

THE ROYAL ALEXANDRA AND ALBERT SCHOOL



CYBER BULLYING POLICY

The Governors and staff at The Royal Alexandra and Albert School are committed to providing a safe and happy learning environment, promoting equality and diversity and ensuring the well-being of all members of the community. It is their clear intention to promote good behaviour and to exercise their responsibilities in ensuring the safeguarding and welfare of all students and staff within the community. This policy should be read in conjunction with the School Rewards and Behaviour Management Policy and Anti-bullying policy.

Approved by the Governing Body on **17 May 2016**

Responsible member of SLT: **Mark Skidmore**

The policy applies to all staff

Next review: **Summer 2017**

1 Introduction

The Governing Body recognises that technology plays an important and positive role in children's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the School community to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip children with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

2 Aims

The aims of this policy are 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 boarding community.
- There are effective measures to deal effectively with cases of cyber bullying.
- The effectiveness of prevention measures is monitored.

3 What is 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: 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.

4 Preventing cyber bullying

4.1 Understanding and discussion

- A designated member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for overseeing the practices and procedures outlined in this policy and for monitoring its effectiveness. He/She will report to the Headmaster.
- Staff will receive training in identifying cyber bullying and understanding their responsibilities. The responsible member of the SLT will liaise with the Head of ICT on this matter.
- All staff will be helped to keep up to date with the technologies that children are using.

- The pupils will be involved in developing and communicating a code of advice on protecting themselves from getting caught up in cyber bullying and on reporting cases they experience. They will have a voice through the School Council.
- Pupils will be educated about cyber bullying through a variety of means: assemblies, Anti-bullying Week, projects (ICT and PSHCE), etc.
- Staff, Pupils and Parents will sign an Acceptable Use Policy ('AUP') on accepting a place at RAAS. Parents will be asked to confirm that they have discussed the AUP contents with their children.
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on cyber bullying via literature, talks, etc.
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on the legalities of contractual agreements with web companies and organisations.
- Parents will be asked to sign an AUP before their children are allowed to use the internet in School and will be asked to confirm that they have discussed its contents with their children.
- Pupils, staff and parents will be involved in evaluating and improving policies and procedures.

5 Policies and practices

5.1 The School will:

- Ensure that existing policies are reviewed and updated to include cyber bullying where appropriate.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to contribute to this process.
- Maintain records of all cyber bullying incidents and report regularly to the Governing Body.
- Review the AUP regularly to ensure it remains appropriate as technologies develop.
- Publish the rules and sanctions relating to this policy clearly and effectively.

6 Promoting the positive use of technology

6.1 The School will:

- Make positive use of technology across the curriculum.
- Use Continuing Professional Development opportunities to help staff develop their practice creatively and support pupils in safe and responsible use.
- Explore ways of using technology to support assertiveness, self-esteem and to develop friendships.
- Ensure all staff and children understand the importance of password security and the need to log out of accounts.

7 Making reporting easier

7.1 The School will:

- Enable staff to recognise non-verbal signs and indications of cyber bullying.
- Publicise and promote the message that asking for help is the right thing to do and shows strength and good judgement.
- Publicise to all members of the School community the ways in which cyber bullying can be reported.
- Provide information for 'bystanders' including reassurances about protection from becoming victims themselves.
- Provide information on external reporting routes e.g. mobile phone Company, internet service provider, Childline.

8 Responding to Cyber bullying

8.1 Most cases of cyber bullying will be dealt with through the School's existing Anti-bullying Policy and Behaviour Policy. Some features of cyber bullying differ from other forms of bullying and may require 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 other 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.

9 Support for the person being bullied

9.1 The School will:

- Offer emotional support; reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling.
- Advise the person not to retaliate or reply. Instead, keep the evidence and take it to their parent or a member of staff.
- Advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain.
- Unless the victim sees it as a punishment, they may be advised to change e.g. mobile phone number.

- If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed, try to get it removed from the web. If the person who posted it is known, ensure they understand why it is wrong and ask them to remove it. Alternatively the School will contact the host provider and make a report to get the content taken down.
- If appropriate confiscate the mobile phone and ask pupil to delete the offending content and say who they have sent it on to.
- Contact the police in cases of actual/suspected illegal content.
- If appropriate assist the person being bullied to block the person bullying from their sites and services.

10 Investigation

10.1 Instances of cyber bullying should be referred for investigation to the pupil's Head of Year or the Key Stage Coordinator. If necessary the matter will be referred for further investigation to the SLT.

- Staff and pupils should be advised to preserve evidence and a record of abuse; save phone messages, record or save-and-print instant messenger conversations, print or produce a screen-grab of social network pages, print , save whole email messages.
- If images are involved, determine whether they might be illegal or raise child protection concerns. This will be decided by the child protection team.
- Identify the bully.
- Any allegations against staff should be handled as other allegations following guidance in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.

11 Working with the bully and applying sanctions

11.1 The aim of the sanctions will be:

- To help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop.
- To hold the perpetrator to account, getting them to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour.
- To demonstrate to the School community that cyber bullying is unacceptable and that the School has effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving similarly.
- Sanctions for any breaches of AUPs or internet/mobile phone agreements will be applied.
- In applying sanctions, consideration must be given to type and impact of bullying and the possibility that it was unintentional or was in retaliation.
- The outcome must include helping the bully to recognise the consequence of their actions and providing support to enable the attitude and behaviour of the bully to change.

- For details for the type of sanctions please refer to the Behaviour Management Policy.

12 Evaluating the effectiveness of prevention measures

12.1 The School will:

- Use the School Council to hear the children's point of view.
- Identify areas for improvement and incorporate children's ideas.
- Conduct an annual evaluation including a review of recorded cyber bullying incidents, a survey of pupil and staff experiences and a parent satisfaction survey.
- Publicise evaluation findings; celebrate what works and what improvements are planned.

13 Legal duties and powers

- The School has a duty to protect all its members and provide a safe, healthy environment.
- The Headmaster has the power 'to such extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off-site or not under the control or charge of a member of staff. (Education and Inspections Act 2006).
- School staff may request a pupil to reveal a message or other phone/electronic device content and may search and confiscate the phone/electronic device if they have 'good reason' to do so. (Searching, Screening and Confiscation, February 2014)
- Some cyber bullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws including Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

This policy will be reviewed annually

Next review: Spring Term 2017