South Hylton Primary School

Policy for Cyber-bullying

A.V. Watson
Updated June 2015 to incorporate the role of Promoting British Values and RRSA

CYBER BULLYING POLICY

South Hylton Primary 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.

THE ROLE OF THE CURRICULUM

South Hylton Primary School is a Rights Respecting School (RRSA) and, as such, our curriculum, explicit and implicit, has a vital role in promoting positive attitudes and tackling stereotypical viewpoints. Our curriculum is "broad and balanced" It promotes respect, tolerance and diversity. Children are encouraged to share their views and recognize that they are entitled to have their own different beliefs which should not be used to influence others.

Our PSHE provision is embedded across the curriculum,. It directs our assemblies and underpins the ethos of the school. It is recognized that children with low aspirations are more vulnerable to Radicalization and therefore we strive to equip our pupils with confidence, self-belief, respect and tolerance as well as setting high standards and expectations for themselves.

Children are regularly taught about how to stay safe when using the internet and are encouraged to recognize that people are not always who they say they are online. They

are taught to seek adult help if they are upset or concerned about anything they read or see on the internet.

PROMOTING BRITISH VALUES

South Hylton Primary School is committed to serving its community. It recognizes the multi-cultural, multi faith and ever-changing nature of the United Kingdom. It also understands the vital role it has in ensuring that groups or individuals within the school are not subjected to intimidation or radicalization by those wishing to unduly, or illegally, influence them.

It follows equal opportunities guidance which guarantees that there will be no discrimination against any individual or group, regardless of faith, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, political or financial status, or similar. South Hylton Primary School is dedicated to preparing students for their adult life beyond the formal curriculum and ensuring that it promotes and reinforces British values to all of its students.

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The Government emphasises that schools are required to ensure that key 'British Values' are taught in all UK schools. The government set out its definition of British values in the Prevent Strategy.

The five British Values are:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

South Hylton Primary School uses strategies within the National curriculum and beyond to secure such outcomes for students. The examples that follow show some of the many ways we seek to embed British values.

Democracy

The principle of democracy is consistently being reinforced at South Hylton Primary School, with democracy processes being used for important decisions within the school community, for instance, elections being held for School Council and Peer Mediator positions. The principle of democracy is also explored in the History and Religious Studies curriculum as well as in assemblies.

The rule of law

The importance of laws, whether they be those that govern the class, the school, or the country, are consistently reinforced at South Hylton Primary School.

Students are taught the rules and expectations of the school which are reinforced through the use of class charters linked to our work on RRSA. Students are taught the value and the reasons behind laws that govern and protect us, the responsibilities that this involves and the consequences when laws are broken.

Individual liberty

At South Hylton Primary School, students are actively encouraged to make independent choices, with the knowledge that they are in a safe, secure and supportive environment. Staff at South Hylton Primary School educate and provide boundaries for students to make informed choices, through a safe environment and an empowering education

Students are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised on how to exercise these safely, for example through e-safety.

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South Hylton Primary School has a robust anti-bullying culture.

Mutual Respect

Respect is a strong part of South Hylton Primary School and is part of its Mission Statement & Values (Respect, Support, Enjoy, Achieve). Students learn that their behaviours have an effect on their own rights and those of others. All members of the school community treat each other with respect and this is reiterated through its teaching and learning environments.

Mutual respect is embraced throughout the curriculum by providing the opportunity for students to express their views in a safe environment.

Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

This is achieved though equipping students with the ability to understand their place in a culturally diverse society and by giving the opportunities to experience such diversity within the school community. The Religious Studies curriculum provides a broad and balanced education on a range of faiths, religions and cultures

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. **Text messages** —that are threatening or cause discomfort - also included here is "Bluejacking" (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using "Bluetooth" wireless technology)
2. **Picture/video-clips** via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
3. **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.
4. **Emails** — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name.
5. **Chatroom bullying** — menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based Chatroom.
6. **Instant messaging** (IM) — unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger) or Yahoo Chat – although there are others.
7. **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 South Hylton Primary 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, 24 hours 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 South Hylton Primary School, pupils are taught how to:
- Understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- Know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyber bullied.
- Report any problems with cyber bullying. 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.

South Hylton Primary School has:

1. Information for parents on: E-communication standards and practices in schools, what to do if problems arise, what is being taught in the curriculum.
2. Support for parents and pupils if cyber bullying occurs by: assessing the harm caused, identifying those involved, taking steps to repair harm and to prevent recurrence in line with our anti-bullying policy.

For pupils:

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, be careful about 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 of you.

- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.

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- 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 cyber bullying. For example, **www.kidscape.org** and **www.wiredsafety.org** have some useful tips:

Text/video messaging

- You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you by making them believe you've changed your phone number. To find out how to do this, visit your network provider's website.

- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider.

- Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying.

- Don't delete messages from cyber bullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.

- Text harassment is a crime. If the calls are simply annoying, tell a teacher, parent or carer. If they are threatening or malicious and they persist, report them to the police, taking with you all the messages you've received.

Phone calls

If you get an abusive or silent phone call, don't hang up immediately. Instead, put the phone down and walk away for a few minutes. Then hang up or turn your phone off.

Once they realise they can't get you rattled, callers usually get bored and stop bothering you.

1. Always tell someone else: a teacher, youth worker, parent, or carer. Get them to support you and monitor what's going on.
2. Don't give out personal details such as your phone number to just anyone.
   Never leave your phone lying around. When you answer your phone, just say 'hello', not your name. If they ask you to confirm your phone number, ask what number they want and then tell them if they've got the right number or not.
   You can use your voicemail to vet your calls. A lot of mobiles display the caller's number. See if you recognise it. If you don't, let it divert to voicemail instead of answering it.
3. Don't leave your name on your voicemail greeting. You could get an adult to record your greeting. Their voice might stop the caller ringing again.

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Almost all calls nowadays can be traced. If the problem continues, think about changing your phone number. If you receive calls that scare or trouble you, make a note of the times and dates and report them to the police. If your mobile can record calls, take the recording too.

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. 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
1. Respect other people - online and off. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.
2. If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm – and ignore them.
3. '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**

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And Section 43 of the **Telecommunications Act** may be used to combat Cyber bullying. People may be fined or sent to prison for up to six months.