What does the law say about cyberbullying?

CYBER BULLYING IS WRONG REPORT THEM!

Although bullying in itself is not a specific criminal offence in the UK, it is important to bear in mind that some types of harassing or threatening behaviour or communications could be a criminal offence. If someone keeps making a child feel scared on purpose, what they are doing could be illegal.

KEEP CALM AND Stop Cyber Bullying!

Who becomes a cyberbully?

It's never easy to say why someone starts being hurtful to other people. Cyberbullying is the same as bullying, there are often underlying problems for the bully and it makes them feel better to hurt others. Bullying someone over the internet or via texts is easier as it means the person doing the bullying can't see how much it hurts the other person. This means they can feel more distant from what they are doing. Sending a nasty message or text can be done so quickly that the person doing the bullying might not think about how hurtful it is.

Nobody really likes to think they are involved in bullying and we can often make excuses for the way we treat people. Sometimes this makes it difficult to realise when we are a part of bullying. If a person uses digital technology to upset, anger or embarrass someone, this means they are involved in online bullying even if it isn't done intentionally but only done as a joke.

If a child realizes they have been involved in bullying help them to learn from their mistakes, put things right and change the way we act in the future.

Building confidence after online bullying .

Online bullying can really knock a child's confidence. But there are things they can try to help them take control and build up their confidence. Cyber bullying or bullying on social networks is upsetting and confusing. You might really struggle to feel confident afterwards.

Make sure they know it is nothing they've done or because of anything special about them.

Get them to talk about what has gone on and to understand it's not their fault.

Being angry about what has happened is ok if that anger is used to make positive changes.

Help your child take control back and build defences.

Go www.engayne.co.uk for more online safety advice and suggested websites

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Engayne Primary School
Parent / Carer guide to
Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is when a person or a group of people uses online technology to threaten, tease, harass, upset or humiliate someone else. Being a victim of cyberbullying can be very distressing they may not know who is bullying them. Cyberbullying should be treated the same as 'real world' bullying, rarely occurs in isolation and tends to include physical and emotional bullying offline. Cyberbullying is increasing with the popularity of internet access which is providing more opportunities for misuse with worrying consequences. It's crucial that children learn to use the internet safely and positively and they are aware of the consequences of not doing so.

How is it different from other bullying?

- Cyberbullying can take place 24/7 , it is not restricted by location either. Victims feel there is no escape.
- Electronic content is very hard to control once posted and cannot be removed totally from circulation - this is very upsetting to victims.
- Bullies can feel "distanced" from the victim and think they are anonymous. They are often unaware of the laws regarding harassment and the fact online activity can be traced via "digital footprints."
- "Bystanders" can become perpetrators by passing on videos/images/content or by videoing incidents such as "happy slapping" .
- Cyberbullying can sometimes occur unintentionally – "It was only a joke."
- Cyberbullying can take place across generations—child to child, child to adult, adult to adult, adult to child.
- Victims who retaliate could then be seen as cyberbullies, leaving an electronic trail and making the situation worse.
- One key positive with cyberbullying is that incidents can be used as evidence – e.g. text messages, messenger conversations, screen shots. It is important that this evidence is kept, not deleted.

Types of Cyberbullying

Phone call bullying—not only receiving calls but having a child's phone taken by the bully to harass others from the bullied person's phone

Text message bullying—texts that cause the recipient discomfort

Picture/video clip bullying—pictures sent to others to cause embarrassment

Email bullying –often using pseudonyms to send threatening messages

Chatroom and Instant messaging bullying—these can be real time tormenting

Website and blog bullying—this and all the above these can be from any device / account anywhere so the bullying can be blamed on others.

Key advice for parents/carers on how to deal with cyberbullying

- Talk to your child and understand how they are using the internet and their phone
- Use safety tools and parental controls – if you're not sure how, contact your service provider but please note that these tools are not always 100% effective.
- Be alert to your child being upset after using the internet/phones – they may be secretive, change relationships with friends. But be aware that your child is just as likely to be a bully as to be a target.
- Role model positive online behaviour for your child. It's important that they know how to act safely and responsibly online and are aware of what content is acceptable and unacceptable to post or share.
- If your child is a victim of cyberbullying, remember, it's not their fault so removing the technology or banning them from websites could make them less likely to speak to you in the future if they experience a problem.
- Remind your child not to retaliate to any cyberbullying. Tell your child not to reply, if they do they're giving the bully exactly what they want. Instead, they should tell someone about what they have seen. Most of the time the bully is looking for a reaction when they're teasing or calling someone nasty names.
- Teach your child not to be a bystander when they think cyberbullying is happening. Tell them to report anything to a n adult that they would not want done to them.
- Remind your child not to participate in forwarding pictures, messages or insults about a person. They may think it's a joke but explain to the how upsetting the person involved will be and that by sending such content they may even be committing a crime. To look at or forward this sort of stuff means you are contributing to cyberbullying.
- If pupils from your child's school are involved work with the school.
- Keep any evidence of cyberbullying – encourage your child to save emails, online conversations, texts, screen prints of sites/chat messages that have made them feel uncomfortable– try and include time/date etc

Report the cyberbullying: -Contact the service provider (e.g. the website, gaming site or mobile phone company) to report the user and if possible to remove the content -Contact the school so they can take action if it involves another pupils -If the cyberbullying is serious and a potential criminal offence has been committed then consider contacting the police.

Key advice to children on how to deal with cyberbullying

Make sure your child knows that you understand online bullying is very serious. That you understand it can make someone feel scared, upset, embarrassed or like everyone is against you.

- Always respect others on and offline – think about what you say online and what images you send/post and be aware that online messages can easily be misunderstood.
- Remember that anything you publish online can be made public very quickly and you will never be sure who may have seen it. Once something is posted you can lose control of who sees it and where it may end up.
- Treat your password like a toothbrush – never share it with anyone and only give your personal information like mobile phone number or email address to trusted friends. Be careful to log out of sites and apps if you share your device with others.
- Learn how to block or report online bullies or anyone behaving badly and don't retaliate or reply to nasty messages! This is usually what the bullies are trying to get you to do. Remember that if you reply with a nasty or unkind comment then it could get you into trouble too.
- If someone is bullying you through your mobile phone don't answer any calls from a withheld number, or from a number you don't know. If it gets really bad ask to change your number and only give your new one to people you can trust
- Always make sure that you save evidence of cyberbullying by saving or printing out text messages, online conversation, pictures etc. Try and include as much information as possible, such as web addresses (URLs), contact numbers, user names, times, dates, locations.
- Always make sure you tell someone if you are being bullied online. Nobody has to go through online bullying alone and often the first step in stopping it is to tell someone about it like an adult you trust or contact someone like Childline or Beat Bullying
- If a crime has been committed or someone is at risk of harm then contact the police

If you see cyberbullying going on, then support the victim and REPORT it to the website or your school, don't be a bystander and say nothing otherwise you become part of the problem.