

Cyberbullying Policy

| Cyberbullying Policy | |
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| Document Revised: | September 2018 |
| Ratified by Trustees: | September 2018 |
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1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This policy and procedure applies to all young people and staff at Talbot House Trust as well as others who care for and support them.

1.2 It should be read in conjunction with the Anti-bullying Policy, Behaviour Management Procedure, Child Protection Policy, Internet & ICT Policy.

1.3 The main purpose of this policy is to support the prevention of cyberbullying and to ensure everyone is fully aware of the appropriate action to take, should cyberbullying occur.

1.4 Talbot House Trust recognises that a bullying incident should be treated as a child protection concern when there is reasonable cause to believe that a young person is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

2. Principles

2.1 Talbot House Trust embraces the advantages of modern technology in terms of the educational benefits it brings, however, it is mindful of the potential for bullying to occur.

2.2 Bullying is never acceptable and Talbot House Trust fully recognises its duty to protect all of its young people and staff in order to provide a safe, healthy environment for everyone.

2.3 Action will be taken against those who take part in cyberbullying in an effort to prevent and combat bullying perpetrated inside and outside of Talbot House Trust (e.g. where bullying has occurred outside of school but is having an impact in school).

2.4 Disciplinary action may be taken against any member of staff found to be using technology inappropriately, including use in relation to cyberbullying.

3. Understanding Cyberbullying

3.1 Cyberbullying may be defined as, 'the use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: the person may be reluctant to admit to being the victim of cyberbullying.'

3.2 Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology, including devices and equipment such as mobile phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat and websites e.g. Facebook, Youtube and Ratemyteacher. It can take a number of different forms, including:

- Threats and intimidation (e.g. behaviour which causes distress, fear or humiliation);
- Harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages);
- Vilification or defamation (e.g. insulting or offending someone by sending unkind text messages or emails, or rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles);
- Exclusion or peer rejection (e.g. deliberately and repeatedly ignoring someone)
- Hijacking or cloning e-mail accounts (e.g. pretending to be someone else for the purposes of bullying);

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- Unauthorised publication of private information or images (e.g. emailing or posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites;
- 'Trolling' (e.g. abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online);

3.3 Cyberbullying can be an extension to face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

4. How Cyberbullying Is Different

Cyberbullying differs from other forms of bullying in a number of ways:

- By facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space as 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 which 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 or 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. Anyone can be a victim of cyberbullying.

5. Cyberbullying and the Law

5.1 All bullying is damaging but cyberbullying and harassment can be invasive of privacy at all times. These acts may also be criminal acts.

5.2 Cyberbullying is not illegal, however, it can be considered a criminal offence under several different acts including, Protection from Harassment Act (1997), Malicious Communications Act (1998), Communications Act (2003), Obscene Publications Act (1959) and Computer Misuse Act (1990).

5.3 The Protection from Harassment Act makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

5.4 Section 127 of the Communications Act makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.

5.5 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 outlines some legal powers which relate to cyberbullying. Head teachers have the power 'to such extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off school site. The Head Teacher is, therefore, able to police cyberbullying or any bullying aspects carried out by pupils, even at home. The Act also provides a defence for staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.

6. Policy

6.1 As with all forms of bullying, the best way to deal with cyberbullying is to prevent it happening in the first place.

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6.2 There is no single solution to the problem of cyberbullying but Talbot House Trust will implement this policy, as a minimum, to impose a comprehensive and effective prevention strategy.

6.3 All members of the Trust community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the Senior Management Team, any example of cyberbullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

6.4 Staff are trained to respond effectively to reports of cyberbullying or harassment and systems are in place to respond appropriately.

6.5 Talbot House Trust educates its young people both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyberbullying and will, through Personal Social Health and Education (PSHE) and in computing lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its young people about cyberbullying.

6.6 Access to inappropriate websites is blocked using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems. No young person is allowed to work on the internet in the computing room, or any other location within the premises which may from time to time be used for computer-based work, without a member of staff present.

6.7 Regular reviews of the security arrangements in place and, where appropriate, audits of computing communications are undertaken.

6.8 Talbot House Trust takes cyberbullying very seriously and will support victims by working with the Police to detect those involved in any criminal acts. Appropriate sanctions will be used to correct, punish or remove young persons who bully fellow young people or harass staff in this way. In addition, where necessary, the power of confiscation will be used where necessary to prevent young people from committing crimes or misusing equipment.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will take overall responsibility for the co-ordination and implementation of cyberbullying prevention and response strategies, ensuring that:

- All incidents of cyberbullying both inside and outside Talbot House Trust are dealt with immediately and will be managed and/or escalated in line with the procedures set out in paragraph 1.1;
- All staff know that they need to report any issues concerning cyberbullying to the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- All staff are aware of the Prevent Duties;
- Training is provided so that staff feel confident to identify young people at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to make a referral when a young person is at risk;
- Parents/carers/care teams are informed and attention is drawn to the cyberbullying policy so that they are fully aware of Talbot House Trust's responsibility relating to safeguarding young people and their welfare.
- The Cyberbullying Policy is available at all times on the Trust's webpages;
- All parents/carers/care teams and young people receive a copy of the Cyberbullying Policy. Parents/carers/care teams should take young people through the document;
- At the beginning of each term, cyberbullying is revisited as part of the Staying Safe Programme and that young people know how to report a concern to someone on their safety circle, Childline or the thinkuknow website: www.thinkuknow.co.uk; it is also

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discussed during scheduled house meetings for resident young people who do not attend Talbot House Trust.

- All staff are aware of their responsibilities, by providing clear guidance for staff on the use of technology within the Trust and beyond.

7.2 The Senior Management Team will ensure that:

- All young people are given clear guidance on the use of technology safely and positively both in school and within the home, including how to manage their personal data and how to report abuse and bullying online;
- Annual guidance/training is provided for parents/carers/care teams on online safety and the positive use of technology and computing;
- The Trust's ICT policies and procedures are adhered to and reviewed periodically;
- Annual training is provided for staff on the above policies and procedures;
- Annual training is provided for staff on online safety;
- A curriculum on online safety in computing lessons is planned and delivered which builds up resilience in pupils to protect themselves and others online;
- Support PSHE staff in delivering the curriculum on online safety.

7.3 The Head of Development, will ensure that:

- Adequate safeguards are in place to filter and monitor inappropriate content and alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead to safeguarding issues. (Talbot House Trust uses an internet security appliance to filter all internet access and record access to prohibited sites which enables the Head of Development to report issues immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead);
- Visitors to the school are given clear guidance on the use of technology in school. This includes how to report any safeguarding issues to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. (Visitors will be given highly restricted guest accounts which will not allow any access to personal data and that any misuse of the system will result in access to the system being withdrawn.)

7.4 The Chief Executive, will ensure that:

- The school manages personal data in line with statutory requirements and is aware of its duties under the Data Protection Act (1998);
- The principles of the Data Protection Act will be applied when processing, collecting, disclosing, retaining or disposing of information relating to a pupil or member of staff;
- Careful consideration is given when processing personal information so that the individual's privacy is respected where it needs protection. Access to the personal information will only be given to those who need it.

7.5 The Trustees, will:

- Appoint a governor/trustee in charge of welfare who will work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure the policies and practices relating to safeguarding, including the prevention of cyberbullying, are being implemented effectively.

8. Guidance for Staff

8.1 If you suspect, or are told about a cyberbullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

- Mobile Phones:
 - Ask the young person to show you the mobile phone.
 - Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names.

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- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names or take photographic evidence.
- Tell the young person to save the message or image.
- Go with the young person to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, or, if unavailable, a member of the senior management team and immediately pass on any information that you have obtained.
- Computers
 - Ask the young person to get up on-screen the material in question.
 - Ask the young person to save the material.
 - Print off the offending material straight away.
 - Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions.
 - Go with the young person to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, or, if unavailable, a member of the senior management team and immediately pass on the offending material.
 - Normal procedures to interview young people and to take statements will then be followed, particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

8.2 If you are the victim of cyberbullying, or suspect a colleague or parent/carer to be the victim of cyberbullying, you must inform your line manager as soon as possible and take appropriate action in line with this policy.

9. Guidance for Young People

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

9.2 Take care to follow the instructions below:

- Do not answer abusive messages but log and report them.
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to an appropriate adult. This could be your tutor, Head Teacher, House Team Leader or parents/carer (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyberbullying).
- Do not give out personal details or contact information (e.g. personal data) without the permission of a parent/carer.
- Be careful who you allow to become a friend online and think about what information you want them to see.
- Protect your password. Do not share it with anyone else and change it regularly.
- Always log off from the computer when you have finished, or if you leave the computer for any reason.
- Always put the privacy filters on to the sites you use. If you are not sure how to do this, ask your teacher or parent/carer/care team.
- Never reply to abusive e-mails.
- Never reply to someone you do not know.
- Always stay in public areas in chat rooms.

9.3 Cyberbullying will be dealt with in the same way as other bullying. Do not think that because it is online that it is different to other forms of bullying. Inappropriate use of technology will also be handled in the same way as other types of inappropriate behaviour

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and sanctions will be given by Talbot House Trust in line with the Behaviour Management Policy.

10. Guidance for Parents/Carers/Care Teams

10.1 It is vital that parents/carers/care teams and Talbot House Trust work together to ensure that all young people are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyberbullying.

10.2 Talbot House Trust informs parents/carers/care teams of the Cyberbullying Policy and the procedures in place to deal with cyberbullying and will provide appropriate guidance and/or training for parents/carers regarding online safety.

10.3 Parents/carers/care teams must play their role and take responsibility for monitoring their child's online life. They can help combat cyberbullying by:

- Talking to the young person about cyberbullying and reminding them, when necessary, about the serious impact it can have on young people who are bullied;
- Taking sure the young person understands the Trust's policy and how seriously Talbot House Trust takes incidents of cyberbullying;
- Explaining to the young person, the legal issues relating to cyberbullying and the consequences of bullying.

10.4 If parents/carers/care teams believe the young person is the victim of cyberbullying, they should:

- Save the offending material (if need be, by saving an offensive text on their or the young person's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything;
- Contact Talbot House Trust to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible on Tel: 0191 229 0111. A meeting can then be arranged with them which may involve other relevant members of staff.

10.5 Talbot House Trust reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside of the Trust which spills over into the Trust.

11. E-Safety at Home

11.1 Several sites offer helpful advice to parents/carers, particularly with respect to how they can best monitor their child's use of the computer at home. Below are some useful websites:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents
www.saferinternet.org.uk
www.childnet.com
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk
www.nspcc.org.uk
www.cyberangels.org
www.digizen.org

11.2 The following useful publications can also be accessed:

[DfE Advice for Parents on Cyberbullying](#)
[NSPCC Bullying and Cyberbullying: Keeping Children Safe](#)
[Childnet Cyberbullying Leaflet](#)
[DfE The use of social media for on-line radicalisation](#)

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12. Monitoring and Review

12.1 This policy will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis or sooner in accordance with changes.

Under Review