

Woodbridge School ANTI-CYBERBULLYING

1 Policy

Bullying is a most unpleasant aspect of life in any society and at Woodbridge School we regard it as most important to have a clear policy to prevent it. This is a policy declared by the School and made openly available to staff, pupils and parents so that all parties are committed to upholding it.

Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. It can take a number of forms: physical and verbal, obvious or subtle and can take place over an extended period of time.

Cyberbullying fulfils all the above, but in addition has other components to it and is dealt with further in this policy document.

It is important to note that with technology and its uses developing rapidly, this document will need to be under fairly constant review and will need to be consulted frequently to keep up to date.

1.1 What is cyberbullying?

From DfE Preventing and Tackling Bullying:

Cyber-Bullying

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 which can happen 24/7, with a potentially bigger audience, and more accessories as people forward on content at a click.

Cyberbullying is the sending or posting of harmful or cruel texts or images using the internet or other (digital) communication devices.

There are many different types of cyber-bullying:

- Text messages - unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.
- Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
- 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.
- Emails - threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a made-up name or someone else's name.

or

- Chatroom bullying - menacing or upsetting replies to children or young people when they are in a web-based chatroom.

- Instant messaging - unpleasant messages sent whilst children are having real-time conversations online.
- Bullying via websites - use of blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites to spread upsetting lies about someone. This includes social networking websites such as Bebo, MySpace, FaceBook etc.

It is important to note that many aspects of cyberbullying outlined above are illegal under UK law, and the School has the right to read e-mail and other electronic communications and take action as a result of information obtained in this way.

Woodbridge School's view on cyberbullying is that the School will take action to prevent cyberbullying wherever possible and take action to stop such bullying as does occur, whenever the School is involved however peripherally.

1.2 Policy Aims

- To ensure that there is a clear procedure to follow which deals with incidents of cyberbullying and that this is made explicit to staff, pupils and parents.
- To prevent cyberbullying by providing opportunity for discussion by pupils and staff within the School's programme of pastoral care.
- To ensure that all pupils have access to an adult in School to whom they may talk in confidence in the knowledge that something will be done immediately to redress the problem and that the matter will be handled discreetly and sensitively.
- To make the unacceptable nature of cyberbullying and the consequences of any repetition clear to the cyberbully and his/her parents/guardians.
- To follow up each incident so as to ensure that the victim is given as much support as possible and also to prevent a recurrence of the behaviour.
- To make clear to parents of both victims and cyberbullies the actions which are being taken by the School, the reasons for doing so and the extent of the support which parents can offer to reinforce those actions.

2 Procedure - Senior School

- Any incident of cyberbullying must be reported to the pupil's Tutor or to a Housemaster/Mistress or Head of Sixth Form. Incidents may be reported via any member of staff (whether teaching, administrative or ancillary), prefects, pupils or parents/guardians. The Tutor/Housemaster/Mistress will report the incident to the Senior Master, Senior Mistress or Head of Sixth Form. Investigation may be undertaken by the Head of Computing/ICT and/or the Network Manager and staff.
- When it is deemed necessary, by the Senior Master/Mistress or Head of Sixth Form, written accounts will be required from all those involved.
- Sanctions to be applied as appropriate include: suspension of an individual's internet access at School and/or suspension of an individual's user account for a period of time.

- In serious cases (and where cyberbullying by an individual continues) the Headmaster may decide to exclude from School the person or persons responsible.
- Through regular communication between the Senior Master/Mistress, Head of Sixth Form, Housemasters/Mistresses, Tutors, Chaplain and Pupil Support Group, it is hoped that any pupil who either seems to be a victim of cyberbullying or is repeatedly being a cyberbully will be quickly identified.

3 Procedure - The Abbey

- Any incident of cyber bullying must be reported to the pupil's class teacher, the Second Master or The Master. Incidents may be reported via any member of staff (whether teaching, administrative or ancillary), pupils or parents/guardians. Investigation may be undertaken by the Abbey Teacher Responsible for ICT and/or the Network Manager and staff.
- When it is deemed necessary, by The Master, written accounts will be required from all those involved. The Master will contact the parents of those pupils involved.
- Sanctions to be applied as appropriate include: suspension of an individual's internet access at School.
- In serious cases (and where cyber bullying by an individual continues) The Master, in consultation with the Headmaster, may decide to exclude from School the person or persons responsible.
- Through regular communication between the class teachers, the Second Master and The Master, it is hoped that any pupil who either seems to be a victim of cyber bullying or is repeatedly being a cyber bully will be quickly identified.

4 Procedure - Queen's House

- Any incident of cyberbullying must be reported to the pupil's class teacher or to the Head of Queen's House. Incidents may be reported via any member of staff (whether teaching, administrative or ancillary), pupils or parents/guardians.
- Investigation may be undertaken by the Head of Computing/ICT and/or the Network Manager and staff.
- When it is deemed necessary, by the Head of Queen's House, written accounts will be required from all those involved.
- Sanctions to be applied as appropriate include: suspension of an individual's internet access at School.
- In serious cases (and where cyber bullying by an individual continues) the Head of Queen's House, in consultation with the Headmaster, may decide to exclude from School the person or persons responsible.
- Through regular communication between the class teachers, and the Head of Queen's House, it is hoped that any pupil who either seems to be a victim of cyber bullying or is repeatedly being a cyber bully will be quickly identified.

5 Further resources:

Specialist Organisations:

[Anti-bullying Alliance \(ABA\)](#): Brings together more than 65 organisations with the aim of reducing bullying and creating safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

[Beatbullying](#): Beatbullying is the leading bullying prevention charity in the UK and provides anti-bullying resources, information, advice and support for young people, parents and professionals affected by bullying.

[Kidscape](#): Kidscape is a charity working UK-wide to keep children safe from bullying and sexual abuse.

[Childnet International](#): Specialist resources for young people to raise awareness of online safety and how to protect themselves.

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