

## **Cyber-bullying Policy**

### **Statement of Intent**

The community of Holmesdale Infant School are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our children and staff so they can learn and work in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. In addition we understand the importance of ICT at Holmesdale Infant School in supporting a creative curriculum for all learners.

Bullying of any kind is totally unacceptable at our school. If cyberbullying does occur, all children and adults should be aware of what action/steps they need to take and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

### **What is Cyberbullying?**

Bullying is a deliberate, conscious, repeated intention to hurt, victimise, threaten or frighten someone.

Cyber-bullying can be defined as the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet to deliberately upset someone else. It can be an extension of face to face bullying, with technology providing the bully with another route to harass their target.

**Cyber-bullying**, like all bullying, should be taken very seriously. It is never acceptable.

All teaching and non-teaching staff and governors should know what the school policy is on cyber-bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.

All parents should know what the school policy is on cyber-bullying, and what they should do if cyber-bullying arises.

All the children of Holmesdale should know what to do if they feel bullied or threatened through the use of ICT.

As a school we take cyber-bullying seriously. Children and parents should be assured that they will be supported when cyber-bullying is reported.

### **Preventing Cyber-bullying**

At Holmesdale Infant School we will work together to raise awareness and promote understanding about cyber-bullying, ensuring that all children, parents and staff are all aware of the procedures and sanctions for dealing with cyber-bullying, including bullying that takes place out of school.

Activities to promote these may include:

- Information sent home to parents.
- Addressing cyber-bullying through our Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme.
- Taking part in a 6 week programme of activities to reinforce and discuss all aspects of cyberbullying. ( CEOP\*- Where's Hector?)

- Parents signing an Acceptable Use of ICT contract and discuss its meaning with their children.
- Staff development activities
- Events such as special assemblies
- Booklet/letter sent home to parents on how to keep their child safe when using the Internet (setting the correct filters/age restrictions).
- Staying up to date – prevention and responding strategies require continuous review and refinement as new technologies and services become popular.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being cyber-bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- begins to do poorly in school work
- has a desire to remain with adults
- Shows changes in their behaviour

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated .

### **Procedures for children**

The children are encouraged to;

- report all incidents of cyber-bullying to any member of staff.
- Tell their parents.
- Click on the dolphin (displayed on the top right-hand corner of the monitor). This will instantly cover up the screen ensuring the content cannot be viewed any longer.

### **Procedures for Parents**

If you feel your child is experiencing cyber-bullying, never ignore what is happening;

- Listen carefully to what they say.
- Make a note of what your child says, with as much detail as possible.
- Reassure your child that they were right to tell.
- Make sure they are not blaming themselves.
- Report incident to the class teacher . They will pass on the incident/information to the designated member of staff responsible for cyber-bullying. (Mrs J Wignell)

**Procedures for staff and strategies for dealing with Cyber-bullying -If you suspect a child is experiencing cyberbullying**

- Give reassurance that the child has done the right thing by telling someone.
- Listen to the child to determine what they have experienced.
- Inform the designated member of staff for cyber-bullying, who will in turn investigate, record and if needed contact the Local Authority.
- Inform the parents.

**Advice on next steps:**

Make sure the child knows not to retaliate or return the message.

Ask the child to think about what information they have given in the public domain.

Help the child (adult support may be needed depending on age) to keep relevant evidence for any investigation (e.g. by not deleting messages they've received, and by taking screen capture shots and noting web addresses of online cyberbullying instances).

Check the child understands simple ways to prevent it from happening again,

**This policy , will be updated periodically as technologies develop.**

**Review Date:**

**Signed.....Chair of Governors          Date.....**

**Signed.....Headteacher          Date.....**

**\*Child Exploitation Online Protection.**

