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Senior Boys**

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## **INTERNET - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY.**

### **1. Acceptable Use Policy within School:**

- The aim is to ensure the safe and effective use of internet resources.
- Internet use is a privilege, not a right.
- The school rules for behaviour apply.
- Pupils and parent/guardian will sign a commitment annually.
- Social networking, chat rooms, personal accounts on school network are forbidden.
- Individual users are responsible for their behaviour and communication over the network.
- Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher
- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material.
- The school will regularly monitor pupils' internet usage
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted.
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis.
- The use of floppy discs, memory sticks, or other digital storage media in school requires a teacher's permission.

### **2. The following are not allowed:**

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures. Using obscene language.
- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks.
- Installing or deleting software or altering computer configuration.
- Violating copyright laws.

- Using others' passwords. Trespassing in others' folders, copying, altering or deleting work or files that are the property of others.
- Intentionally wasting limited resources.
- Digital photographs, audio or video clips of individual students will not be published on the school website. Instead photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities.
- Personal pupil information including home address and contact details will be omitted from school web pages.

### **3. What is Cyberbullying?**

Bullying is repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical conduct by an individual or group against others. Bullying is always wrong and is unacceptable behaviour which should never be overlooked or ignored. Cyberbullying refers to bullying which is carried out using the internet, mobile phone or other technological devices. Cyberbullying generally takes a psychological rather than physical form but is often part of a wider pattern of 'traditional' bullying. It can take the form of sending nasty, mean or threatening messages, emails, photos or video clips; silent phone calls; putting up nasty posts or pictures on a message board, website or chat room; saying hurtful things in a chat room; pretending to be someone else in a chat room or message board or text message and saying hurtful things; or accessing someone's accounts to make trouble for them. We need to be careful not to rush to see bullying where it doesn't exist. Once-off posting of nasty comments on someone's profile or uploading photographs intended to embarrass someone is not acceptable but it is not, by itself, bullying. Bullying is widely agreed to be behaviour that is sustained or repeated over time and which has a serious negative effect on the well-being of the victim and is generally a deliberate series of actions.

### **4. Ways Technology is used to Cyberbully:**

- **Personal Intimidation** - This behaviour includes sending threatening text (SMS) messages, posting abusive and threatening comments on the victim's profile or other websites, or sending threatening messages via instant messaging.

- **Impersonation** - This behaviour involves setting up fake profiles and web pages that are attributed to the victim. It can also involve gaining access to someone's profile or instant messaging account and using it to contact others and subsequently bully while impersonating the account or profile owner.
- **Exclusion** - This behaviour involves blocking an individual from a popular group or community such as a school or class group on an internet site.
- **Personal Humiliation** - This behaviour involves posting images or videos intended to embarrass or humiliate someone, it can involve users sharing and posting images or videos of victims being abused or humiliated offline, or users sharing personal communications such as emails or text messages with a wider audience than was intended by the sender.
- **False Reporting** - This behaviour involves making false reports to the service provider or reporting other users for a range of behaviours with a view to having the user's account or website deleted.

## 5. What do you need to know about Cyberbullying?

- Communication between young people is often hidden from adults. They want to be with their friends in a space that isn't influenced by adults and because of the constraints imposed on them; they rarely get the opportunity to do this. This invisibility is exaggerated online where they are increasingly communicating in ways that are unknown to adults and free from their supervision.
- When they are online, young people can hide behind the anonymity that the internet can provide.
- The big difference between writing nasty messages on the back of a school book and posting it on the internet is that the messages can potentially be seen by a very wide audience almost instantly. The message can remain available on the internet even if it is later removed from the site where it was first posted.
- Young people posting messages on the internet tend not to feel as responsible for their online actions as they do in 'real life'. They frequently don't fear being punished for their actions.
- This type of behaviour is often outside of the reach of schools as it often happens outside of school on home computers or via mobile phones.

- Young people are often fearful of telling others about being bullied because they fear that the bullying may actually become worse if they tell.
- They are often also afraid to report incidents, as they fear that adults will take away their mobile phone, computer and/or internet access.
- In most cases, Cyberbullies know their targets, but their victims don't always know the person bullying them. This can prove very isolating for the victim in group, club or school settings where they come to distrust all their peers.
- Communications technologies have become widespread. As a result, cyberbullying can happen any time and any place and, for many children, home is no longer a safe haven from bullying.

## **6. Advice for Children on Cyberbullying:**

**Don't Reply** to messages that harass or annoy you, even though you may really want to as this is exactly what the sender wants. They want to know that they've got you worried and upset. They are trying to mess with your head, don't give them that pleasure. If you respond with an even nastier message it makes them think that they really got to you, and that's just what they want. They might even complain about you!

**Keep the Message.** You don't have to read it, but keep it. Keep a record that outlines, where possible, the details, dates and times of any form of bullying that you experience. This would be useful where any investigation were to be taken by your school, youth organisation, or even the Gardaí.

**Tell Someone** you trust. Talking to your parents, friends, a teacher, youth leader or someone you trust is usually the first step in dealing with any issue. In the case of school related bullying messages you should also talk to a teacher you trust or guidance counsellor about it. If you need to speak to someone in confidence straight away you can call Childline on 1800 66 66 66, or get help through their online services at [www.childline.ie](http://www.childline.ie).

**Block the Sender.** You don't need to put up with someone harassing you. If you are getting messages that upset you on your internet profile or on MSN you can block the person simply by clicking the block button. On some mobile phones you can restrict communications to an approved list of contacts. You might need to check the manual

or ask an adult to help you do this. Mobile networks can't bar numbers but they will help you to change your phone number in the case of serious bullying

**Report Problems** to the people who can do something about it. You can take control by not putting up with offensive content and by reporting it when you come across it. Responsible websites and mobile phone operators provide ways for their users to report things such as pornography, bullying content, or other offensive material.

**Step 1: Report to the website or mobile phone operator**

If something that is intended to be hurtful or offensive to someone is posted on a website or circulated by mobile phone, your first step should be to contact the owners of the service. Look for the "Report Abuse" button or contact Customer Care

For more tips and information on things you can do, visit [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie)

If this doesn't have any effect, move on to step 2.

**Step 2: Report Serious Issues**

Serious incidents that could be illegal should be reported to the Gardai. Illegal issues include someone making inappropriate sexual suggestions, racist remarks, or persistent bullying that is seriously damaging to the victim's well-being. If you are being bullied by mobile phone, contact your mobile phone operator, they can help by changing your phone number.

**Be in Control**

There are some things you can do on your space to prevent it happening again:

- Change password and contact details.
- Block unwanted contacts.
- Report abuse on the site - to mobile operators or social networking providers.

**Remember**

It is not your fault if this is happening. If you receive unwanted comments or texts or someone is making you feel uncomfortable or upset, it is understandable you want it to stop. You have the right to tell someone and maybe ask someone you trust to read over them with you.

Some messages may be seen as harassment, which is a crime. If someone sends you messages or images that make you uncomfortable, upset and are sent to abuse, annoy or harass, you can report it to your internet service provider.

Taking some preventative steps about what you post online will help you stay in control of your online life. You'll find more information on [www.webwise.ie](http://www.webwise.ie) and [www.watchvourspace.ie](http://www.watchvourspace.ie).

## **7. Sanctions and Actions**

Students using the internet to bully or discredit others within the school community may be subject to the following sanctions:

- (a) Removed from play area for a long period
- (b) Be denied an opportunity to represent the school at games or athletics.
- (c) Removed from peers (temporary or permanently)
- (d) Have the incident reported on their school record
- (e) Be suspended

The school reserves the right to report any illegal activity to the Gardaí.

### **More Information:**

**Safety Center: Educator Resources:** (Youtube – Questions and Answers)

#### **How old does a user have to be to use YouTube?**

- In order to create a YouTube account, we require users to confirm that they are at least 13 yrs old. Users who enter any age younger than 13 will be prohibited from creating YouTube accounts. In addition, if a user's video gets flagged and, upon review, we determine that the user has inaccurately stated their age during the account creation process, we will suspend their account.

#### **Can a teacher file a privacy or harassment claim on behalf of his/her students?**

- Only a parent or legal guardian may file a complaint on behalf of a child. If you are concerned that content on the site is harassing a student or violating his/her privacy, please contact the student's parents or legal guardian and let them know of the potentially violating content.