

# Date Valley School

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## Cyber Bullying Guidance.

Cyber bullying is the use of modern communication technologies to embarrass, humiliate, threaten, or intimidate an individual in the attempt to gain power and control over them.

Because of the anonymity that new communications technologies offer, anyone with a mobile phone or internet connection can be a target for cyber bullying. What's more, bullies can reach much larger numbers within a peer group than they can with conventional bullying. Vindictive comments posted on a website, for instance, can be seen by a large audience, as can video clips sent by mobile phone.

Most cyber bullying is done by children in the same class or year group. Although it leaves no visible scars, cyber bullying of all types can be extremely destructive.

- Cyber bullying affects a significant number of pupils.
- There are electronic methods to record and track this type of bullying.
- The school must have a clear policy for appropriate use, monitoring and sanctions that is owned by the whole school.
- Students must be taught how to use technology safely and appropriately.
- There is legislation to protect victims.

### Duty of Care:

- Date Valley School has a duty to ensure that teachers have sufficient knowledge to deal with cyber bullying in school.
- The curriculum teaches the children about the risks of new communications technologies, the consequences of their misuse, and how to use them safely.
- All e-communications used on the school site or as part of school activities off-site are monitored.
- Internet-blocking technologies are continually updated and harmful sites are blocked.
- Security systems are in place to prevent images and information about pupils and staff being accessed improperly from outside school
- Providing support for parents and pupils if cyber bullying occurs by:
  1. Assessing the harm caused.
  2. Identifying those involved.
- A member of staff should be familiar with their role and responsibilities in:
  1. Teaching children safe internet etiquette.
  2. Monitoring electronic messages and images.
  3. Giving pupils key guidance on personal privacy rights.
  4. Taking action if a child is being cyber-bullied or is bullying someone else.
  5. Informing parents about emerging technologies their child might be using.
  6. Ensure parents know who to approach at the school if they suspect that their child is being cyber-bullied or is bullying someone else.

### Code of Conduct:

Here are some points that could be included in the code of conduct that you discuss and agree with the children. Use these points to help you start the discussion, but aim to end up with a small number (up to five or so) of short statements that are suitable for the age of the children.

- If you feel you are being bullied by email, text or online, do talk to someone you trust.
- Never send any bullying or threatening messages. Anything you write and send could be read by an adult.
- Serious bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.

- If applicable ask the parent to contact the service provider (mobile phone company / your internet provider) to tell them about the bullying. They may be able to track down the bully.
- Use blocking software - you can block instant messages from certain people or use mail filters to block emails from specific email addresses.
- Don't reply to bullying or threatening text messages or emails - this could make matters worse.
- Don't give out your personal details online - if you're in a chat room, 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.
- Don't forward abusive texts or emails or images to anyone.
- Do not open emails from sources you do not know.
- Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account.
- Remember that sending abusive or threatening messages is against the law.
- Respect others. Do not spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.

The Kidscape booklet 'Don't Bully Me!' gives advice to primary school children on what to do if they are bullied. <http://www.kidscape.org.uk/assets/downloads/ksdontbullyme.pdf>

This guidance has been read and approved for Date Valley School, by the School Principal and the School Manager.

Date: April 2009.