



St. George's National School

CYBER BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

Young people have fully embraced the use of information and communication technologies to maintain contact with friends and make new ones. They send emails, create their own websites, post intimate personal news in blogs (online interactive diaries), send text messages and images via cell phones, message each other through IMs (instant messages), chat in chatrooms, post to discussion boards, and seek out new friends in teen community sites.

While most interactions are positive, there are increasing reports of these technologies being used to harass and intimidate others. This has become known as cyber bullying.

Definition

- **Cyber bullying** is when someone is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed, or otherwise targeted by another child, pre-teen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. It has to be a minor on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor.

- www.stopcyberbullying.org

Policy

St. George's National School is committed to developing a safe environment where the students act respectfully and positively towards each other in acceptable and non-threatening ways.

School Ethos

The school, under the patronage of the Church of Ireland, will preserve and develop the religious character in accordance with the Church. It aims to serve the community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all.

Procedure

The staff at St. George's National School has the responsibility to ensure that:

- all forms of cyber bullying are prohibited at St. George's
- all the children take the *cyber bullying pledge*
- staff are aware of cyber bullying and are able to identify and look for signs of occurrence among the students
- students are aware of the consequences of cyber bullying
- a code of conduct is in use for technology, including computers and mobile phones, whilst on the school premises
- students will be educated about safe cyber communication and usage
- all cases of cyber bullying are reported to the Principal and responded to promptly
- there is supervision of technology that is effective for monitoring and deterring cyber bullying
- we recognize and we are cognizant of the fact that technology is very much part of their after-school time. In an attempt to promote continuous positive relations in a class, teachers may find it is necessary to deal with issues that arise due to negative interactions on social media.

Students at St. George's National School have a responsibility to ensure that they:

- do not participate in cyber bullying
- do not use mobile phones, cameras or other digital devices to record audio and visual material that is not authorised as part of the school curriculum programme
- do not breach the privacy of students, staff and members of the school community through any unauthorised recording or filming
- do not disseminate inappropriate information through digital media or other means
- report incidents of cyber bullying to a member of staff
- advise students being victimised by cyber bullying to talk to an adult
- offer to speak to an adult on behalf of the student who is being victimised by cyber bullying

Review and Ratification:

This policy was reviewed and ratified in May 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2021 by staff and the Board of Management. It will be reviewed again in 2023.

B.O.M: _____ Date: _____