Cyber-Bullying Policy

Our Vision
Meadowside is a nurturing community primary school with a strong sense of pride and belonging, with the belief that all have the potential to thrive.

Our Purpose
We exist to cultivate a love of learning by broadening horizons and opening minds to new possibilities. Through our School Values, we grow confident individuals who aspire to shape the future.

Responsibility   Reflection   Respect   Resilience

Chair of Governors:	Angela Pratt	Signed:	
Chair of Committee:			
Committee Responsible:			
Staff Responsible:	Chloe Rodwell		
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All forms of bullying are taken very seriously at Meadowside Primary School and are always acted upon. We actively encourage children to share with a trusted adult any concerns they may have.

The school recognises that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

Cyber- Bullying

Cyber-Bullying may be defined as 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying'.

It can take a number of different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), sexting (e.g sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones) vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and 'trolling' (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online).

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 from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:

- By facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space. Cyberbullying can take place at any time and intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe and personal.
- The potential for anonymity on the part of the bully. This can be extremely distressing for the victim.
- The potential for the bully to play very rapidly to a larger audience so the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying.
- Through the knowledge that the data is in the world-wide domain, disproportionately amplifying the negative effect on the victim, even though the bully may feel his / her actual actions had been no worse than conventional forms of bullying
- The difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages as more people get drawn in as accessories. By passing on a humiliating picture or message a bystander becomes an accessory to the bullying. The profile of the bully and target can be different to other forms of bullying as cyberbullying can take place between peers and across generations. Teachers can be victims and age and size are not important.
- Many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence so it is important the victim saves the information.

Virtual Bullying

With more and more of us using email, mobile phones and other electronic devices, bullying does not have to happen in person. Silent phone calls or abusive texts,

emails and social networking sites can be just as distressing as being bullied face to face.

Virtual bullying is sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices.

How we as a school deals with Cyber-Bullying:

- Staff – all incidents must be logged on My Concern and be reported to the Head Teacher who will then ensure the person being bullied is being supported, take responsibility for investigating and managing the incident and for contacting the police and other services if appropriate. If staff want additional advice and support, they can seek this from their union or professional association.
- Pupils – procedures will be followed in line with the school Bullying policy and LA and DfE guidelines.

Categories of Cyber Bullying

Text message bullying involves sending unwelcome texts that are threatening or cause discomfort.

Picture/video-clip bullying via mobile phone cameras is used to make the person being bullied feel threatened or embarrassed, with images usually sent to other people.

'Happy slapping' involves filming and sharing physical attacks.

Phone call bullying via mobile phone uses silent calls or abusive messages. Sometimes the bullied person's phone is stolen and used to harass others, who then think the phone owner is responsible. As with all mobile phone bullying, the perpetrators often disguise their numbers, sometimes using someone else's phone to avoid being identified.

Email bullying uses email to send bullying or threatening messages, often using a pseudonym for anonymity or using someone else's name to pin the blame on them. Email bullying can also present as 'blackmailing' and threatening to reveal personal information or embarrassing photos/videos if they don't send money etc.

Chat room bullying involves sending menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room (this could be on chatrooms on gaming sites when using games on the PlayStation or Xbox.)

Bullying through instant messaging (IM) is an Internet-based form of bullying where children and young people are sent unpleasant messages as they conduct real-time conversations online (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Snap chat, TikTok, Instagram, WhatsApp etc.).

Bullying via websites includes the use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal polling sites. There has also been a significant increase in social networking sites for young people, which can provide new opportunities for cyber bullying.

Upskirting – includes taking videos/photos under a person's clothing without them knowing. This could then be shared online.

Advice for Parents

- Don't wait for something to happen before you act. Make sure your child understands how to use these technologies safely and knows about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- Make sure they know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyber bullied.
- Encourage your child to talk to you if they have any problems with cyber bullying. If they do have a problem, contact the school, the mobile network or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it.
- Parental control software can monitor and manage how your child uses the internet and their devices.
- Make it your business to know what your child is doing online and who your child's online friends are. It is important that parents and carers ensure that their children are engaged in safe and responsible online behaviour.

Suggestions for parents to stay involved

- Keep the computer or other electronic devices in a public place in the house. Periodically check on what your child is doing.
- Discuss the kinds of internet activities your child enjoys.
- Be up front with your child that you will periodically investigate the files on the computer, the browser history files, and your child's online activities.
- Search for your child's name online, look at his or her profiles and postings on community sites, review web pages or blogs.
- Tell your child that you may review his or her private communication activities if you have reason to believe you will find unsafe or irresponsible behaviour.
- Watch out for secretive behaviour as you approach your child when they are online, such as rapidly switching screens, changing passwords and for attempts to hide online behaviour, such as an empty history file.
- Apps are available to parents to limit the times and sites that children can use.

Advice for Pupils

If you believe you or someone else is the victim of cyber-bullying, you must speak to an adult as soon as possible. This person could be a parent/guardian, or a member of staff on your safety network.

- Do not delete anything. It has to be shown to your parents/carers or a member of staff at school (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying)
- If you are being bullied, 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. There is plenty of online advice on how to react to cyber bullying.

  For example, www.bullying.co.uk, www.childline.org.uk and www.nspcc.org.uk have some useful tips:

Text/Video Messaging

- You can turn off incoming messages for a couple of days.
- If bullying persists you can change your phone number (ask your mobile service provider).
- Do not 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. Visit their website for details.

Email

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails.
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you do not know.
- Always tell an adult if you receive unpleasant emails

Web

- If the bullying is on a website, tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying was face-to-face.

Social Media & Instant Messaging

- Make sure you are old enough to use a particular online service as many of the popular ones are 13+ (Facebook) or 16+ (WhatsApp).
- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online. It's a good idea to use a nickname. Do not give out photos of yourself either.
- Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them.
- Do not accept emails or open files from people you do not know.
- Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room/social media forum.
- Do not accept friend requests from unknown profiles.
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your parents or a trusted adult if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens anywhere online.
- Do not say or do things that you would not be comfortable saying/doing face to face with a person.

Think carefully about what you write online.

 REMEMBER: Always tell an adult.

Associated documents: School Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy