



CYBERBULLYING

GEMS MILLENNIUM SCHOOL, SHARJAH

REVIEWED IN: JANUARY 2017, MARCH 2019, MARCH 2020

POLICY ON CYBERBULLYING

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

GEMS Millennium School, Sharjah is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all the pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Announcements are made regularly in school during assemblies as well as circulars sent to parents by the Principal to be vigilant about their wards' online networks. Timely reminders are also sent and talks given by the Principal, Headmistress, Heads of Sections, Supervisors and Counsellors.

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 Head of Section/ Supervisors/Counsellors.

WHAT IS CYBER BULLYING?

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:

- Emotional Unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. use of derogatory words, defamatory remarks, spreading rumours etc.)
- Racist Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual Sexual content or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexual
- Cyber All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room. Also Includes the misuse of smartphones, tablets and associated technology in the form of threats and calls and video facilities.



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WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPOND TO CYBERBULLYING?

Cyberbullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of cyberbullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect 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 cyberbullying is.
- All management team members and 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 should know what the school policy is on cyberbullying, and what they should do if cyberbullying arises.
- 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 through signs or behaviour 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
- shows a sudden decrease in online activity
- is withdrawn and anxious or displays lack of conscience
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries himself to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money [to pay bully]
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving [money / lunch has been stolen]
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating



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- is frightened to say what's wrong
- 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 behaviour could indicate other problems, but cyberbullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

PROCEDURES:

1. If a cyberbullying incident is seen or reported by a student to any teacher or class teacher, immediate action must be taken and children involved must be counselled. As soon as the school receives a report that a child has been cyber-bullied, the Principal/Headmistress/Head of Section/Supervisor is informed accordingly.

- A committee is constituted comprising of the Principal/Headmistress/Head of Section and the School Counsellor.
- An investigation is immediately held to trace the sequence of events.
- Facts from parents'/class teachers/supervisors/the person who reports the matter, are noted.
- The victim is kept calm and assured of all help and support.
- The alleged pupil (s) is questioned in the Principal's office.
- A letter is written to the parents of the alleged pupil(s), requesting them to meet with the committee.
- The pupil and the parents are spoken to.
- The pupil is counselled/reprimanded.
- Depending on the severity of the situation the alleged pupil(s) could be suspended from school.
- If the incident is repeated the matter would be referred to the Director of Education-GEMS/Ministry with a recommendation that the pupil's name be struck off from the rolls.
- All copies of correspondence are placed in the files of both the victim and the bully.