



Cyberbullying Policy

Introduction

The school recognises that excellence in education requires that technology is seamlessly integrated throughout the educational program. Increasing access to technology is essential for that future. We recognise that technology plays an important and positive role in everyone's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the school community to understand both the benefits and the risks and to equip children with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

Research into cyberbullying indicates that it is a feature of many young people's lives. Cyberbullying, like all other forms of bullying, should be taken very seriously. It is never acceptable.

The policies, procedures and information within this document apply to all wireless mobile devices used at BFPS, including any other device considered by the Leadership Team to come under this policy.

Definition of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. Cyberbullying can involve Social Networking Sites, emails and mobile phones used to send messages or images.

- It can be used to carry out all the different types of bullying, an extension of face-to-face bullying
- It can also go further in that it can invade home/personal space and can involve a greater number of people.
- It can take place across age groups and school staff and other adults can be targeted
- It can draw bystanders into being accessories
- It includes threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyberstalking', exclusion or peer rejection, Impersonation and manipulation.
- It includes cyberstalking, e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts and defamation of character.
- It includes the circulation of private information or images.
- It can be an illegal act as in the UAE it is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.

Aims

- We safeguard all students in the real and virtual world.
- Students, staff and parents are educated to understand what cyberbullying is and what the consequences can be.
- Knowledge, policies and procedures are in place to prevent incidents of cyberbullying in school or within the school community.
- We monitor the effectiveness of prevention measures through questionnaires.



Procedures

BFPS educates students both in the proper use of technology and about the serious consequences of cyberbullying and will through curriculum links, computing lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its students in these fast changing areas.

All students and teachers must sign the **Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement**.

All members of the school community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the Principal any example of cyberbullying, harassment or misuse of technology that they know about or suspect.

BFPS endeavors to block access to inappropriate web sites using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems.

Students are only permitted to use devices connected to the internet with permission from a teacher. Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, BFPS will take action against those who take part in cyberbullying in line with the guidelines in the Anti-Bullying policy. In addition, BFPS will confiscate devices where necessary to prevent students from misusing equipment.

If an incident takes place in the evening or at the weekend, BFPS reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school.

Students are encouraged to report any suspicions of cyberbullying and have access to the school counsellor. Support is offered to victims of cyberbullying including emotional support and reassurance.

Responsibilities:

All staff have a responsibility to prevent misuse of equipment and cyberbullying.

Teachers may ask to look at content on a student's personal device but it is good practice to do so with 2 adults present and take note.

- Ask the student to show you the device.
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate content.
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, recording date, times and names.
- Tell the student to save the message/image.
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership and pass them the information that you have.



Students:

- Should follow the school's code of behaviour policy, when writing online. It is acceptable to disagree with someone else's opinions, however, do it in a respectful way. What is inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online.
- Must speak to an adult as soon as possible if they believe someone is a victim on cyberbullying.
- Should not answer abusive messages but save them and report them.
- Should not delete anything until it has been shown to parents or a member of staff at BFPS (even if it is upsetting, the material is important evidence which may need to be used later as proof of cyberbullying)
- Should not give out personal IT details.
- Should never reply to abusive e-mails or messages in chat rooms or other social media.
- Should never reply to someone you do not know.

Parents

- It is vital that parents and the school work together to ensure that all students are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that may be seen to be cyberbullying.
- Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously BFPS takes incidents of cyberbullying.
- Parents should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyberbullying.
- If parents believe their child is the victim of cyberbullying, they should save the offending material.
- Parents should contact the school as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with a member of the Senior Leadership.