



## Foremarke Hall

Repton Preparatory School

# Cyber Bullying Policy

This policy is a whole-school policy including EYFS. It is relevant to all staff and should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- The Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Portable Electronic Devices Policy
- ICT Network Policy
- Boarding Handbook
- PED Parent/Pupil contract

### Introduction and Definition – Cyber bullying

*Cyber bullying can be defined as 'the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, to deliberately upset someone else'. It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target. However, it differs in several significant ways from other kinds of bullying: the invasion of home and personal space; the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages, the size of the audience, perceived anonymity, and even the profile of the person doing the bullying and their target.*

**The following policy document has been produced with reference to 'Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools' produced by the DfE.**

Foremarke Hall is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils in its care. As is made clear in the Anti-Bullying policy, Foremarke stands against bullying.

Cyber Bullying is a form of bullying, although there are some particular features which set it alone from bullying. The key differences are:-

- **Impact** – The scale and scope of cyber bullying can be greater than other types of bullying
- **Targets and Perpetrators** – The people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets.
- **Location** – the 24/7 and anyplace nature of cyber bullying

- **Anonymity** – The person being bullied will not always know who is attacking 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.

### **Procedures to help prevent cyber bullying**

The prevention of cyber bullying is the responsibility of the whole school community. The Head of ICT, Head of PSHE, Assistant Head Pastoral, Head of Safeguarding, Head of Year and Form Tutors play a significant role in ensuring that all pupils understand the associated risks of technology.

As with all aspects of pastoral care, education lies at the heart of our approach. Issues associated with the appropriate use of ICT are discussed both inside and outside the classroom. All pupils follow a structured programme of ICT where pupils are instructed on the responsible use of technology. Each time a pupil logs on to the school network advice is given with regard to the safe usage of email and the internet. Work in ICT is supplemented by the PSHE program including the topic ‘cyber bullying’ and an annual Anti - Bullying week.

The ICT Network policy details all aspects of screening emails and preventing inappropriate use of the internet.

Our aim is also to help parents understand the appropriate use of ICT through a half termly letter dealing with a particularly relevant topic and an annual talk on cyber safety given by an outside agency.

Where incidents of cyber bullying do occur they are monitored and recorded in the same way as all other forms of bullying.

### **Support for those being bullied**

Cyber bullying is a particularly pernicious aspect of bullying and is recognised as posing significant risk to the welfare of children. Current research into the extent of cyber bullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people’s lives. Cyber bullying can have a seriously detrimental impact on a victim for a number of reasons.

- The sense of invasion of an individual’s home and personal space.
- The anonymity (at least initially) of the bully.
- The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages.
- The ability to broadcast upsetting messages and images to a potentially huge audience.
- The opportunity for others to become involved in the bullying activity.

### **Support for the Bully**

- It is important for the bully to be aware of the impact of their actions.
- The perpetrator will need to be supported in trying to understand the need to change their attitude and behaviour.
- It is important to recognise that the bully may need emotional support.
- The bully should be involved in all stages of the process including filling in of initial reports, meeting with the child who is being bullied (where deemed appropriate by the mediator) and follow up meetings

**Examples of Cyber Bullying may include but are not restricted to**

- Threats and intimidating messages sent via computers or mobile phones.
- Cyber-stalking – repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages.
- Pupils who set up website pages and invite others to post derogatory comments about a pupil.
- Pupils who film fights or assaults and circulate them via mobile phones.
- Pupils sending, insulting and vicious text messages or messages of a sexual nature.
- Pupils posting fake and/or obscene photographs of the victim on a social networking site.

**Responding to cyber bullying and records**

The guiding principles and practices outlined in The Anti-Bullying Policy will underpin our approach when responding to any and all forms of bullying. In addition to this there may be a need to report the incident to the Designated Person for Safeguarding / Child Protection, The Assistant Head Pastoral or the Headmaster.

**Procedures and Sanctions**

- All cases of Cyber bullying will be dealt with according to the procedure and guidelines identified in the Anti-bullying policy
- Once the person responsible has been identified, steps are taken to ensure they understand and appreciate the impact of their actions. This is particularly important when dealing with examples of cyber bullying, as the bully may not witness directly the effect their behaviour has had on the victim
- Pupils are also reminded that misconduct of this kind outside school will be subject to school discipline if the welfare of other pupils or the culture or reputation of the school are placed at risk
- In serious cases the Headmaster may consider suspension or indeed permanent exclusion
- Where there are concerns that a criminal act has been committed or that a pupil has been subject to child abuse, the matter may need to be referred to the police and / or children's services.

Cases of Cyber bullying are treated very seriously and appropriate sanctions will always be taken.

The Cyber Bullying policy is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team and will be reviewed according to the school's policy review cycle.

Last Reviewed: Michaelmas 2017

Next Review: Michaelmas 2019