

Link Learning Trust Barlow Hall Primary School



Digital Safety

A Guide for Parents

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Our children are growing up in a world which is very different from that of most of their parents and carers. The world of mobile phones and the internet is mostly a creative, positive and productive part of what they do. More and more information communication technologies support social activity that allows young people to feel connected to their peers.

As parents and school staff, we are aware that technologies can, and are, being used negatively. Sometimes as adults, we may feel that we are entering an unfamiliar world that children seem to know so much more about but cyber-bullying, as it is known, is a form of bullying that children must be aware of. As with other forms of bullying, children can feel anxious and isolated when faced with cyber bullying. The challenges for many adults will be that they have no experience of what is happening or how to deal with it.

This guide is a tool to help our parents know how they can help and what other support networks there are for you and your children. At Barlow Hall, we are totally committed to anti-bullying. This guide should be used alongside our guide for parents on anti-bullying at Barlow Hall. As always, please talk to us in school if you have any questions or queries.

How do we promote a positive culture of confident technology users to support our children and prevent cyberbullying?

- Agree on family rules and what you will do if cyberbullying happens.
- Look with your children at the online technologies and websites they like to use.
- Have your child, or someone else, show you how to block someone on a chat service like MSN or how to report abuse to a website or service provider.
- Help and encourage your child to use technology to support their learning.
- Encourage your children to use 'netiquette' (responsible on-line behaviour) only post or write positive things on-line, use appropriate language, make sure you are old enough to be using a site or on-line service.
- Remember that your child could be involved in on-line bullying. Be alert to your child's behaviour, especially after using their mobile phone or the internet.
Keep passwords safe, don't share them



How is cyberbullying different?

- Cyberbullying can happen 24/7 and allows the invasion of home and personal space.
- The audience can be very large and reached rapidly.
- People who cyberbully can sometimes remain anonymous.
- Age, size and position do not protect you from cyberbullying. Children can bully adults.
- Cyberbullying is sometimes unintentional - a misunderstood joke, a lack of awareness, sharing something you thought was private that is then shared by others.

There are harassment and threatening behaviour laws that can include cyberbullying.

How can we prevent Cyberbullying?

The Head of School, is the person ultimately responsible for Anti-bullying in school. However, it is the responsibility of the whole community to make sure our children are safe and this includes 'e-safety'.

What do we do in school:

- We understand and talk about cyberbullying as a staff and with our children.
- We have a clear e-safety policy which is reviewed regularly (it is summarised in this 'Guide for Parents')
- We keep records of any incidents
- We can search our internet use records and our children know this.

How can we respond to cyber bullying?

- Talk to your child about cyberbullying, and encourage them to talk to you about anything that concerns them.
 - Make sure that your child does not respond or retaliate to cyberbullying
 - Help your child to save evidence of cyberbullying
 - If you need to, help your child to change their contact details.
- Use the security tools on your family's computer, on websites or on your child's mobile phone.
 - Report cyberbullying, to school, the website or service provider.

Denying children access to the technology is not the answer

Tips to share with your children, what we tell them to do:

- Don't reply – never retaliate or reply if you have been sent a nasty message. Block the bully and tell an adult at home or school
- Keep evidence of cyberbullying – save messages and conversations.
- Report it – most websites and mobile phone operators have a place where you can report abuse.
- Always respect others – be careful what you say and what you send. Messages and images can be made public and could stay on-line forever – you can't control what is and isn't shared.

- Protect your on-line accounts and your mobile phone with a password – don't share it with anyone!
- Tell someone – a child, an adult at home or school or call Childline on 0800 1111 or go to www.cybermentors.org.uk

**Don't be a part of cyberbullying.
If you see it, get help and stop it**

For further support and advice you can contact the following organisations:

Parentline Plus 0808 800 2222 Immediate support and advice for parents 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Kidscape 08451 205 204 A telephone helpline for parents and carers of children being bullied
www.kidscape.org.uk

Childline 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

CyberMentors a safe social networking site providing information and support for people affected by bullying. www.cybermentors.org.uk