Vernham Dean Gillum's Primary School
Cyber-Bullying Policy

Vernham Dean Gillum's Church of England embraces the advantages of modern technology in terms of the educational benefits it brings, however the school is mindful of the potential for bullying to occur. Central to the School's anti-bullying policy is the belief that 'all pupils have a right not to be bullied' and that 'bullying is always unacceptable'. The School also recognises that it must 'take note of bullying perpetrated outside School which spills over into the School'.

Definition of Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media such as:
- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in chat rooms, to include Facebook and YouTube

Legal Issues

Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. There are laws that apply to cyberspace:
- It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.
- Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 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
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment

Policy

Vernham Dean Primary School educates its pupils both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through Health and Citizenship, Computing lessons and Class Worship, continue to inform and educate its pupils in these fast changing areas.

Vernham Dean Primary trains its staff to respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it by reporting it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Headteacher. The school endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no pupil is allowed to access the Internet without an adult presence. Teachers and support staff will ensure that pupils follow the Schools 'Think Then Click' policy, and the Senior Leadership Team will regularly review the security arrangements in place.

Whilst education and guidance are central to what we do, Vernham Dean Primary reserves the right to take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying.

- All bullying is damaging but cyber-bullying and harassment can be invasive of privacy at all times. These acts may also be criminal acts
- Vernham Dean Primary supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts
- Vernham Dean Primary will use, as appropriate, the full range of sanctions to correct, or remove pupils who bully fellow pupils or harass staff in this way, both in and out of school
- Vernham Dean Primary will use its power of confiscation where necessary to prevent pupils from committing crimes or misusing equipment
- All members of the school community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the DSL or Headteacher any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect

Guidance for Staff

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

Mobile Phones
- Ask the pupil 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
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Tell the pupil to save the message/image
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team and pass them the information that you have

Computers
- Ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question
- Print off the offending material straight away
- Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team and pass them the information that you have
- Normal safeguarding procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed, particularly if a child protection issue is presented

Guidance 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 at Vernham Dean Primary.
- Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your parents/guardian or a member of staff at Vernham Dean Primary (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyber-bullying)
- Do not give out personal IT details

- Never reply to abusive e-mails
- Never reply to someone you do not know
- Stay in public areas in chat rooms

Guidance for Parents

It is vital that parents and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying.
- Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously Vernham Dean Primary takes incidents of cyber-bullying

- Parents should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyber-bullying
- If parents believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving an offensive text on their or their child's mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting anything
- Parents should contact the school as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- If the incident falls in the holidays, Vernham Dean Primary reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school

E-Safety

Several sites offer helpful advice to parents. If you have not received a copy of our E-Safety advice for parents leaflet, please request one from our school office.

IT Acceptable Use

Vernham Dean Primary has an acceptable use agreement which all pupils and parents are asked to sign. This will be explained and discussed within our Health and Citizenship curriculum and computing lessons.

National Bodies

Links to advice about cyber-bullying for parents can be found on our e-safety leaflet. Further support and guidance may be obtained from the following:

- http://www.antibullying.net/cyberbullying5.htm Advice for teachers and professionals
- http://old.digizen.org/cyberbullying/ Understanding, preventing and responding to cyber-bullying
- http://www.bullying.co.uk/cyberbullying/ Support for families
- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf Advice for parents and families
- http://www.hampshire.police.uk/internet/advice-and-information/safe4me/primary-social-networking-cyber-bullying Advice for Hampshire primary schools
- http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/search-results?keywords=online%20reputation UK safer Internet centre

Date of policy and plan update (annual review): Autumn 2017

Signed…………………………………………Headteacher

Signed………………………………………….Chair of Governors