Dubai International Private School
Al Qouz

Cyber Bullying & Digital Safety Policy

2023-2024

DIPS Vision:

DIPS, in partnership with parents and community, strives to ensure all students are digitally literate, lifelong learners, productive citizens and nurture their well-being in an inclusive learning environment.

Cyber bullying Policy

Rationale:

Dubai International Private School gives the technological advancement its careful attention for the benefit it has on students' lives, achievement, and career development. 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 recognizes that it must 'take note of bullying perpetrated outside School which spills over into the School'. Based on this belief and on the UAE national restrictions set to terminate such types of bullying, the school has set this policy to protect all involved personnel.

Definition:

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:

- 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, 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

LEGAL ISSUES
Cyber-bullying is generally criminal in character. The law applies to cyberspace
- It is unlawful to spread defamatory information in any media including internet sites
Cyber-bullying is a very serious concern that could cause irreparable psychological damage, especially to young people in their formative years.
Schools are also being urged to help stop cyber attacks by adopting an internet safety policy.
DIPS educates its pupils both in the proper use of telecommunications and about the serious consequences of cyber-bullying and will, through ICT lessons and assemblies, continue to inform and educate its pupils in these fast changing areas.

DIPS trains its staff to respond effectively to reports of cyber-bullying or harassment and has systems in place to respond to it. It blocks 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 present. Where appropriate and responsible, DIS audits ICT communications and regularly reviews the security arrangements in place.

Whilst education and guidance remain at the heart of what we do, the school 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.

• DIPS supports victims and, when necessary, will work with the Police to detect those involved in criminal acts.

• The school 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.

• DIPS 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 Superintendent any example of cyber-bullying or harassment that they know about or suspect.

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, or the supervisor.

• Do not answer abusive messages but log and report them

• Do not delete anything until it has been shown to your Form Teacher, parents/guardian or the supervisor (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 ID details

• Never reply to abusive e-mails

• 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.DIS 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 the school takes incidents of cyber-bullying

• Parents should also explain to their sons or daughters legal issues relating to cyberbullying (Refer to UAE law regarding digital crimes)

• 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 Head of the school as soon as possible. A meeting can then be arranged with the Head, which may involve other relevant members of staff

• If the incident falls in the holidays the school 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.

DIGITAL SAFETY DURING BLENDED LEARNING

DIPS uses different digital platforms to deliver a high standard of lessons during blended learning. The school ensures that all students, parents and staff understand the below stated expectations while using the digital platforms.

Expectations

Roles of teachers:

• Follow the code of conduct for online meetings

• Make sure that online meetings are carried on on time

• Make sure that during live meetings, all the materials & resources used are totally safe & hold no offensive messages for students & parents

• Refer the technical issues directly to the IT team

- In case of any suspected cyberbullying incident, directly inform the head of section, supervisors or counselors.

- Remind students to use the technology safely & responsibly and to report to the teachers if anything made them feel unsafe.

Roles of Parents & students:

Parents are partners in the learning process, and their impact is a key element in this process. They must understand their role as complementing the school's endeavors to bring success and desired learning outcomes. The school supports the parents and emphasizes their role to guide their children to their best practices during the Distance Learning approach and make it a safe experience. In addition to monitoring their children's use of internet resources, they need to engage in open dialogue to allow their children express emotions freely, and closely monitor any follow-up after any incident. They need to discuss with them safety practices to raise their awareness around the risks of wrong cyber practices such as Oversharing and Cyber grooming. If needed, parents may work with a trained professional to further support their children. Therefore, parents need to guide their children to:

- Be on time to the live stream sessions.

- Attend all live stream sessions and online assignments day wise as per the Timetable and engage actively.

- Be respectful while interacting with their teachers and other students

- Check their assignments, complete and submit them as per the timeline shared by their teachers daily.

- Ensure not to share passwords with anyone and keep them secure.

- Be reflective learners and learn from their daily reflections.

- Be digitally responsible and maintain online decorum.

- Follow the instructions of the teachers and not interfere with any controls like the microphone or invite attendees.

- Not engage in online chats during live sessions, comment or share any derogatory material online.

- Not take/record videos of class mates and teachers during the live sessions.

- Submit work as a result of their own efforts and that has not been plagiarized.

- Download or forward material only if it is educational and contributes to learning.

- Contact their teachers through mail for any doubts/enquiry.'

- Understand that any misdemeanor will lead to strict sanctions as per school policy.

Besides, parents' contribution to assist their younger siblings especially in KG and Lower Elementary classes is essential and has its impact on the children's long-term safety. At this young age, parents must make it clear that their children have to:
- Seek their help to choose safe websites
- Inform them if unexpected thing appeared on their screens
- Inform them if any stranger sends them messages or tries to speak with them on internet
- Interact respectfully with others on internet
- Keep their personal data confidential