



## Squirrel Hayes First School

Policy Reviewed on	June 2015	June 2016	June 2017	June 2019	Nov 2020	Sept 2021	Sept 2022	Nov 2023	Nov 2024	
Policy Owner Signature	Amanda Harris	Amanda Harris	Amanda Harris	Helen Johnson Allen	Rebecca Mahan	Rebecca Percival	Rebecca Percival	Rebecca Percival	Rebecca Percival	
Policy adopted by the Governing Body on	02/07/2015	20/07/2016	June 2017	June 2019	Nov 2020	October 2021	October 2022	Dec 2023	Dec 2024	
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Version	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	

# CYBER BULLYING POLICY

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

## Squirrel Hayes First School Cyber-bullying Policy

Squirrel Hayes First School 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'. Under powers granted by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Headteacher is able to police cyber-bullying or any bullying aspects carried out by pupils even at home.

Our school is committed to providing a safe, caring and respectful environment. Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using digital technology such as mobile phones, tablets, computers, games consoles or online platforms. It can affect children inside and outside school and can cause significant emotional harm. This policy supports our Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding/Child Protection, Behaviour, Online Safety and Acceptable Use policies and aligns with *DfE Preventing & Tackling Bullying (2017)* and *KCSIE 2025*.

### DEFINITION OF CYBER-BULLYING

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

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- 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.
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts/social media pages.
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in chat rooms, to include Facebook, Bebo, You Tube, Ratemyteacher, twitter and Google classrooms.
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in during gaming such as Xbox live.

### Virtual Bullying

With more and more of us using email and mobile phones and other electronic devices, bullying does not have to happen in person. Silent phone calls or abusive texts, emails and social networking sites can be just as distressing as being bullied face to face.

### Cyber Bullying

This is sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the internet or other digital communication devices.

### **Aims of the Policy**

Our cyberbullying policy aims to ensure:

1. **Awareness** - Pupils, staff and parents understand what cyberbullying is and how to prevent it.
2. **Protection & Support** - Clear procedures exist for prevention, reporting and investigation.
3. **Safe Use of Technology** - Pupils learn to use technology responsibly, safely and respectfully.

### **LEGAL ISSUES**

Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. The law applies 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.

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The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

### **Cyberbullying and the Law**

There is no legal definition of cyberbullying within UK law. However there are a number of existing laws that can be applied to cases of cyberbullying and online harassment.

Bullying is never acceptable and the school fully recognizes its duty to protect all of its members and to provide a safe, healthy environment for everyone.

### **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 school site.
- The Act also provides a defence for staff in confiscating items such as mobile phones from pupils. This is a whole school policy which also applies to Page 2 of 5 the Early Years Foundation Stage and Boarding Version 1.9 September 2021

### **Civil and Criminal Law**

- There is not a specific law which makes cyberbullying illegal but it can be considered a criminal offence under several different acts including Protection from Harassment Act (1997), Malicious Communications Act (1988), Communications Act (2003) Obscene Publications Act (1959) and Computer Misuse Act (1990).

### **European Law**

- European Data Protection Legislation is now being applied to issues of cyberbullying, online harassment and identity theft. In 2010, Giovanni Buttarelli, the Assistant European Data Protection Supervisor, outlined how EU Data Protection could be implemented to protect individuals from cyberbullying and online harassment.

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- Breach of the Peace (Scotland)
- Defamation Act 2013

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**POLICY**

Through the connect strand of Curriculum 2014, Squirrel Hayes First School educates its pupils about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying. The Relationships in Education document (2019) provides careful guidance on what learners should know by the end of Primary School. This includes cyber bullying and relationships online. At Squirrel Hayes, we will, through PSHE and in Computing lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate learners to use ICT safely.

**Education for Pupils**

We will teach children about:

- Online respect, kindness and responsible communication
- Privacy, passwords and digital identity
- What to do if something worries them online

This is delivered through Computing, PSHE, RSHE, assemblies and Anti-Bullying Week activities.

All senior leaders, teachers, learning support staff, homes-school link and administration staff have training and are accredited with a certificate in E-safety training. All Staff know how to respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and have systems in place to respond to it. The school endeavours to block access to inappropriate websites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no pupil can work on the internet at any location within the school without a member of staff present. Where appropriate and responsible, Squirrel Hayes audits ICT communications and regularly reviews the security arrangements in place. Only school Staff, supervised learners and authorised visitors can use ICT facilities with an authorised school or visitor log on.

- Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, Squirrel Hayes First School reserves the right to act against those who take part in cyber-bullying.
- All bullying is damaging but cyber-bullying and harassment can be invasive of privacy always. Acts described as cyber-bullying may also be criminal acts.
- Squirrel Hayes supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts.
- Squirrel Hayes will use, as appropriate, the full range of sanctions to deal with pupils who bully fellow pupils or harass staff in this way, both in or out of school.

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- Squirrel Hayes 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 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**

- Go with the pupil and see the Headteacher, or in the Headteacher's absence, a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and pass them the information that you have

Details of any incidents of cyber-bullying should be recorded on an incident form and brought to the attention of the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Computers**

- Accompany the pupil, taking the offending material, to see the Headteacher
- 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
- Normal 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, teacher or other adult in school.

- Do not answer abusive messages but log and report them.

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- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your Teacher, parents/guardian or the Headteacher (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. Squirrel Hayes informs parents of the cyber-bullying policy and the procedures in place to deal with cyber-bullying.

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

Parents and Carers should also explain to their child or 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.

#### **How we as a school deals with Cyber Bullying:**

- Staff - all incidences should be reported to the Headteacher who will then ensure the person being bullied is being supported, take responsibility for investigating and managing the incident and for contacting the police and LA if appropriate. If staff want additional advice and support they can seek this from their union, professional association, Teacher Support Network.
- Pupils - procedures will be followed in line with the school Bullying Policy and LA and DFE guidelines.

For further support and advice:

- Speak to your class teacher.
- Make an appointment with the Home-link worker
- Make an appointment to speak to a senior leader.

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- There is a direct link to the CEOP Internet Safety website on the school's web page. This provides links to further information or to report an incident.
- There is a 'Whisper' link on the school's web page where you can report an issue directly to the school's leadership team either anonymously or with contact details for follow up.

Parents should contact the Headteacher as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with the Headteacher, which may involve other relevant members of staff.

If the incident falls in the holidays Squirrel Hayes reserves the right to act against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school.

### 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.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents)
- [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)
- [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)
- [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)
- [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

### ICT CODE OF CONDUCT

This is displayed in the Library and the Code of Conduct is explained and discussed with pupils in assemblies, PSHE classes and IT classes.

### NATIONAL BODIES

Further support and guidance may be obtained from the following:

[www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/cyber-bullying](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/cyber-bullying)

The following information can be downloaded from the above website:

Safe to Learn: *Embedding anti-bullying work in schools* (2007):

Cyber-bullying Guidance and Resources. Safe to Learn

Cyber-bullying Summary Leaflet

[www.antibullying.net/cyber-bullying1.htm](http://www.antibullying.net/cyber-bullying1.htm) for an Information Sheet for Teachers and other Professionals who work with Young People.

[www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk) for information on safeguarding learners.

[www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)

[www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)

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**DOCUMENT CHANGE LOG**

Version No.	Date of review	Reviewer	Changes Made
01	June 2013	David Francis	New Policy
02	June 2014	A Harris	Reviewed
03	June 2015	A Harris	Reviewed
04	June 2016	A Harris	Inclusion of Curriculum 2014 Inclusion staff training Inclusion of ways to seek advice or report concerns
05	June 2017	A Harris	Reviewed Grammatical corrections. Changes to authorised use of ICT
06	June 2017	A Harris	Reviewed
07	June 2018	H. Johnson Allen	Types of cyber bullying. Cyber bullying and the law. Relationships in education Guidance involving reporting

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Version No.	Date of review	Reviewer	Changes Made
08	Nov 2020	R.Mahan	Addition of types of media to use for cyber bullying- twitter and Google classrooms.
09	Sept 2021	R. Percival	Updated the definition of cyberbullying Updated the cyberbullying and the law. Updated guidance for staff. Added new websites to help parents with ESafety at home.
10	Sept 2022	R. Percival	Reviewed, no changes made.
11	Nov 2023	R. Percival	How we as a school deal with cyber bullying Definitions of different bullying
12	Nov 2024	R. Percival	Reviewed, Updated of hyperlinks
12	Nov 2024	R. Percival	Reviewed, addition of education for pupils and opening paragraph. Cyberbullying poster created for children

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