

Mayflower Primary School



SET SAIL FOR SUCCESS

Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy

This policy was adopted in Summer 2015
It will be reviewed annually and updated in Summer 2018

Mayflower school believes that all people in our community have the right to teach and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. We believe that every individual in school has a duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person.

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

There are many types of cyber-bullying. Although there may be some of which we are unaware, here are the more common:

1. **Picture/video-clips** via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
2. **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.
3. **Emails** — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.
4. **Chatroom bullying** — menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based chatroom.
5. **Instant messaging (IM)** — unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger) or Yahoo Chat – although there are others.
6. **Bullying via websites** — use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal "own web space" sites such as Bebo (which works by signing on in one's school, therefore making it easy to find a victim) and MySpace – although there are others.

At Mayflower School, we take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually. An episode may result in a simple verbal warning. It might result in a parental discussion. Clearly, more serious cases will result in further sanctions.

Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24hours a day, 7 days a week. Cyber-bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.

Young people are particularly adept at adapting to new technology, an area that can seem a closed world to adults. For example, the numerous acronyms used by young people in chat rooms and in text messages (POS - Parents Over Shoulder, TUL – Tell You later) make it difficult for adults to recognise potential threats.

At Mayflower School, pupils are taught how to:

- Understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them. This is done in ICT lessons, through assemblies and circle time.
- Know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyberbullied.
- Report any problems with cyberbullying. If they do have a problem, they can talk to the school, parents, the police, the mobile network (for phone) or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.

Mayflower School has:

- An Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that includes clear statements about E-communications
- Information for parents on: E-communication standards and practices in schools.

The messages we give to pupils are:

If you're being bullied by phone or the Internet

- Remember, bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.
- Don't ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line.
- Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don't get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.
- Don't give out your personal details online - if you're in a chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.

- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.

There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying. For example, **www.kidscape.org** and **www.wiredsafety.org**

Emails

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails ('flames') — the sender wants a response, so don't give them that satisfaction.
- Keep the emails as evidence. And tell an adult about them.
- Ask an adult to contact the sender's Internet Service Provider (ISP) by writing abuse@ and then the host, e.g **abuse@hotmail.com**
- Never reply to someone you don't know, even if there's an option to 'unsubscribe'. Replying simply confirms your email address as a real one.

Web bullying

If the bullying is on a website (e.g. Bebo) tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying were face-to-face – even if you don't actually know the bully's identity.

Serious bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature. Your parent or teacher will help you do this.

Chat rooms and instant messaging

- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online.
- It's a good idea to use a nickname. And don't give out photos of yourself.
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you don't know. Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room.
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your parents or carers if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.
- Think carefully about what you write; don't leave yourself open to bullying.
- Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account.

Three steps to stay out of harm's way

- Respect other people - online and off. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.
- If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm – and ignore them.
- 'Do as you would be done by.' Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for your own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

The law is on your side

The **Protection from Harassment Act**, the **Malicious Communications Act 1988** and Section 43 of the **Telecommunications Act** may be used to combat cyberbullying. People may be fined or sent to prison for up to six months.

Signed by The Chair of Governors:

Date: