

# Cyber-Bullying Policy

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS by Dene Bright and Johannes Bodenstein

Review date: September 2019

Policy actioned from: September 2019 – August 2020

Next review date: September 2020

Please note: 'School' refers to Reach British School; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

Reach British School embraces the advantages of modern technology in terms of the educational benefits it brings, however, the school is mindful of the potential for bullying to occur. Central to the School's anti-bullying policy is the belief that 'all pupils have a right not to be bullied' and that 'bullying is always unacceptable'. The School also recognises that it must 'take note of bullying perpetrated outside School which spills over into the School'.

## Definition of Cyber-Bullying

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.

By cyber-bullying, we mean bullying by electronic media such as:

- 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, but not limited to Facebook, Bebo, Youtube and Ratemyteacher

## Legal Issues

Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. There are laws in the UAE that apply to cyberspace:

- It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites.
- Defamation, which is often at the core of cyberbullying, is potentially a criminal offence in the UAE. Not only does the UAE have extensive provisions within its Penal Code (Federal Law No. 3 of 1987), but it also has the benefit of the Cyber Crimes Law (Federal Decree No. 5 of 2012 on Cyber Crimes).

## Policy

RBS educates its pupils both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through Moral Education, International Primary Curriculum, ICT lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its pupils in these fast changing areas. RBS trains its staff to respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it. RBS endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems and no pupil is allowed to work on the internet in the Computer Room, or any other location within the school which may from time to time be used for such work, without a member of staff's permission. Where appropriate and responsible, RBS audits ICT communications and regularly reviews the security arrangements in place. Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, RBS 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.
- RBS supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts.
- RBS will use, as appropriate, the full range of sanctions to correct, punish or remove pupils who bully fellow pupils or harass staff in this way, both in or out of school.
- RBS will use its power of confiscation where necessary to prevent pupils from committing crimes or misusing equipment.
- All members of the School community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the Heads of School, Vice Principal or Principal any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

### **Guidance for Staff**

If you suspect or are told about a cyber-bullying incident, follow the protocol outlined below:

- When asking to look at content on a student's personal device it is good practice to do so with 2 adults present and inform the parents as soon as possible.

### **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.
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Tell the pupil to save the message/image.
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team (Principal, Vice Principal, Heads of School) and pass them the information that you have.
- If possible and with the student's agreement a screen capture image may be sent to the staff's school email account. Use of other transfer systems such as SMS, Bluetooth, etc., to a personal phone or device of a staff member is not allowed.

### **Computers**

- Ask the pupil to get up on-screen the material in question.
- Ask the pupil to save the material.
- Print off the offending material straight away.
- Make sure you have got all pages in the right order and that there are no omissions.
- Inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team (Principal, Vice Principal, Heads of School) and pass them the information that you have.
- Normal procedures to interview pupils and to take statements will then be followed particularly if a child protection issue is presented.
- If possible and with the student's agreement a screen capture image may be able to be sent to the staff's school email account.
- Use of other transfer systems such as SMS, Bluetooth etc. to a personal phone to device of

the staff member is not allowed.

### **Guidance for Pupils**

- 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/guardian, or a member of staff at RBS.
- Do not answer abusive messages but save them and report them
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your parents/guardian or a member of staff at RBS (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 IT details
- Never reply to abusive e-mails or messages in chat rooms or other social media
- Never reply to someone you do not know
- Stay in public areas in chat rooms

### **Guidance for Parents**

It is vital that parents and the school work together to ensure that all pupils are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. RBS informs parents of the cyber-bullying policy and the procedures in place to deal with cyber-bullying.

- Parents can help by making sure their child understands the school's policy and, above all, how seriously RBS takes incidents of cyber-bullying
- Parents should also explain to their children legal issues relating to cyber-bullying
- If parents 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 should contact the school as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- If the incident falls in the holidays RBS reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the school which spills over into the school.

### **E-Safety at Home**

Several sites offer helpful advice to parents, 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 sites:

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/advice/advice-for-parents-and-carers/internet-safety-and-online-risk/protecting-your-child-online/>

<https://www.imom.com/7-ways-to-protect-your-child-online/#.XF5EvFwzblU>

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

### **ICT Code of Conduct**

This is displayed prominently in the ICT Room and the Code of Conduct is explained and discussed with pupils in assemblies, Moral Education, Homeroom time and ICT classes.

### **National Bodies**

- Further support and guidance may be obtained from the following:
  - [www.tamimi.com/law-update-articles/cyberbullying-a-snapshot-of-the-laws-in-the-uae/](http://www.tamimi.com/law-update-articles/cyberbullying-a-snapshot-of-the-laws-in-the-uae/)
  - [www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/cyber-bullying](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/cyber-bullying)
- The following information can be downloaded from the above website:
- Safe to Learn: *Embedding anti-bullying work in schools* (2007):
- Cyber-bullying Guidance and Resources. Safe to Learn
- Cyber-bullying Summary Leaflet
- [www.antibullying.net/cyber-bullying1.htm](http://www.antibullying.net/cyber-bullying1.htm) for an Information Sheet for Teachers and other Professionals who work with Young People
- [www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk) for information on safeguarding learners

- Beatbullying Rochester House London SE19 2AT 020 8771 3377 [www.beatbullying.org](http://www.beatbullying.org)  
Anti-Bullying Alliance National Childrens Bureau 8 Wakley Street London EC1V 7QE 020 7843  
1901 [www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk](http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk)