept complaints lodged by a third party. In cases of mobile phone abuse, where the person being bullied is receiving malicious calls and messages, the account holder will need to contact the provider directly.

Before you contact a service provider, it is important to be clear about where the content is; for example by taking a screen shot of the material that includes the web address. If you are requesting they take down material that is not illegal, be clear to point out how it breaks the site's terms and conditions. Where the material is suspected of being illegal the school will contact the police directly.

Contact details for reporting issues on social networking sites

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/reporting-to-social-media-sites-/

Checklist

Due to the rapidly changing technology which enables cyberbullying, the following checklist will be used regularly by the school.

- School governors, head teachers, and senior management team members are familiar with the cyber bullying guidance: https://www.childnet.com/resources/cyberbullying-guidance-for-schools
- The whole-school community understands what is meant by 'cyberbullying', it's potential impact, how it differs from other forms of bullying and why it is unacceptable.
- All staff have been provided with information and professional development opportunities regarding understanding, preventing and responding to cyberbullying. Emphasis has been placed on the importance of understanding child protection and other legal issues that may relate to cyberbullying incidents.
- Current school policy, guidance and information relevant to cyberbullying has been reviewed regularly, to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils and staff. This includes: Behavioural agreements; Acceptable Use Policies, including the use of mobile phones and cameras within school; Employee terms and conditions; Pupil and staff support and pastoral care.

- The whole-school community understands reporting routes and responsibilities and the flow chart (above) is displayed in prominent places.
- Learning strategies and targets, as well as staff development programmes, support the innovative and engaging use of technologies and promotes its positive use which models safe and effective practice.
- The impact of prevention and response policies and practice is being monitored annually. Staff, pupils and parents feel confident that we effectively support those who are cyberbullied.

Appendix A

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Cyberbullying: Advice for headteachers and School staff

Who is this advice for?
This is non-statutory advice from the Department for Education for headteachers and all school staff on how to protect themselves from cyberbullying and how to tackle it if it happens.

Overview
All forms of bullying (including cyberbullying) should be handled as a community issue for the whole school. It is important that schools take measures to prevent and tackle bullying among pupils. But it is equally important that schools make it clear that bullying of staff, whether by pupils, parents or colleagues, is unacceptable. Evidence indicates that one in five (21%) teachers have reported having derogatory comments posted about them on social media sites from both parents and children.

School leaders, teachers, school staff, parents and pupils all have rights and responsibilities in relation to cyberbullying and should work together to create an environment in which pupils can learn and develop and staff can have fulfilling careers free from harassment and bullying.

Schools can offer support to parents on how to help their children engage safely and responsibly with social media, perhaps through a parents' evening, advice in a school newsletter or signposting to other sources of support and advice. Creating a good school-

parent relationship can help create an atmosphere of trust that encourages parents to raise concerns in an appropriate manner. Part of this is making sure that parents and carers are aware and understand how to communicate with the school. Schools should also make clear that it is not acceptable for pupils, parents or colleagues to denigrate and bully school staff via social media in the same way that it is unacceptable to do so face to face.

Schools should encourage all members of the school community including parents to use social media responsibly. Parents have a right to raise concerns about the education of their child, but they should do so in an appropriate manner.

School staff

All school staff are in a position of trust, and there are expectations that they will act in a professional manner at all times. Here is some key advice for staff which may help protect their online reputation:

Ensure you understand your school's policies on the use of social media, Childnet's 'Using Technology' guide has more information on what to be aware of.

Do not leave a computer or any other device logged in when you are away from your desk.

Enabling a PIN or passcode is an important step to protect you from losing personal data and images (or having them copied and shared) from your mobile phone or device if it is lost, stolen, or accessed by pupils.

Employers have a duty to support staff and no-one should feel victimised in the workplace. Staff should seek support from the senior management team, and their union representative if they are a member.

The Professional Online Safety Helpline is a free service for professionals and volunteers working with children and young people, delivered by the UK Safer Internet Centre. The helpline provides signposting, advice and mediation to resolve the e-safety issues which staff face, such as protecting professional identity, online harassment, or problems affecting young people; for example cyberbullying or sexting issues.

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Schools
Whole-school policies and practices designed to combat bullying, including cyberbullying, should be developed by and for the whole school community. All employers, including employers of school staff in all settings, have statutory and common law duties to look after the physical and mental health of their employees. This includes seeking to protect staff from cyberbullying by pupils, parents and other members of staff and supporting them if it happens.

Schools should develop clear guidance to help protect every member of the school community and to ensure that sanctions are appropriate and consistent. This will need to be effectively communicated to and discussed with employees, pupils and parents. Kidscape has also produced best practice advice and guidelines for professionals. The Diana Award also runs a whole school Anti-Bullying Programme, information and good practice can be found at www.antibullyingpro.com.

Reporting
The whole school community should understand reporting routes and responsibilities. Many schools will appoint a designated person to deal with bullying while others will distribute responsibility among a number of staff.

Acceptable use policies

Every school should have clear and understood policies in place that include the acceptable use of technologies by pupils and staff that address cyberbullying. Agreements on the responsible use of technology should include:

Rules on the use of school equipment, software and access routes when used on or off the school premises within school hours: for example, internet access, tablets, lap tops and mobile phones.

Acceptable behaviour for pupils and employees, including behaviour outside school: for example teachers' and pupils' use of social networking services and other sites, so as not to harm others or bring the school into disrepute.

School staff should expect the school to react quickly to reported incidents or support the member of staff concerned to do so. It is also important that staff who are harassed in this way receive support and information enabling them to access appropriate personal support. The school should endeavour to approach internet providers or other agencies on their behalf in order to request that the inappropriate material is removed. The internet provider may only accept a request from the victim. However, the school may want to take action if it is on a school website or email address.

If it is necessary for the person being bullied to contact the service providers directly, the school may provide support. This might apply, for example, in cases of identity theft, impersonation or abuse via a mobile phone service.

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Some service providers will not accept complaints lodged by a third party. In cases of mobile phone abuse, where the person being bullied is receiving malicious calls and messages, the account holder will need to contact the provider directly.

Before you contact a service provider, it is important to be clear about where the content is; for example by taking a screen shot of the material that includes the web address. If you are requesting they take down material that is not illegal, be clear to point out how it breaks the site's terms and conditions. Where the material is suspected of being illegal you should contact the police directly.

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