Cyber-Bullying Policy

Cyberbullying may be defined as 'the use of electronic communication, particularly mobile phones and the internet, to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature: children and adults may be reluctant to admit to being the victims of cyberbullying'.

It can take a number of different forms: threats and intimidation, harassment or 'cyber-stalking' (e.g. repeatedly sending unwanted texts or instant messages), sexting (e.g. sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, primarily between mobile phones) vilification/defamation, exclusion/peer rejection, impersonation, unauthorised publication of private information/images and 'trolling' (abusing the internet to provoke or offend others online). It can be an extension of face-to-face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

However, it differs from other forms of bullying in several significant ways:

• by facilitating a far more extreme invasion of personal space. 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. This 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 / 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.

Teachers can be victims and age and size are not important.

• many cyberbullying incidents can themselves act as evidence so it is important the victim saves the information. Cyberbullying and the Law Bullying is never acceptable and the hub fully recognizes its duty to protect all of its members and to provide a safe, healthy environment for everyone.

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Education Law:

• The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) outlines some legal powers which relate more directly to cyberbullying. Head teachers have the power 'to such an extent as is reasonable' to regulate the conduct of pupils when they are off the hub site.

• The Act also provides a defence for staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils.

Preventing Cyberbullying As with all forms of bullying the best way to deal with cyberbullying is to prevent it happening in the first place.
There is no single solution to the problem of cyberbullying but the hub will do the following as a minimum to impose a comprehensive and effective prevention strategy:

Roles and Responsibilities –

The Hub Manager who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead will take overall responsibility for the coordination and implementation of cyberbullying prevention and response strategies.

The DSL will always –

• ensure that all incidents of cyberbullying both inside and outside hub are dealt with immediately and will be managed and/or escalated in line with the procedures set out in the hub's Anti-bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

• ensure that all policies relating to safeguarding, including cyberbullying are reviewed and updated regularly

• ensure that all staff know that they need to report any issues concerning cyberbullying to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

• ensure that all staff are aware of the Prevent Duties.

• provide training (using Channel online awareness training module) so that staff feel confident to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, to challenge extremist ideas and to know how to make a referral when a child is at risk.

 ensure that parents/carers are informed and attention is drawn annually to the cyberbullying policy so that they are fully aware of the hub's responsibility relating to safeguarding pupils and their welfare. The Cyberbullying Policy is available at all times on the hubs website

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• ensure that at the beginning of each term, cyberbullying is revisited as part of the Staying Safe Programme and that pupils know how to report a concern. (to someone on their safety circle, Childline or the thinkuknow website: www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

• ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities by providing clear guidance for staff on the use of technology within the Hub and beyond. All staff should sign to say they have read and understood the Staff Code of Conduct.

Guidance for Staff Guidance on safe practice in the use of electronic communications and storage of images is contained in the Code of Conduct.

The hub will deal with inappropriate use of technology in line with the Code of Conduct which could result in disciplinary procedures. 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 the Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and pass them the information that you have Computers

- Ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question

- Ask the pupil 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

- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership team and pass them the information that you have

- Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

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Use of Technology Policy in the QPG Hub

All members of the Hub community are expected to take responsibility for using technology positively. As well as training, the following is in place:

All staff are expected to sign to confirm they have read and understood the Acceptable Use Policy.

• All staff are expected to sign to confirm they have read and understood the Staff Code of Conduct.

All staff are expected to have read and understood Guidelines for Staff when Children are using Digital Devices

• All children are expected to have been taken through and understood Children's Use of Digital Devices 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 on your safety network. For more advice, look at the Cyberbullying leaflet.

- Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them

- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your parents/carers or member of staff at the Hub or School (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 details or contact information without the permission of a parent/guardian (personal data)

- 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 a teacher or your parents.

- Never reply to abusive e-mails

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- Never reply to someone you do not know

- Always stay in public areas in chat rooms

- The hub will deal with cyberbullying in the same way as other bullying.

Do not think that because it is online it is different to other forms of bullying. Parents/carers must play their role and take responsibility for monitoring their child's online life.

- Parents/carers can help by making sure their child understands the Hub's policy and, above all, how seriously the Hub takes incidents of cyber-bullying.

- Parents/carers should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyber-bullying.

- If parents/carers believe their child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they should save the offending material (if need be by saving the offensive text on their computer or on their mobile phone) and make sure they have all relevant information before deleting.

- Parents/carers should contact the hub as soon as possible.

Please contact Kerry Singh on 02086162170 or email afterschool@qpghub.com

E-Safety at Home 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. Here are some parents/carers might like to try: • **www.thinkyou.know.co.uk/parents** •

- **www.saferinternet.org.uk**
- **www.vodafonedigitalparenting.co.uk**
- **www.childnet.com**
- **www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk**
- **www.nspcc.org.uk**
- **www.cyberangels.org**