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Anti-Cyberbullying Policy

Introduction

Shakespeare Walk Adventure Playground (SWAPA) recognises that technology plays an important and positive role in everyone's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all staff to understand both the benefits and the risks, and to equip them with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

Aims

The aims of this policy are to ensure:

• safeguarding the children in the real and virtual world
• children, staff and parents are educated to understand what cyberbullying is and what its consequences can be
• knowledge, policies and procedures are in place to prevent incidents of cyberbullying in the playgrounds
• have effective measures to deal effectively with cases of cyberbullying
• monitor the effectiveness of prevention measures.

What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying - Definition
"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 for SMS messages and as cameras. In addition:

• 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 staff and other adults can be targeted
• It can draw bystanders into being accessories

• It includes: threats and intimidation; harassment or 'cyberstalking'; vilification/defamation; exclusion or peer rejection
• Impersonation; unauthorised publication of private information or images ('happy-slapping'); and manipulation
• It can be an illegal act

PREVENTING CYBERBULLYING

Understanding and discussion
• Staff will receive training in identifying cyberbullying and understanding their responsibilities in developing e-safety. In this training all staff will be helped to keep up to date with the technologies that children are using will discuss keeping personal information safe and appropriate use of the internet
• Children and staff will be involved in evaluating and improving policies and procedures.

Policies and Procedures
• Ensure regular review and update of existing policies to include cyberbullying where appropriate
• Provide opportunities for children to be involved in the process of updating and improving them
• Keep good records of all cyberbullying incidents

Making Reporting Easier
• Children/parents should contact the service line manager or the Designated Person for Safeguarding if they are concerned about a bullying issue
• Ensure staff can recognise non-verbal signs and indications of cyberbullying
• Publicise and promote the message that asking for help is the right thing to do and shows strength and good judgement
• Publicise to all members staff the ways in which cyberbullying can be reported
• Provide information for all children including reassurances about 'whistleblowing' and the appropriate way of informing appropriate staff or parents about incidents they have witnessed
• Provide information on external reporting routes eg mobile phone company, internet service provider, Childline, CEOP or the NSA.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Prevention Measures
• Identify areas for improvement and incorporate children's ideas

RESPONDING TO CYBERBULLYING

Most cases of cyberbullying will be dealt with through the SWAPA's existing Behaviour Policy and Safeguarding Policy. This must remain the framework within which incidents of bullying are investigated. However, some features of cyberbullying differ from other forms of bullying and may prompt a particular response. The key differences are:

• impact: the scale and scope of cyberbullying can be greater than other forms of bullying
• targets and perpetrators: the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets
• location: the 24/7 and anywhere nature of cyberbullying
• anonymity: the person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them
• motivation: some children may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying
• evidence: unlike other forms of bullying, the target of the bullying will have evidence of its occurrence
• it is possible that a member of staff may be a victim and these responses apply to them too.

Support for the person being bullied
• Offer emotional support; reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling
• Advise the person not to retaliate or reply. Instead, keep the evidence and take it to their parent or a member of staff (in the case of staff they should take it to their line manager)
• Advise the person to consider what information they have in the public domain
• Unless the victim sees it as a punishment, they may be advised to change eg mobile phone number
• If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed, try to get it removed from the web. If the person who posted it is known, ensure they understand why it is wrong and ask them to remove it. Alternatively, contact the host provider and make a report to get the content taken down
• In some cases, the person being bullied may be able to block the person bullying from their sites and services.

Investigation
• Members of staff should contact their line manager in all cases
• Staff and children should be advised to preserve evidence and a record of abuse; save phone messages, record or save-and-print instant messenger conversations, print or produce a screenshot of social network pages, print, save and forward to staff whole email messages
• If images are involved, determine whether they might be illegal or raise child protection concerns. If so, contact the DCPP, who may involve the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), the local police in cases of actual/suspected illegal content, or CEOP (http://www.ceop.gov.uk/)

Working with the bully and applying sanctions

The aim of the sanctions will be:

• to help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying will stop

• to hold the perpetrator to account, getting them to recognise the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behaviour

• to demonstrate that cyberbullying is unacceptable

• General advice on protecting yourself online and dealing with Cyberbullying

To avoid the risk of being exposed to illegal content and protecting yourself online, we recommend the following precautions:

- Do not share your personal information! This includes pictures of you or your family and friends, email addresses, mobile numbers and online IDs
- Do not arrange to meet strangers! You may have been communicating with people you think you know online, but do you really know who they are?
- Do not open email or links on social networking pages from people you do not know or when you do not recognise the email address
- Similarly, do not open attachments or pictures you receive from unknown people or email addresses
- Ensure you have an effective filter on your PC to stop unwanted content
- If you are regularly using search engines (such as Google), you can set each search engine site to a strict level of filtering. This limits what a search will bring up when entering keywords. Check your options with your preferred search engine site. Once you have chosen a search filtering level, check these settings regularly to ensure they have not been amended or switched off
- Viewing illegal images online can carry a penalty of up to 10 years in prison in the UK
- Curiousity is normal on the internet, but being exposed to unwanted and potentially illegal images is not acceptable
- Child Abuse images reflect just that: abuse of children and as such, should always be reported.