St. Mary's
Special School, Drumcar

Principal: Kevin Toale
Drumcar,
Dunleer,
Co. Louth,
A92 Y627.
Tel: 041 6862666

St. John of God

Anti-Cyber-Bullying Policy

St Mary's Special School aims to ensure that children are safe and feel safe from bullying, harassment and discrimination. This school is committed to teaching students the knowledge and skills to be able to use ICT effectively, safely and responsibly.

UNDERSTANDING CYBER-BULLYING:

- Cyber bullying is the use of ICT (usually a mobile phone and or the internet) to abuse another person
- It can take place anywhere and involve many people
- Anybody can be targeted including pupils and school staff
- It can include threats, intimidation, harassment, cyber-stalking, vilification, defamation, exclusion, peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorized publication of private information or images etc.
- While bullying involves a repetition of unwelcome behaviour the **Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools, September 2013,** states:

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

There are many types of cyber-bullying. The more common types are:

1. **Text messages** – can be 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, 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 somebody else's name
5. **Chat room bullying** – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in a web-based chat room
6. **Instant messaging (IM)** – unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real-time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger), Yahoo Chat or similar tools
7. **Bullying via websites** – use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal 'own web space' sites such as You Tube, Facebook, Ask.fm, Bebo (which works by signing on in one's school, therefore making it easy to find a victim) and Myspace – although there are others.

Explanation of slang terms used when referring to cyber-bullying activity:

1. **'Flaming':** Online fights using electronic messages with angry and vulgar language
2. **'Harassment':** Repeatedly sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages
3. **'Cyber Stalking':** Repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm or are highly intimidating or engaging in other on-line activities that make a person afraid for his or her own safety
4. **'Denigration':** 'Dissing' someone online. Sending or posting cruel gossip or rumors about a person to damage his or her reputation or friendships
5. **'Impersonation':** Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material online that makes someone look bad, gets her/him in trouble or danger, or damages her/his reputation or friendships
6. **'Outing and Trickery':** Tricking someone into revealing secret or embarrassing information which is then shared online
7. **'Exclusion':** Intentionally excluding someone from an on-line group, like a 'buddy list'

This list is not exhaustive and the terms used continue to change.

AIMS OF POLICY:

- To ensure that pupils, staff and parents understand what cyber bullying is and how it can be combated
- To ensure that practices and procedures are agreed to prevent incidents of cyber-bullying
- To ensure that reported incidents of cyber bullying are dealt with effectively and quickly.

PROCEDURES TO PREVENT CYBER-BULLYING:

- Staff, pupils, parents and Board of Management (BoM) will be made aware of issues surrounding cyber bullying through the use of appropriate awareness-raising exercises
- Staff CPD (Continuous Professional Development) will assist in learning about current technologies
- Parents will be provided with information and advice on how to combat cyber bullying{ Parents association informative meetings{guest speakers }
- Pupils and parents will be urged to report all incidents of cyber bullying to the school
- Procedures in our school Anti-bullying Policy shall apply
- The police will be contacted in cases of actual or suspected illegal content
- This policy will be reviewed every two years. Pupils, parents and staff will be involved in reviewing and revising this policy and any related school procedure.

Useful Websites

www.spunout.ie

www.kidsmart.org.uk/beingsmart

www.bbc.co.uk./schools/bullying

www.childline.ie/index.php/support/bullying/1395

www.chatdanger.com

www.kidpower.org

www.childnet.int.org

www.antibullying.net

http://ie.reachout.com

www.abc.tcd.ie

www.sticksandstones.ie

Compiled in consultation with teachers, SNAs, pupils, parents/guardians and wider community.

Kevin Toale

Kevin Toale

Conor Sparks

Conor Sparks

20/ 6/ 24

Date

20/ 6/ 24

Date