



# Beauchamp College

## Cyber-bullying Policy

2018-20

Date	Detail
2016	Original, based on Beauchamp College Policy
2018	Updated
Approved by	Chair of Governors

# Cyber-bullying Policy

Beauchamp College embraces the advantages of emerging technology in terms of the educational benefits it brings, however the college is mindful of the potential for bullying to occur. Central to the college's anti-bullying policy is the commitment to 'providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere' and that 'bullying of any kind is unacceptable. Under powers granted by the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Principal is able to police cyber-bullying or any bullying aspects carried out by students even at home.

## DEFINITION OF CYBER-BULLYING

Cyber-bullying is an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual using electronic forms of contact against a victim who cannot easily defend himself/herself.

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

- Bullying by texts, calls, emails, chats or any other type of communication on an electronic device
- Recording audio, taking images or capturing video on an electronic device that can cause distress, fear or humiliation
- Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites, to include blogs, personal websites, chat rooms, message boards and other spaces on social networking sites
- Hijacking/cloning accounts on the college networks, e-mail and learning environments, and accounts on websites such as social networking sites
- Using without permission someone else's electronic device to spy on their personal details and other data; and/or bringing distress to them by impersonation using their device

## LEGAL ISSUES

Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. The law applies to cyberspace. It is unlawful to disseminate defamatory information in any media including internet sites. Section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 makes it an offence to send, by public means of a public electronic communications network, a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or one of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes it an offence to knowingly pursue any course of conduct amounting to harassment.

## POLICY

Beauchamp College educates its students both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying. The college informs students in year gatherings; raises awareness through the tutor/ PSHE programme; disseminates promotional material; offers guidance and teaches on relevant matters within certain curriculum lessons.

The college trains its staff to act effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it. The college endeavours to block access to inappropriate web sites, using firewalls, antivirus protection and filtering systems. Where appropriate and responsible, the college audits ICT communications and regularly reviews the security arrangements in place.

Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, the college 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.
- The college supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts.
- The college will use, as appropriate, the full range of sanctions to correct, punish or remove students who bully fellow students or harass staff in this way, either in or out of college.
- The college will use its power of confiscation where necessary to prevent students from committing crimes or misusing equipment.
- All members of the college community are aware they have a duty to bring to the attention of the 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:

### **Devices not on the college network**

- Ask the student to show you the device
- If it is appropriate to do so, note clearly everything on the screen relating to a message, image, video etc. to include the date, time and names if they are apparent
- Make a transcript of a spoken message, again record date, times and names
- Tell the student to save the message/image etc.
- Accompany the student to the Head of the relevant Key Stage. If however you believe it to be a safeguarding incident, accompany the student to an available Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Follow normal procedures to interview students and to take statements

### **Networked devices**

- Ask the student to get up on-screen the material in question
- Ask the student 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
- Accompany the student, taking the offending material, to the Head of the relevant Key Stage. If however you believe it to be a safeguarding incident, accompany the student to one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Follow normal procedures to interview students and to take statements

### **GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS**

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, your tutor, a teacher, a member of the Student Support Services or Leadership Team.

- Do not answer abusive messages but log and report them
- Do not delete anything until it has been shown to a teacher or your parents/guardian (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 messages
- Never reply to someone you do not know
- Stay in public areas in chat rooms, forums etc.

### **GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS**

It is vital that parents and the college work together to ensure that all students are aware of the serious consequences of getting involved in anything that might be seen to be cyber-bullying. The college 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 college's policy and, above all, how seriously the college takes incidents of cyber-bullying
- Parents should also explain to their sons or daughters 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 college as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with the relevant member of staff.
- If the incident falls in the holidays the college reserves the right to take action against bullying perpetrated outside the college which spills over into the college.

## **E-SAFETY AT HOME**

We regularly send information to parents/carers about digital resilience.

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 at:

- <http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers>
- <http://www.antibullying.net>

## **Acceptable Use Policy**

The Acceptable Use Policy is provided to every student on admission to the college. As a requisite to gaining a college network account, students are expected to read the document and sign to acknowledge their understanding of the code.

## **NATIONAL BODIES**

Further support and guidance may be obtained from the following:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/444865/Advice\\_for\\_parents\\_on\\_cyberbullying.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444865/Advice_for_parents_on_cyberbullying.pdf)

Addresses of other useful contacts:

BeatBullying  
Units 1 - 4  
4 Belvedere Road  
London SE19 2AT  
E: [hello@beatbullying.org](mailto:hello@beatbullying.org)  
T: 0208 771 3377  
<http://www.beatbullying.org/>

Anti-Bullying Alliance  
National Children's Bureau  
8 Wakley Street  
London EC1V 7QE  
E: [aba@ncb.org.uk](mailto:aba@ncb.org.uk)  
T: 020 7843 1901  
<http://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>