Beaumont Primary School

Cyber-bullying Policy February 2021

Background
This policy works in collaboration with the school's Online Safety Policy which includes the school's Acceptable Use Policies for all members of the school community.

What is Cyber-bullying?
Cyber-bullying is the use of ICT, particularly mobile phones and the internet, specifically social networking sites, to deliberately upset someone else. Some features of cyber-bullying are different from other forms of bullying. These differences include:

- The invasion of home and personal space;
- The audience can be very large and reached rapidly;
- People who cyber-bully may attempt to remain anonymous;
- Cyber-bullying can take place between peers and between generations, with teachers/staff   becoming victims;
- Some instances can begin unintentionally. The school community has a duty to protect all of its members and provide a safe, healthy environment. Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, there are laws that can apply in terms of harassing or threatening behaviour.

Preventing Cyber-bullying
Preventative steps will be taken to ensure cyber-bullying does not occur in the first place. Much of the school's work relating to prevention will not be restricted to cyber-bullying but will be part of the school's general approach to the prevention of bullying. It will also be addressed as part of the school's work with pupils on e-safety.

Four key steps in the prevention of cyber-bullying

1. Understanding and talking and about cyber-bullying
A shared definition of cyber-bullying will be agreed and all members of the school community will be aware of its impact and the ways it differs from other forms of bullying. Pupils and their parents will be made aware of pupils' responsibility in their use of ICT. All members of the school community will know that the school can support them if cyber-bullying takes place out of school.

2. Updating existing policies and practices
Other policies relating to pupil welfare and computing will be updated regularly and shared with shared with pupils and parents. Records of any cyber-bullying will be kept and pupils will be made aware that searches can be made of past internet use within school.

3. Making reporting cyber-bullying easier
The school will make available and publicise ways that pupils can report cyber-bullying through the use of discussions within online safety lessons and posters around school

4. Promoting the positive use of technology
The school uses technology successfully to promote and personalise learning. Staff model and inform pupils about safe ways to use technology. When appropriate, specific workshops with outside agencies will be provided to raise the profile of online safety.

Responding to cyber-bullying

Reassurance will be given to the victim that they have acted correctly by telling someone and the incident will be reported to all parents/carers involved. Any meetings regarding a cyber-bullying incident will take place with a member of the senior leadership team present.

Advice will be given about the next steps:

- The victim will be made aware of the importance not to retaliate or return any messages.
- The victim will be asked to think about what information they have in the public domain.
- The victim will be recommended to keep relevant evidence for any investigation.
- Check the victim understands how to prevent it from happening again e.g. by changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chat-room.

Take action to contain the incident when content has been circulated:

- If the perpetrator is known, ask them and/or parents to remove the content.
- Contact the host to make a report to get the content taken down.
- Ask the pupil who they have sent messages onto.

In the cases of illegal content, contact the police, who can determine what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.

Investigating incidents

All cyber-bullying incidents will be recorded and investigated. Staff and parents are advised to make records as these can act as evidence. At Beaumont, incidents will be recorded in a central log held by the Headteacher. Steps will be taken to identify the bully, which may involve interviewing witnesses, contacting the service provider and the police if necessary so that the data of other users can be accessed.

Working with the bully and sanctions

Once the person bullying is identified, steps will be taken to modify their attitude and behaviour as well as ensuring access to any support that is required in line with behaviour policy.

Factors that will be considered when determining sanctions include:

The impact on the victim: was the bully acting anonymously, was the material widely circulated and humiliating?

The motivation of the bully: was the incident unintentional or retaliation to bullying behaviour from others?

Policy agreed on: February 2021
Policy to be reviewed :   February 2022