

## Cyberbullying and the Law

Although bullying is not a specific criminal offence in UK law, criminal and civil laws can apply in terms of, for example, harassment or threatening behaviour, and particularly relevant for cyberbullying – threatening and menacing communications:

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997, which has both criminal and civil provision
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Section 43 of the Telecommunications Act 1984
- Communications Act 2003
- Public Order Act 1986

### What Should I do if someone else is being bullied?

If you know someone that is being cyberbullied or have seen nasty profiles or messages going around, it is your duty to report it. Cyberbullying is really scary for the person being bullied as the audience can be huge, loads of people could be seeing the mean things that have been said and done. If you see anything that looks like cyberbullying, it is your duty to report it. Tell a member of staff about what is going on and they will be able to help offer support to the person who is being bullied.

Don't participate in forwarding pictures, messages or insults about a person. You may think it is a joke, but you could be really upsetting the person involved and even committing a crime. To look at or forward this sort of stuff means you are contributing to cyberbullying.

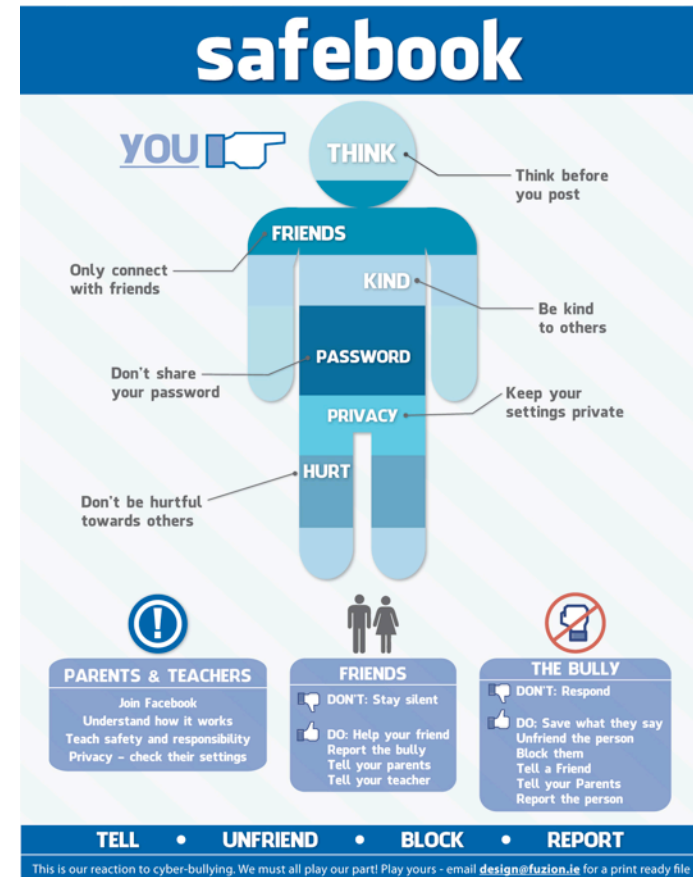
Standing back and letting it happen can be just as bad. If you are worried that someone is getting threatened or hurt by others, offer them support or inform an adult you trust so they can help make it stop.

Always respect other people and be aware of what you're sending and receiving whilst online.

## Pensans Community Primary School

### PARENT GUIDE No.2

## CYBER BULLYING



Updated Oct. 2013

## **What is cyber bullying?**

Cyber bullying is the use of electronic media - especially mobile phones and the internet - to intimidate, threaten or upset someone.

Cyber bullying can include:

- texting scary or rude messages by mobile phone
- sending unpleasant photographs by mobile phone
- using online message boards, chat rooms or social networking sites to post cruel messages
- deleting the victim's name from or ignoring their messages on social networking sites

## **Is my child likely to be a victim of cyber bullying?**

Research suggests that cyber bullying is common among teenagers - at least one in five has been a victim of it. The practice is becoming more widespread.

A major difference between cyber bullying and other types of bullying is that the cyber bully can follow your child into the house, even into his or her bedroom. Another disturbing aspect of cyber bullying is that the victim often feels there's nowhere to hide

## **What should I do if my child is being cyber bullied?**

If you suspect your child is being cyber bullied, don't ignore it. Consider the following approaches:

- Make sure your child is aware of cyber bullying.
- Be aware of your child's internet activity.
- Try to understand the technology and communication networks your child uses.
- Ask your child to show you any nasty messages he or she receives.
- Tell your child never to respond to an abusive text message - what the cyber bully most wants is a reply.
- Talk to staff at here school they will be able to help you and your child.

Pensans School are very aware of cyber bullying and it's included in our anti-bullying policy.

## **Could my child be a cyber bully?**

No one wants to think of their child bullying other children. But cyber bullying is different from other forms of bullying - tactics can often be hidden and more subtle - so it's sometimes difficult to detect.

Cyber bullies don't need to be bigger or more aggressive or even in the same place as the child they're bullying. But like all bullies, they often rely on the support of bystanders - other children who observe what they're doing and don't challenge them.

Ask your child if they've ever done anything online to hurt or upset anyone. It's important to emphasise to your child that being cruel to other children and taking part in an activity that could hurt them is wrong.

Cyber bullying also gives children the opportunity to bully adults. Teachers are sometimes the victims of internet messaging that undermines or ridicules them. Make sure your child is aware that these activities are unacceptable and that schools will deal harshly with the pupils involved.

Further information on cyber bullying is available on the following websites:

- [www.cybermentors.org.uk](http://www.cybermentors.org.uk)
- [yp.direct.gov.uk/cyberbullying/](http://yp.direct.gov.uk/cyberbullying/)