

### Definition

*Cyber bullying is the sending or posting of harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices. The DfE define cyber bullying as 'an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact against a victim who cannot easily defend him/herself'.*

### Introduction

Cyber bullying is a 'method' of bullying. It can be used to carry out all the different 'types' of bullying (such as racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to SEN and disabilities), but instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying in person, they use technology as a means of conducting the bullying.

Technology can be used both positively and negatively. The table below gives examples of a range of technologies and how they can be used.

Technology:	Great for	Examples of misuse
<b>Mobile phone</b>	Keeping in touch by voice or text, taking and sending pictures and film, listening to music, playing games, going online and sending emails. Useful in emergency situations and for allowing children a greater sense of independence.	Sending nasty calls or text messages, including threats, intimidation, and harassment. Taking and sharing humiliating images. Videoing other people being harassed and sending these to other phones or internet sites.
<b>Instant Messenger (IM)</b>	Text or voice chatting live with friends online. A quick and effective way of keeping in touch even while working on other things.	Sending nasty messages or content. Using someone else's account to forward rude or mean messages via their contacts list.
<b>Chatrooms and message boards</b>	Groups of people around the world can text or voice chat live about common interests. For young people, this can be an easy way to meet new people and explore issues which they are too shy to talk about in person.	Sending nasty or threatening anonymous messages. Groups of people deciding to pick on or ignore individuals. Making friends under false pretences – people pretending to be someone they're not in order to get personal information that they can misuse in a range of ways – e.g. by spreading secrets or blackmailing.
<b>Email</b>	Sending electronic letters, pictures and other files quickly and cheaply anywhere in the world.	Sending nasty or threatening messages. Forwarding unsuitable content including images and video clips, or sending computer viruses. Accessing someone else's account, e.g. to forward personal emails or delete emails.
<b>Webcams</b>	Taking pictures or recording messages. Being able to see and talk to someone live on your computer screen. Bringing far-off places to life or video conferencing.	Making and sending inappropriate content. Persuading or threatening young people to act in inappropriate ways. Using inappropriate recordings to manipulate young people.
<b>Social Networking sites</b>	Socialising with your friends and making new ones within online communities. Allowing young people to be creative online, even publishing online music. Personalising homepages and profiles, creating and uploading content.	Posting nasty comments, humiliating images / video. Accessing another person's account details and sending unpleasant messages, deleting information or making private information public. Groups of people picking on individuals by excluding them. Creating fake profiles to pretend to be someone else, e.g. to bully, harass or

		get the person into trouble.
<b>Video hosting sites</b>	Accessing useful educational, entertaining and original creative video content and uploading your own.	Posting embarrassing, humiliating film of someone.
<b>Virtual Learning (VLE's)</b>	School site, available from home and school, set up for tracking and recording student assignments, tests and activities, with message boards, chat and IM.	Posting inappropriate messages or images. Hacking into someone else's account to post inappropriate comments or delete schoolwork.
<b>Gaming sites, consoles and virtual worlds</b>	Live text or voice chat during online gaming between players across the world, or on handheld consoles with people in the same local area. Virtual worlds let users design their own avatars – a figure that represent them in the virtual world.	Name-calling, making abusive / derogatory remarks. Players may pick on weaker or less experienced users, repeatedly killing their characters. Forwarding unwanted messages to other devices in the immediate vicinity.

### What is different about cyber bullying?

Bullying is not new, but some features of cyber bullying are different from other forms of bullying:

- ✳ **invasion of home/personal space:** cyber bullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.
- ✳ **The audience can be very large and reached rapidly:** the difficulty in controlling electronically circulated messages means the scale and scope of cyber bullying can be greater than for other forms of bullying. Electronically forwarded content is hard to control, and the worry of content resurfacing can make it difficult for targets to move on.
- ✳ **People who cyber bully may attempt to remain anonymous:** this can be extremely distressing for those being bullied. The person cyber bullying may never be in the same physical space as their target.
- ✳ **The profile of the bully and target:** cyber bullying can take place both between peers and across generations; teachers have also been targets. Age or size are not important. Bystanders can also become accessories to the bullying; for example, by passing on a humiliating image.
- ✳ **Some instances of cyber bullying are known to be unintentional:** it can be the result of not thinking (something sent as a joke may be deeply upsetting or offensive to the recipient) or a lack of awareness of the consequences – for example saying something negative online about another student, or friend that they don't expect to be forwarded or viewed outside their immediate group.
- ✳ **Preventing Cyber bullying:** the best way to deal with cyber bullying is to prevent it happening in the first instance. Students are encouraged to follow the Welling school Anti-Cyber Bullying code. Welling School have identified many opportunities to reinforce the message to students, staff and parents/carers that bullying of any kind, including cyber bullying will not be tolerated. These include:

Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
<b>E-safety activities</b> Using email Using mobile technology On-line safety <b>Cyber bullying</b> Definitions of cyber bullying Technologies associated with cyber bullying Dealing with Cyber bullying Cyber bullying scenarios Chat room /on-line forums safety Cyberstalking Cyber bullying guidelines and student posters displayed in ICT rooms	Chat room safety Anti- bullying work through Drama Cyber bullying guidelines and posters displayed in ICT rooms Anti-bullying work through School Council
PSHE/Assemblies/Tutor Time	Parents/Carers
Anti- bullying Week Impact of Cyber bullying on individuals Mobile phone Safety Reporting Cyber bullying The role of the bystander Anti Cyber bullying code displayed in all classrooms	To be made aware of anti-bullying and cyber bullying policies through: Year 7 intake evening School website Admission interviews Headteacher newsletters
ALL STAFF TO BE AWARE OF AND UNDERSTAND	
☼ The Anti-Bullying Policy/ cyber bullying policy and their role in the process of keeping students safe.	
☼ The eSafety Policy for Kemnal Trust supported schools.	

The Welling School ICT Technical Support Staff operate three levels of filtering which help to protect both students and staff when they are accessing the internet.

1. **The London Grid for Learning** provides two layers of filtering.  
Students' internet is heavily restricted preventing access to inappropriate material such as pornography, racism etc. Staff filtering is moderately filtered so that it does not inhibit teaching and learning but still restricts access to highly inappropriate material.
2. **SurfControl**, which is managed by The Kemnal Trust / Welling School.  
This enables the ICT team to filter keywords for different users and groups.
3. **Impero**, which is managed by The Kemnal Trust / Welling School.  
This software allows reporting of sites visited by students and staff. It captures screenshots of the offending sites and any keywords that are typed by the user. The Executive Network Manager and the Head of ICT have access to the reports and data captured by the software.

### Responding to Cyber bullying

Students and parents/carers are encouraged to report all incidents of cyber bullying, in the first instance to the form tutor or Head of Year and are assured that they will be dealt with swiftly. In serious cases the school will involve the police.

The student being bullied should be assured that they have done the right thing and that action will be taken which does not place them at further risk of bullying of any kind.

- ☼ Staff, students and parents/carers are advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence, for example phone logs, text messages or images on networking sites. They can be useful to show parents of the perpetrator and where necessary, the police
- ☼ When evidence has been secured, the offensive material should be removed or deleted from the relevant device

- ✳ Once the situation has been resolved, the student who reported the cyber bullying should be monitored by the form tutor to ensure that there have been no further incidents
- ✳ All Cyber bullying incidents are thoroughly investigated and recorded in the school Bullying Log by Care and Guidance

As with all forms of bullying at Welling School, both victims and perpetrators will be offered appropriate support to ensure that there will be no reoccurrence of actions which will cause distress to any students.

### **Sanctions for the cyber bully**

Once the student(s) responsible for the cyber bullying has been identified, it is important that, as in other cases of bullying sanctions are applied. Steps should be taken to change the attitude and behaviour of the bully and a restorative approach may be appropriate. Parents/carers of all students would be involved and consideration would be given as to the appropriateness of involving outside agencies

Sanctions for cyber bullying would be considered in that same way as sanctions for other forms of bullying. These may involve:

- ✳ Loss of social time, break/lunch for a specified period of time
- ✳ Put on report to monitor behaviour towards others
- ✳ School Detention
- ✳ Seclusion
- ✳ Banned from bringing a mobile phone into school for a specified period of time
- ✳ Limiting internet access for a specified period of time

### **Further incidents of serious cyber bullying**

- ✳ A recommendation to the Headteacher may be made for a fixed-term exclusion
- ✳ Persistent bullying may result in a recommendation for permanent exclusion

### **The Role of the Governing Body**

- ✳ Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and its regular review
- ✳ Receive reports from the Headteacher as appropriate regarding the monitoring, logging and management of Cyber Bullying incidents

### **The Role of the Parent**

- ✳ Encourage your child to tell you if they come across any sites that could cause offence or pose some sort of danger.
- ✳ Try and position the computer in a high traffic area of your home so that you can keep an eye on your child's technology use.
- ✳ Ensure that you have the appropriate software to bar the types of websites you do not want your children to see.
- ✳ With regard to social networking, always explore the privacy settings of your child's Social Networking Site (SNS) to protect your child's privacy and to protect them from strangers.
- ✳ Talk to / check that your child does not give out too much personal information or posts inappropriate photos / film.
- ✳ As a safety precaution, talk to your child about sharing his / her password with you and / or make sure that you are 'accepted as a friend' on chat rooms, networking sites, etc.
- ✳ Use the SNS at 'reasonable times' of the day, rather than late and night / early hours of the morning.
- ✳ Act as a positive role model in the use of social networking sites and accessing appropriate material from the web.

## Civil and criminal law

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law, there are laws that can apply in terms of harassing or threatening behaviour, for example, or indeed menacing and threatening communications. In fact, some cyber bullying activities could be criminal offences under a range of different laws, including the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, which has both criminal and civil provision, the Malicious Communications Act 1988, section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 and the Public Order Act 1986.

This policy has links to the following school policies and procedures:

- ✳ Anti-bullying policy
- ✳ AEN policy
- ✳ Equality and diversity policy
- ✳ Behaviour policy
- ✳ Acceptable use policy (internet safety)
- ✳ Safeguarding policy
- ✳ Complaints Procedure
- ✳ eSafety Policy for Kemnal Trust Supported Schools

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## WELLING SCHOOL ANTI-CYBER BULLYING CODE

Being sent an abusive or threatening text message, or seeing nasty comments about yourself on a website can be really upsetting. This code gives you six important tips to protect yourself and your friends from getting caught up in cyber bullying and advice on how to report it when it does happen.

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### 1. Always Respect Others and Think Before You Send

- ✘ Remember when you send a message by e-mail or mobile phone to someone you cannot see, the impact that your words or images may have on the other person.
- ✘ What you think is a joke may really hurt someone else.
- ✘ You should always ask permission before you take a photo of someone and before sending or posting on the internet such images.
- ✘ If you receive a rude or nasty message or picture about someone else, do not forward it. You could be assisting a bully, and even be accused of cyber bullying yourself. You could also be breaking the law.

### 2. Passwords

- ✘ Do not let *anyone* know your passwords.
- ✘ It is a good idea to change passwords on a regular basis.
- ✘ Choose hard-to-guess passwords with symbols and numbers, this will help stop people hacking into your account and pretending to be you
- ✘ Remember that what you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever. Do you really want your teacher, parents or future employer to see that photo?
- ✘ Remember to only give your mobile number or personal website address to trusted friends.

### 3. Block the Bully

- ✘ Most responsible websites and services allow you to block or report someone who is behaving badly. Make use of these features, they are there to keep you safe.

### 4. Don't Retaliate or Reply!

- ✘ Replying to bullying messages, particularly in anger, is just what the bully wants. Report it to a trusted adult.

### 5. Save the Evidence

- ✘ Learn how to keep records of offending messages, pictures or online conversations. These will help you demonstrate to others what is happening, and can be used by your parents, school, internet service provider, mobile phone company, or even the Police, to investigate the cyber bullying.

### 6. Make Sure You Tell

You have a right not to be harassed and bullied online. There are people who can help:

- ✘ Tell your parent or Carer
- ✘ Tell your school. Your teacher, tutor, Head of Year or Care and Guidance can support you.
- ✘ Tell an adult you trust, who can help you to report it to the right place, or call a helpline like ChildLine on 0800 1111 in confidence
- ✘ Tell your mobile phone operator or social network provider that you have been bullied. Check their website to see how to report it.

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**Finally, do not just keep quiet – if you see cyber bullying going on, support the victim and report the bullying. How would you feel if no-one stood up for you?**

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