



Star

NURTURING TODAY'S **YOUNG PEOPLE**,
INSPIRING TOMORROW'S **LEADERS**

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY





Document control

This document has been approved for operation within:	All Trust Schools		
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Summary of changes in this version

Point Number	Information
	Change in language throughout, using 'target' instead of 'victim'.
18	Updated to include forms of bullying that are illegal.
22	'Relational' and 'Prejudicial' bullying definitions added along with racism as a specific type of bullying.
27	Section on 'Peer on peer abuse' added.
55	Link added to the Anti-Bullying Alliance free online training.
Appendix 3: Record of bullying incident	Addition of Appendix 3 'Bullying Incident Record' template.
Appendix 4: Central bullying incidents record	Addition of Appendix 4 'Central Bullying Record' template.
Appendix 5: DfE advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying	Appendix 5 updated with new contact details for social networks and mobile phone providers.



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Introduction

1. This policy, which incorporates a set of procedures, makes clear the school's commitment to be known amongst the pupils and the community as an Anti-Bullying School.
2. To this end, we recognise that bullying exists within our society, and that its consequences can sometimes be traumatic for the individuals and families concerned.

Aims

3. To raise awareness of bullying and create a school ethos which encourages children to disclose and discuss incidences of bullying behaviour.
4. To bring about conditions in which bullying is less likely to happen in the future.
5. To ensure bullying is prevented in so far as reasonably practical.
6. To clarify the reporting processes.
7. To prevent, de-escalate and/or stop any continuation of harmful behaviour.
8. To react to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
9. To safeguard the pupil who has experienced bullying and to trigger sources of support for the pupil.
10. To provide support for the perpetrator whilst developing strategies to enable perpetrators to be accountable for their behaviour.
11. To support the mission, vision and values of the Trust and its establishments.

Who is responsible for this policy?

12. The Trust has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory or Trust framework. The Trust has delegated day-to-day responsibility for operating the policy to Star Central, the local governing body and the principal of each Trust school.
13. The local governing body and senior leadership team at each Trust school has a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for supporting colleagues and ensuring its success.

Key responsibilities

14. Young people have a right to expect that they will be listened to, have their concerns taken seriously and that appropriate steps will be taken to put right any unpleasant situations or cases of bullying.
15. The School has a responsibility to ensure that:
 - bullying incidents can be reported confidentially (including bullying that may have occurred outside school, e.g. cyberbullying);
 - all involved in the incident are listened to empathetically by professionals, parents/carers and peers;
 - targets of bullying are encouraged to report what has happened;
 - targets are reassured that it is not their fault;
 - professionals work in collaboration with parents/carers when appropriate.



16. The school will fulfil its legal duty of care to ensure its pupils do not come to harm. This includes the reporting of all bullying incidents which have been identified as such, using the policy definition. This reporting is made available to the local governing body as and when required. It is also available on request to the Trust.
17. Under the Children Act 1989, a bullying incident should be addressed as a child protection concern when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm'. Where this is the case, the school staff will report their concerns to children's social care.
18. Some forms of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. These include violence or assault, theft, repeated harassment or intimidation, for example name calling, threats and abusive phone calls, emails or text messages and hate crimes ([Bullying at school - GOV.UK](#)). Where school staff feel that an offence may have been committed they will seek assistance from the police.

Definition of bullying

19. The government defines bullying as "behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally" (DfE, 2017 Preventing and tackling bullying).
20. Bullying is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion, culture, gender, sexual orientation, or because a child is adopted or has caring responsibilities. It might be motivated by actual differences between children, or perceived differences.
21. Many believe bullying involves an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the target. The imbalance of power can manifest itself in several ways, it may be physical, psychological (knowing what upsets someone), derive from an intellectual imbalance, or by having access to the support of a group, or the capacity to socially isolate. It can result in the intimidation of a person or persons through the threat of violence or by isolating them either physically or online.
22. Bullying can take many forms which include:
 - emotional (being unfriendly, threatening looks/gestures, tormenting such as hiding belongings);
 - physical (pushing, hitting, shoving or any form of physical violence);
 - verbal (name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours);
 - sexual and sexist (unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments or those which are sexist);
 - homophobic, biphobic or transphobic (behaviour or language which makes a person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, whether actual or perceived, or because of their association with people who are, or perceived to be, gay, bisexual or transgender e.g. children of same-sex couples);
 - racism (negative behaviour or language towards an individual's ethnicity, skin colour, country of birth, speaking a different language or different religious beliefs);
 - cyber (all forms of abuse involving the internet, social websites, chat rooms, mobile phones, email, text messages, photographs etc) ;
 - relational (excluding, isolating and ostracising someone usually through verbal or emotional bullying);
 - interference with possessions (hiding, stealing and destroying belongings).



23. These definitions are important as there is a need to make a distinction between things that may cause a young person distress during their time in school, and bullying. A friendship that has broken down for example, and has led to insults being exchanged, though distressing, would not be considered to be bullying as it was neither deliberate nor repeated. There are occasions in school when a young person is quite unaware of the hurt that they have caused to a fellow pupil, as the target had kept their feelings to themselves.
24. The definitions outlined above must be sensitively and thoughtfully applied; a hasty classification helps neither the 'target' nor the 'perpetrator'.

Signs of bullying

25. Bullying can cause serious psychological damage and even suicide. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence, there are criminal laws which apply to harassment, threatening behaviour and physical behaviour.
26. A pupil who is being bullied may:
 - become frightened of attending school, specific lessons or entering specific areas of the school;
 - change their usual routine;
 - become more withdrawn or anxious than previously;
 - threaten to run away or actually run away;
 - threaten suicide;
 - begin to perform poorly at school;
 - frequently have missing or damaged possessions;
 - repeatedly ask for extra money or never have money;
 - have unexplained injuries or signs of self-harm;
 - become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable;
 - begin to bully others;
 - change their eating patterns by eating too much or too little or avoiding eating all together;
 - have missing dinner money;
 - be afraid to use the internet or a mobile phone;
 - become nervous when a cyber-message is received;
 - choose the company of adults over fellow pupils;
 - be frequently absent from school or regularly arrive late to class;
 - be reluctant to discuss reasons for any of the above;
 - show any other signs of changes in behaviour or attitude at school or at home.

Peer on peer abuse

27. Children may be harmed by other children or young people. Staff will be aware of the harm caused by bullying and will use anti-bullying procedures where necessary. However, there will be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.
28. Staff should refer to the detailed section in the Schools Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and act accordingly.



Vulnerable pupils

29. Some pupils are particularly vulnerable to bullying and may be severely affected by it, such as those with special educational needs or disabilities. Others may be particularly vulnerable because they are going through a personal or family crisis or suffering from a health problem. Children in care that are frequently on the move may be vulnerable because they are always the newcomer. Those with caring responsibilities may be vulnerable because they are socially isolated. These vulnerable young people may also be at risk of turning to social media for consolation or to get their own back by cyberbullying. Counselling and education on e-safety can help them.
30. There will also be a range of other local or individual factors that result in some children being more vulnerable to bullying and its impact than others.
31. The impact of bullying can be severe because of the nature and extent of the bullying or because it is combined with other factors such as those mentioned above that also affect the social, mental and emotional health of the pupil.

Preventing bullying

32. This policy is to be used as a key vehicle for communicating and celebrating the anti-bullying stance of the school with pupils, parents/carers and the wider community. The school incorporates the Anti-Bullying Policy into staff and governor handbooks, the school curriculum, whole school assemblies, and all school staff training as well as taking on board other opportunities to raise awareness, such as Anti-Bullying Week and targeted group work. The policy is shared with all staff, pupils, parents/carers, and governors, at their respective points of contact with the school.
33. The school takes a zero-tolerance stance on all forms of bullying and discriminatory language (e.g. the use of homophobic, biphobic or transphobic language) and all incidents reported are taken seriously.
34. The school is responsible for promoting a culture of openness, trust, and support and for ensuring that all the young people in school are aware both of their rights and their responsibilities with respect to bullying. This will take place primarily through the following structures:
 - the induction programme;
 - citizenship/PSHE/SMSC lessons;
 - the Pupil Council;
 - displays around school;
 - whole school assemblies;
 - pastoral programmes;
 - effective parenting sessions;
 - e-safety training to combat cyber-bullying;
 - multi-agency working including drawing on the expertise of anti-bullying organisations or specialised expertise in dealing with certain types of bullying;
 - ICT Acceptable Use Policy for pupils;
 - safeguarding systems and procedures.



35. One of the most effective ways of preventing bullying is through the curriculum, by creating effective learning environments in which:
- the contribution of all pupils is valued;
 - kindness and empathy are celebrated and developed;
 - all pupils can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately;
 - stereotypical views and prejudiced language are challenged, and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others whether arising from race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability, disability or different family situations (e.g. children who are looked after or those with caring responsibilities);
 - pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours both in school and in the wider community and understand how their actions affect others;
 - all forms of bullying and harassment are challenged;
 - pupils are supported to develop their social and emotional skills.

Responding to incidents of bullying

36. The school has clear systems in place to deal with bullying which are clear to parents, pupils and staff, so that when incidents do occur, they are dealt with quickly (See Appendix 1 and 2 for procedural guidance in a primary and secondary setting).
37. A record sheet is completed for every incident that takes place (see template in Appendix 3).
38. A Central Bullying Incidents Record enables the school to spot trends and patterns of behaviour. The school will record all incidents of bullying (see template in Appendix 4).
39. Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.
40. Fixed-term exclusions will be considered for more severe and persistent cases of bullying. The school will make a decision whether it is necessary to involve any other agencies to ensure the long-term emotional wellbeing of the young people involved.

Addressing the needs of pupils who are bullied

41. The nature and level of support will depend on the individual circumstances and the level of need. These can include a quiet word from a teacher who knows the pupil well, asking the pastoral team to provide support, providing formal counselling, engaging with parents/carers, referring to Local Authority Children's Services, completing an Early Help referral or referring to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
42. In some circumstances, the consequences of bullying may lead to a child or young person experiencing pronounced social, emotional or mental health difficulties. The school will ensure they make appropriate provision for a child's short-term needs, including setting out what actions will be taken when bullying has had a serious impact on a child's ability to learn. If the bullying leads to persistent, long-lasting difficulties that cause the child or young person to have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age, then the school will consider whether the child will benefit from being assessed for special educational needs (SEN). The [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) considers that developing a graduated response to the varying levels of SEN among children and young people is the best way to offer support, and this can include the needs of bullied children.



On-site provision

43. The school will do all it can to ensure bullied children continue to attend school. This support will be provided hand-in-hand with measures to tackle the bullying so that bullied children feel safe at school, and on their way to and from school.
44. Removing bullied children from school, even for a short time, disrupts their education and can make it difficult for them to reintegrate. It also fails to address the causes of the problem and can send the wrong message that targets of bullying are unwelcome. The school will respond sensitively where an absence arises as a result of bullying but, in most cases, it may not be necessary or helpful to remove a bullied child from school.

Alternative provision

45. In extreme cases, where the effects of bullying are so severe that the child and family feel it is not possible to attend school, other arrangements will be made for the pupil to continue their education. In the first instance this may involve the transfer of the child to another mainstream school. Where a child has developed complex needs as a result of bullying, which cannot be met in mainstream education, alternative provision may need to be arranged. The needs and wishes of the child and family will be managed with care and sensitivity.

Bullying outside school premises

46. Staff have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaving outside the school premises “to such an extent as is reasonable” (Behaviour and discipline in schools, DfE, 2016). This can relate to any bullying incidents occurring anywhere off the school premises, such as on school or public transport, outside the local shops, or in a town or village centre.
47. Where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on. If the misbehaviour could be criminal or poses a serious threat to a member of the public, the police should always be informed.
48. In all cases of misbehaviour or bullying, the member of staff can only discipline the pupil on school premises or elsewhere when the pupil is under the lawful control of the staff member.

Parental involvement

49. The school endeavours to have open and supportive communication with parents/carers in relation to all bullying incidents. The school ensures that parents/carers know what measures are being taken to prevent bullying, as well as how incidents are responded to.
50. Parents/carers who are concerned that their child may be being bullied, or who suspect that their child may be the perpetrator of bullying, should contact the school immediately.
51. Parents/carers have a responsibility to support the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.
52. Department for Education advice for parent and carers on cyberbullying is provided in Appendix 5. This has been updated by the Safeguarding Team to reflect current online platforms.



Staff training

53. The school will ensure that all staff have received sufficient high-quality training to ensure that they are able to both identify cases of bullying, and then provide appropriate support for all parties.
54. Staff will be trained to understand the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) pupils.
55. The [Anti Bullying Alliance](#) offer a suite of free online training for anyone that works with children and young people. The programme was particularly developed to reduce levels of bullying of disabled children and those with special educational needs (SEN) but applies to all children.



Appendix 1: Dealing with bullying incidents procedure – primary setting

Many incidents where a young person is emotionally distressed by the behaviour of another pupil will have been observed by a classroom teacher and should be dealt with by them. This is because the response by the teacher will have been both immediate and personal. The primary responsibility, however, for the emotional welfare of the pupils in school is the young person's class teacher.

It is to this person that any potential incidents of bullying should be referred, as they have the all-round knowledge of the young person.

The class teacher is then responsible for investigating the incident and taking appropriate steps to resolve the problem.

Where it is established that the incident can be resolved by the intervention of the class teacher and that, following the definitions within, the incident **is not a case of bullying**, the matter can be dealt with by the class teacher alone.

If the class teacher suspects that this **may in fact be a case of bullying**, then they should refer the matter to the senior leader who leads their key stage, who will then assume responsibility for the case.

The investigation will ensure that all parties have the opportunity to speak openly. If the key stage leader believes that bullying has in fact taken place, the following will happen:

- The head of key stage will record the incident in the Central Bullying Incidents Record;
- The head of key stage will inform the principal who will oversee procedure;
- The parents/carers of the target will be informed;
- The parents/carers of the perpetrator will be informed.

The use of the Central Bullying Incidents Record is a key part of the process as it enables the school to spot trends and patterns of behaviour. The school will record all incidents of bullying.

Those dealing with young people should be mindful of best practice when comes to cases of bullying which are, in brief:

- Avoid the labelling of both parties in terms of 'bully' and 'victim' - it is the behaviour we criticise, not the person);
- Allow the target to put to the perpetrator how they have been made to feel, if appropriate;
- Allow the perpetrator the opportunity to put right any hurt they have caused;
- Avoid immediately resorting to punishments or sanctions, depending on the degree to which the bullying has been premeditated, how long it has been going on and how many people are involved - these decisions are at the discretion of the principal;
- Maintain focus on:
 - the removal of the feeling of helplessness and fear that the target is experiencing;
 - the restoration of pride, dignity, and belonging.

Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently and reasonably, taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.



Fixed-term exclusions will be considered for more severe and persistent cases of bullying. The school will make a decision whether it is necessary to involve any other agencies to ensure the long-term emotional wellbeing of the young people involved.



Appendix 2: Dealing with bullying incidents procedure – secondary setting

Any member of school staff who witnesses a young person being emotionally distressed by the behaviour of another pupil, should address the incident immediately. This is because the response by the member of staff will have been both immediate and personal. The primary responsibility, however, for the emotional welfare of the pupils in school is the young person's learning co-ordinator/form tutor.

It is to this person that any potential incidents of bullying should be referred, as they have the all-round knowledge of the young person.

The learning co-ordinator/form tutor is then responsible for investigating the incident and taking appropriate steps to resolve the problem.

Where it is established that the incident can be resolved by the intervention of the learning co-ordinator/form tutor, and that, following the definitions within, the incident **is not a case of bullying**, the matter can be dealt with by the learning co-ordinator/form tutor alone.

If the learning co-ordinator/form tutor suspects that this **may in fact be a case of bullying**, then they should refer the matter to the pupil's head of year/pastoral manager, who will then assume responsibility for the case.

The investigation will ensure that all parties have the opportunity to speak openly. If the head of year/pastoral manager believes that bullying has in fact taken place, the following will happen:

- The head of year/pastoral manager will record the incident in the Central Bullying Incidents Record;
- The head of year/pastoral manager will inform the senior leader responsible for pastoral support and pupil wellbeing who will oversee procedure;
- The parents/carers of the target will be informed;
- The parents/carers of the perpetrator will be informed.

The use of the Central Bullying Incidents Record is a key part of the process as it enables the school to spot trends and patterns of behaviour. The school will record all incidents of bullying.

Those dealing with young people should be mindful of best practice when comes to cases of bullying which are, in brief:

- Avoid the labelling of both parties in terms of 'bully' and 'victim' - it is the behaviour we criticise, not the person (the use of the term 'victim' throughout the rest of this document is unavoidable);
- Allow the target to put to the perpetrator how they have been made to feel, if appropriate;
- Allow the perpetrator the opportunity to put right any hurt they have caused;
- Avoid immediately resorting to punishments or sanctions, depending on the degree to which the bullying has been premeditated, how long it has been going on and how many people are involved - these decisions are at the discretion of the senior leader responsible for pastoral and pupil wellbeing;
- Maintain focus on:
 - the removal of the feeling of helplessness and fear that the target is experiencing;
 - the restoration of pride, dignity, and belonging.



Disciplinary measures will be applied fairly, consistently, and reasonably taking account of any special educational needs or disabilities that the pupils may have and taking into account the needs of vulnerable pupils.

Fixed-term exclusions will be considered for more severe and persistent cases of bullying. The School will make a decision whether it is necessary to involve any other agencies to ensure the long-term emotional wellbeing of the young people involved.



Appendix 3: Record of bullying incident



Record of bullying incident

Ensure details from this form are added to the Central Bullying Incidents Record

Date of incident	
Time of incident	
Location of incident	
Name of target(s)	
Name of perpetrator(s)	
Name of staff member reporting	
Nature of incident <i>What happened?</i> <i>Exactly where and when did this take place?</i> <i>Were there any other young people around at the time?</i> <i>Was there an adult around at the time?</i> <i>Do you know the names of the people involved?</i> <i>What were you doing before the incident took place?</i> <i>Can you remember exactly what happened or what was said?</i> <i>Do you have details of pictures/texts/messages?</i> <i>What happened next?</i> <i>Has this happened before?</i> <i>How did it make you feel?</i> <i>What would you like to happen now?</i> <i>Is it repetitive?</i> <i>Is it hurtful?</i> <i>Is it intentional?</i> <i>Is there a power imbalance?</i>	
Agreed actions/outcome <i>Eg: Restorative approaches</i> <i>1:1 Intervention around anti-bullying for perpetrator</i> <i>1:1 Mentoring programme for target</i> <i>Break/lunch DT's</i> <i>Internal exclusion</i> <i>FTE</i>	
Review date	





Appendix 4: Central bullying incidents record

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
	Incident Record No.	Bullying Type 1	Bullying Type 2	Bullying Type 3	PERCEIVED BY	Name of Perpetrator/s	Form	Name of Target/s	Form	Date of Incident	Approximate Duration of Bullying	Location/s	Staff Lead	Nature of incident/s
1														
2	Example	Verbal	Physical		Parent	*****	Yr5	*****	9E	01/10/2020	2 days	Social areas	*****	Threatening language/physical behaviour towards the victim
3	1													
4	2													
5	3													
6	4													
7	5													
8	6													
9	7													
10	8													
11	9													
12	10													
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22														
23														
24														
25														
26														

2020-21 Perceived Bullying

2020-21 Central Bullying Log

2020-21 Peer on Peer Abuse





Appendix 5: DfE advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying

Advice for parents and carers on cyberbullying

Who is this advice for?

This advice is for parents and carers about cyberbullying. It provides advice and information about how they can protect their child from cyberbullying and how to tackle it if it happens.

Overview

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using technology. Whether on social media sites, through a mobile phone, or gaming sites, the effects can be devastating for the young person involved. There are ways to help prevent a child from being cyberbullied and to help them cope and stop the bullying if it does happen.

Parents and carers need to be aware that most children have been involved in cyberbullying in some way, either as a victim, perpetrator, or bystander. By its very nature, cyberbullying tends to involve a number of online bystanders and can quickly spiral out of control. Children and young people who bully others online do not need to be physically stronger and their methods can often be hidden and subtle.

Cyberbullying can also involve adults. Even though technology has provided wonderful opportunities for both teaching and learning, it has led to some teachers becoming the victims of internet messaging that undermines or ridicules them. It is important that parents make clear that this is not acceptable behaviour and lead by example. What was once a conversation at the school gate between small groups of parents and carers can now become a conversation with perhaps hundreds of “friends” on social networking sites, include comments that are recorded permanently, with a large audience, and easily shared. Whilst parents and carers have the right to be critical of decisions made by schools, or even individual staff members, they should raise concerns in an appropriate way and not become abusive, or libellous. Open conversations on social networking sites are not private and can easily be reported to school staff, even if it was not the intention for views to be shared directly.

Social networking

Young people routinely access social media and much of their social lives are conducted online. This can create a false sense of security; for example chatting online feels different from chatting face to face. It can be easier to say and reveal things that wouldn't be said face to face; be cruel, aggressive or flirtatious. It is important for young people to remember that there are offline consequences to online behaviour.

Comments intended to be funny can often be misinterpreted online whereas if said face to face they could be acceptable as facial expressions, body language, tone of voice and context would all help to ensure that comments are taken the right way. This is not the case online. We also know that increasingly younger children are signing up to social network sites and may not have the maturity to handle their online identity in a safe and responsible way.



Social networking can increase existing social pressures and reinforce a sense of isolation; for instance by people purposefully not liking a young person's status update or photo so they seem unpopular, or by excluding them from group chats. Online bullying often involves a large audience and this increases the pressure.

Parents and carers need to understand the way young people communicate with others, and the potential risks. Asking their child simply not to use technology is not a realistic way to prevent or react to cyberbullying. Internet Matters provides an overview of cyber-bullying in more detail and NSPCC advice on bullying and cyberbullying prevention is helpful

Parents and carers have a challenging job. They need to know what their children are doing online and also help them to do it in a safe way. With technology changing on a day-to-day basis, the best way to stay informed is for parents to be involved. [Thinkuknow](#) provides helpful tips on letting your child teach you.

Set boundaries

A good way to supervise children's internet access and set boundaries about what they can and cannot do online is to create an agreement with them. If a child breaks the rules, restrict internet access for an agreed period of time. Thinkuknow provides helpful tips on agreeing and setting boundaries.

Ensure you use the privacy settings, parental controls and inbuilt internet safety features provided by the major internet service providers. The UK Safer Internet Centre has guides for parental controls for parents and carers experiencing any internet safety issues with their children. The Parent Zone provides a national helpline service at - help@theparentzone.co.uk

Being involved and talking to children

Social networks have a minimum age restriction, usually age thirteen. Parents should talk to their children about the reasons behind the age restriction. Accessing such sites too early can expose children to unnecessary bullying.

It is also very important to ensure children and young people feel comfortable about telling their parents things that have happened online. Talking to their children will help parents to understand the ways in which they are using the internet, social media and their mobile phone. Talking to children about responsible behaviour is important as sometimes children who are victims of cyberbullying may also be involved in cyberbullying others. Ensure they know they can go and talk to an adult or parent if they are being bullied and need support. How parents talk to their children will depend on their age. [Childnet](#) gives more detailed information about talking to your child and antibullying pro provides practical advice for parents

Advice for children

Parents may wish to consider the following advice when teaching their children about using the internet safely:

- Make sure you use the privacy settings;
- Always respect others – be careful what you say online;
- Be careful what pictures or videos you upload. Once a picture is shared online it cannot be taken back;



- Only add people you know and trust to friends/followers lists online. When talking to strangers, keep your personal information safe and location hidden;
- Treat your password like your toothbrush – keep it to yourself and change it regularly;
- Block the bully – learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly;
- Do not retaliate or reply to offensive e-mails, text messages or online conversations;
- Save the evidence. Always keep a copy of offensive e-mails, text messages or a screen grab of online conversations and pass to a parent, a carer or a teacher;
- Make sure you tell an adult you trust, for example, a parent/carers, a teacher, or the anti-bullying co-ordinator or call a helpline like Childline on 0800 1111 in confidence;
- Most social media services and other sites have a button you can click on to report bullying. Doing this can prevent a bully from targeting you and others in the future. Many services take bullying seriously and will either warn the individual or remove his or her account;
- While you are on your mobile phone make sure you also pay attention to your physical surroundings.

Possible signs of cyberbullying

It is not always easy to spot the signs of cyberbullying as it can happen all the time, which is a feature that makes it different from other forms of bullying. Be alert to a change in your child's behaviour, for example:

- being upset after using the internet or their mobile phone;
- being unwilling to talk or secretive about their online activities and mobile phone use;
- spending much more or much less time texting, gaming or using social media;
- having many new phone numbers, texts or e-mail addresses showing on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet;
- seeming withdrawn, upset or outraged after texting or being online;
- not wanting to go to school and/or avoiding meeting friends and schoolmates;
- avoiding formerly enjoyable social situations;
- experiencing difficulty sleeping;
- suffering from low self-esteem.

What to do if you suspect a child is being cyberbullied

If you suspect a child or young person is being harassed or bullied either over the internet or via mobile phone, ask them to give you details. If your child tells you that someone is bothering them online, take it seriously. Offer practical as well as emotional support. Print out the evidence for future reference. Talk to a teacher at your child's school if other pupils at the schools are involved.

Support for children who are bullied

School staff should support all pupils who are bullied and develop strategies to prevent bullying from happening. Children and young people who have been a victim of images or videos of a sexual nature being uploaded and shared will be particularly vulnerable and in need of support to return to school. To help schools support pupils who are severely affected by bullying, the Department for Education has produced advice for schools, available [here](#).

Cyberbullying on social networks can be upsetting and really knock -targets' confidence. Childline has produced guidance for young people on building their confidence after online bullying available at: [Childline - Building confidence after online bullying](#)



It is also important to involve your child in resolving the issues as this can help to strengthen their self-confidence and restore a sense of emotional safety.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance has helpfully created a fact sheet outlining the range of support that is available to schools, parents, carers and young people from the anti-bullying sector advice and support from the anti-bullying sector.

Facebook has produced a support sheet Empowering Parents and Families which gives guidance on what to do if you child is being bullied.

Useful Resources

Getting offensive content taken down

If online content is upsetting and inappropriate, and the person or people responsible are known, you need to ensure they understand why the material is unacceptable or offensive and request they remove it.

If the person responsible has not been identified or refuses to take down the material you should contact the social networking site directly to make a report and request the content is taken down. The material posted may be in breach of the service provider's terms and conditions of use and can therefore be removed.

Some service providers will not accept complaints lodged by a third party. In cases of mobile phone abuse, where the person being bullied is receiving malicious calls and messages, the account holder will need to contact the provider directly.

Before you contact a web service provider, it is important to be clear about where the content is, for example by taking a screen shot of the material that includes the web address. If you are requesting that someone takes down material that is not illegal, be clear to point out how it breaks the site's terms and conditions. Where you suspect that the material is illegal, you should contact the police directly.

NSPCC Netware: Your guide to the social network your kids use – [stay up to date and keep your child safe in today's digital world](#)



Contact details for social networking sites:

The [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) works with social networking sites to disseminate their safety and reporting tools.

Social Networking Site	Useful links
Ask.fm	Ask.fm Safety Centre Reporting on Ask.fm: You do not need to be logged into the site (i.e. a user) to report. When you move your mouse over any post on someone else's profile, you will see an option to like the post and also a drop down arrow which allows you to report the post.
Facebook	Read Facebook's rules Report to Facebook Safety Centre
Instagram	Read Instagram's rules Report to Instagram Safety Centre
Kik Messenger	Read Kik's rules Report to Kik Help Centre
Snapchat	Read Snapchat rules Report to Snapchat Read Snapchat's safety tips for parents
Tumblr	Read Tumblr's rules Report to Tumblr by email If you email Tumblr take a screen shot as evidence and attach it to your email
TikTok	Read TikTok's rules Report to TikTok
Twitter	Read Twitter's rules Report to Twitter
Vine	Read Vine's rules Contacting Vine and reporting
YouTube	Read YouTube's rules Report to YouTube YouTube Safety Centre



Mobile phones

All UK mobile phone providers have malicious or nuisance call, text or picture message centres set up and have procedures in place to deal with such instances. They will help you to change the number of the person being bullied if necessary. If you want to prosecute the perpetrator contact the police. The mobile provider will work closely with the police and can usually trace calls for them.

Some service providers such as Vodafone produce annual magazines for parents and carers (Digital Parenting), giving information and top tips for keeping your children safe online including cyberbullying.

Service providers

Service provider	From your mobile	Pay as you go	Pay monthly contracts
O2	4445 or 202	08705 678 678	0870 241 0202
VodaFone	191	03333 040 191	03333 048 069
3	333	08433 733 333	08433 733 333
EE	150	0800 956 6000	0800 956 6000
Virgin	789	0345 6000 789	0345 6000 789
BT		08000 328 751	08000 328 751

Organisations that provide support to parents and carers and children

- [The Anti-Bullying Alliance](#)
- [CEOP](#)
- [Childline](#)
- [Childnet](#)
- [The Diana Award](#)
- [Internetmatters](#)
- [Kidscape](#)
- [Get connected](#)
- [NSPCC](#)
- [The Parent Zone](#)
- [Thinkuknow](#)
- [Young Minds](#)
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)