RPES CYBER BULLYING POLICY

Cyber Bullying Policy	
Implemented Date	April 2020
Review Date	September 2023
Next Review Date	September 2024

STATEMENT OF INTENT - ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY REMAIN SAFE IN CYBERSPACE.

Royal Private English High School is committed to providing a caring, friendly, safe and positive environment for all the pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Our children know more than we think they know, and less than they think they know. They are swimming in oceans of data, communications, and media. While we call members of this generation "digital natives" — those with the ability to consume, create, absorb, and navigate everything in the digital spectrum — in truth, our children are in danger of being overwhelmed by this 24/7 unfiltered digital world without our guidance. While we carefully oversee other areas of their lives, many of us are unintentionally negligent when it comes to their digital experiences. Though we may be uncomfortable with the full scope of our responsibility in the digital world, ignoring it won't make it go away.

As per Article 21 of the UAE Federal Decree Law 5/2012, cybercrimes are punishable by a jail term of at least six months and/or a fine not less than Dh150,000 and not exceeding Dh500,000.

Bullying of any kind, including cyberbullying is unacceptable at our school. If cyberbullying does occur, pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively and any such cases will be immediately reported to the Principal/Head of The Section / Supervisors/ Counsellor.

WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING?

Cyber bullying is the use of aggression online with the intention of hurting another person. This may be in the form of text, photos or videos which results in pain and distress to the victim. Cyberbullying can be of many types.

- **Emotional**
  Emotional abuse can occur online in the form of messages, images or videos that are intended to humiliate, torment, degenerate, exclude, blackmail or exploit an individual or group of individuals.
- **Racist**
  Cyberbullying could include racist comments that are targeted to individuals belonging to a specific culture, country, race or ethnicity. This includes digital content aimed at humiliating or ridiculing individuals or a group of individuals belonging to a particular group.
- **Sexual**
  Cyberbullying can also include sexual content or sexually abusive comments, pornography, sexually explicit content. This entails the use of sexual content aimed at humiliating an individual or exposing an individual to sexual content without their consent.
- **Impersonation**
  Impersonation includes when an individual hacks into another person's digital account or accounts with the intention of using the victim's online identity. This is usually done with the intent to post or upload questionable digital content.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO CYBERBULLYING?

Cyberbullying causes emotional and psychological detriment to the victims. No one deserves to be a victim of cyberbullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect and dignity even in the online world. Pupils who are cyberbullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

- All management team members, teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what cyber bullying is and the impact it has on its victims.
- All management team members, teaching and non- teaching staff should know what the school policy is on cyberbullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents and staff must know the reporting protocol to report incidents of cyber bullying.
- As a school we take cyberbullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when cyberbullying is reported.
- In all cases there will be Zero tolerance to cyberbullying.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is being cyberbullied. Parents and teachers should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened or timid
- Doesn't want to go to school
- Starts stammering
- Shows a sudden decrease in online activity
- Is withdrawn and anxious or displays lack of conscience
- Attempts or threatens suicide or running away
- Cries himself/ herself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Changes in eating and sleep patterns
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a message is received

These signs and behavior could indicate other problems, but cyberbullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Principal, Senior Leadership Team and Counsellor

2.2.1   The Principal has overall executive responsibility for the safety and welfare of members of the School community.

2.2.2   The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) are senior members of staff from the Senior Leadership Team and the School Counsellor will lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection. The responsibility of the DSL includes managing safeguarding incidents involving the use of technology in the same way as other safeguarding matters, in accordance with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

2.2.3   The DSLs will work with the IT Manager in monitoring Technology uses and practices across the School and assessing whether any improvements can be made to ensure the online safety and well-being of students.

2.2.4 The DSLs will regularly monitor the Technology Incident Log maintained by the IT Manager and the School Counsellor. The School Counsellor also has a prominent role in safeguarding as mentioned in the Online Safety Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2.2.5 The DSL will regularly update other members of the SLT on the operation of the School's safeguarding arrangements, including online safety practices, In line with the Online Safety Policy.

2.2.6 DSL, will ensure that all incidents are reported in line with the reporting protocol mentioned in this Policy.

2.2.7 The counsellor will conduct sessions for students on e safety and cyber bullying.

2.4 All staff

2.4.1 The School staff have a responsibility to act as good role models in their use of Technology and to share their knowledge of the School's policies and of safe practice with the students.

2.4.2 Staff are expected to adhere to each of the policies referenced in paragraph 1.5 above.

2.4.3 Staff have a responsibility to report any concerns about a pupil's welfare and safety in accordance with this policy and the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

2.4.4 Contribute to this policy and digital citizenship to improve the overall online curriculum of the school.

2.5 Parents

2.5.1 The role of parents in ensuring that students understand how to stay safe when using Technology is crucial. The School expects parents to promote safe practice when using Technology and to:

(a) Support the School in the implementation of this policy and report any concerns in line with the School's policies and procedures;

(b) Talk to their child / children to understand the ways in which they are using the internet, social media and their mobile devices and promote digital citizenship and responsible behaviour;

(c) Encourage their child to speak to someone if they are being bullied or otherwise are concerned about their own safety or that of another pupil or need support; and

(d) Contribute to this policies as when the need arises.

2.5.2 If parents have any concerns or require any information about online safety, they should contact the DSL.

2.6 Students

The role of students to understand how to stay safe when using Technology is crucial. The School expects students to be aware of safe practices when using Technology.

The safe use of Technology is also a focus in all areas of the curriculum and key safety messages are reinforced as part of assemblies and tutorial/pastoral activities, teaching students:

(a) about the risks associated with using the Technology and how to protect themselves and their peers from potential risks;

(b) to be critically aware of content they access online and guided to validate accuracy of information;

(c) how to recognise suspicious, bullying, radicalisation and extremist behaviour;

(d) the definition of cyberbullying, its effects on the victim and how to treat each other's online identities with respect;

(e) the consequences of negative online behaviour; and

(f) how to report cyberbullying and/or incidents that make students feel uncomfortable or under threat and how the School will deal with those who behave inappropriately.

(g) actively participate and contribute to the digital citizenship program.

(h) contribute to this policy via their inputs shared through the Prefects of the Student Council.

Reporting Protocol

Students may report incidents of cyber bullying or online safety to any trusted adult. Once reported the individual must report the incident according to the reporting protocol as follows:

Student >Teacher>Supervisor / DSL > Counsellor / IT manager >Principal

Procedures

As soon as the school receives a report that a child has been cyberbullied, the Principal/ Heads of Section/ Supervisors/ Counsellor is informed. If a cyberbullying incident is seen or reported by a student to any subject teacher or class teacher, immediate action must be taken and children involved must be counseled.

- Once reported, the incident report will be documented and forwarded to the Counsellor, Section Supervisor and the Principal.
- The identified bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken to, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented by the counsellor in coordination with the Subject Teacher/Class Teacher/Supervisor/Principal.
- Parents will be notified about the incident.
- Both the bully and the victims will be offered counselling and support.
- If found guilty, appropriate steps including suspension of E-learning classes, will be taken in accordance with the MOE Student Behaviour Management Distance Learning Policy 2020 and the School's Child Protection Policy.
- The identity of the students and the violation will be treated with appropriate confidentiality by the Behaviour Management Committee.
- The student found to be guilty of bullying others will be monitored and monthly reports sought to ensure that he/she does not repeat such an act.
- Timely follow ups will be conducted as required.

All procedures and penalties will be followed as per the MOE Behavioural guidelines and MOE distance Learning guidelines.

This policy to be read in conjunction with the guidelines and norms outlined in the:
- Online Safety Policy
- MOE Student Behaviour Management Guidelines.
- Child Protection and safeguarding Policy.
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Bring Your Own Device

Principal

Royal Private English School

Fujairah