

VOYAGE LEARNING CAMPUS



CYBER BULLYING POLICY

This policy has been adopted by SLT on:	
Date adopted:	17 th April 2018
Signed:	<i>Atill</i>
Next review due:	April 2019

Voyage Learning Campus (VLC) VLC Cyber-Bullying Policy

Policy to be read in conjunction with the following document:

- ***VLC Safeguarding Policy***
- ***VLC Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy***
- ***VLC Behaviour policy***
- ***VLC Online Safety Policy***

1. Definition of cyber-bullying

1.1 Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact repeatedly over time against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.

1.2 By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media:

- Bullying by texts or messages or calls on mobile phones
- The use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, social networking sites
- Using e-mail to message others
- Hijacking/cloning e-mail accounts
- Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in chat rooms, to include Facebook, YouTube and Ratelyteacher

2. Legal issues

2.1 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.
- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

3. Policy

3.1 The VLC educates its students both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through PSHE and in ICT lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its pupils in these fast changing areas.

3.2 The VLC trains its staff to respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it. The VLC endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no student is allowed to work on the Internet in the class

rooms, or any other location within the school which may from time to time be used for such work, without a member of staff present.

3.3 Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, the VLC reserves the right to take action against those who take part in cyber-bullying.

- All bullying is damaging but cyber-bullying and harassment can be invasive of privacy at all times. These acts may also be criminal acts.
- The VLC supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts.
- The VLC will use, as appropriate, the full range of sanctions to correct, discipline or remove students who bully fellow students or harass staff in this way, both in or out of the Campus.
- The VLC will use its power of confiscation where necessary to prevent students from committing crimes or misusing equipment.
- All members of the VLC community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the Principal any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

4. Guidance for Staff

All staff to be aware that if you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident you should follow the protocol outlined below:

4.1 Mobile Phones

- Ask the pupil to show you the mobile phone
- Note clearly everything on the screen relating to an inappropriate text message or image, to include the date, time and names and record on the e-safety incident log sheet.
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Ask the student to save the message/image
- Inform the Vice Principals or Senior Assistant Vice Principals and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4.2 Computers

- Ask the student to show on-screen the material in question
- Ask the student to save the material
- Print off a hard copy the offending material
- Inform the Vice Principals or Senior Assistant Vice Principals and the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Normal procedures to interview students and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.

5. Guidance for Students

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 / carer, your teacher, the Vice Principal or Assistant Vice Principal.

- Do not answer abusive messages but log and report them
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your Teacher, parents/guardian or the Vice Principal or Senior Assistant Vice Principal (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 details
- Never reply to abusive e-mails
- Never reply to someone you do not know
- Stay in public areas in chat rooms.

6. Guidance for Parents / Carers

It is vital that parents / carers and the VLC work together to ensure that all students are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. The VLC informs parents / carers of the Cyber-Bullying policy and the procedures in place to deal with cyber-bullying.

- Parents / carers can help by making sure their child understands the VLC's policy and, above all, how seriously the VLC takes incidents of cyber-bullying
- Parent / carers should also explain to their sons or daughters legal issues relating to cyber-bullying
- If parents / carers 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
- Parents / carers should contact the Principal as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with the Principal, which may involve other relevant members of staff.

7. Online 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. Important and useful information can be found on the following site:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety>

8. ICT Code of Conduct

This is displayed prominently in classrooms and the Code of Conduct is explained and discussed with pupils in PSHE classes and ICT classes.

9. National Bodies

Further support and guidance may be obtained from the following:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-abuse-and-bullying-prevention-guide>

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/>