ANTI-CYBER BULLYING POLICY

2024-2025

- **This document has been approved for operation for - Islamiyah Girls High School**
- **Last Reviewed – September 2024**
- **Next review – July 2025**
- **Review Period – 1 Year**
- **Owner – Islamiyah Girls High School**

ANTI-CYBER-BULLYING POLICY

1. Introduction

SGA believes that all people in our community have the right to teach and learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied.

We believe that every individual in school has a duty to report an incident of bullying whether it happens to themselves or to another person. Please see also the anti-bullying policy and notices displayed in classrooms.

Pupils are not allowed mobile phones in school and must comply with the E-Safety policy, which they and their parents sign. If we find that a pupil's wellbeing is compromised by cyber- bullying which has taken place outside school, we will take action to help that pupil. This may mean contacting other parents if we find their son or daughter is involved.

2. WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

Cyber-bullying is the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the Internet, deliberately to upset someone else. Technology allows the user to bully anonymously or from an unknown location, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cyber- bullying leaves no physical scars so it is, perhaps, less evident to a parent or teacher, but it is highly intrusive and the hurt it causes can be very severe.

There are many types of cyber-bullying. Although there may be some of which we are unaware, here are the more common.

> 1. **Text messages** —that are threatening or cause discomfort - also included here is "blue-jacking" (the sending of anonymous text messages over short distances using "Bluetooth" wireless technology)
> 2. **Picture/video-clips** via mobile phone cameras - images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened or embarrassed.
> 3. **Mobile phone calls** — silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim's phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible.
> 4. **Emails** — threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or somebody else's name.
> 5. **Chat room bullying** — menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based chat room.
> 6. **Instant messaging** (IM) — unpleasant messages sent while children conduct real- time conversations online using MSM (Microsoft Messenger), Skype or Yahoo Chat – among others.
> 7. **Bullying via websites** — use of defamatory blogs (web logs), personal websites and online personal "own web space" sites such as Bebo (which works by signing on in one's school, therefore making it easy to find a victim) and Myspace – although there are others.

IGHS Procedures

3. We take this bullying as seriously as all other types of bullying and, therefore, will deal with each situation individually.

In cases of cyber-bulling, as with all bullying, the procedure will fall under the anti-bullying policy. Pupils are taught within ICT and PSHCE lessons how to:

- Understand how to use these technologies safely and know about the risks and consequences of misusing them.
- Know what to do if they or someone they know are being cyberbullied.
- Appreciate the upset and unhappiness that cyber-bullying causes.
- Report any problems with cyberbullying. If they do have a problem, they can talk to the school, parents, the police, the mobile network (for phone) or the Internet Service Provider (ISP) to do something about it. If preferred this can be done anonymously.

4. IGHS

- has an Acceptable Internet Use Policy for pupils that includes clear statements about e-communications and behaviour
- uses a variety of security tools to ensure that the programs and websites most frequently used for cyber-bullying are unavailable on the school network
- provides information for parents on:

E-communication standards and practices in schools, what to do if problems arise, what's being taught in the curriculum and holds internet safety seminar evenings

- Gives support for parents and pupils if cyber-bullying occurs by: assessing the harm caused, identifying those involved, taking steps to repair harm and to prevent recurrence
- Has a clear disciplinary framework for dealing with any behavioural issues. Once the person responsible for cyber-bullying has been identified, the school will take steps to change their attitude and behaviour as well as ensuring access to any support that is needed.

Advice to pupils (whether at school or elsewhere) who are victims of

- Remember, bullying is never your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced

- Don't ignore the bullying.

- Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line. Your form tutor or your Child Protection Officer will be especially well placed to help you. Try to keep calm. Don't retaliate or return the message. If you show that you are angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue

- Don't give out your personal details online – don't give out information about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. Your friends already know all of this

- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then these can be used as evidence

- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.

There's plenty of online advice on how to react to cyberbullying. For example, **www.kidscape.org** and **www.wiredsafety.org** have some useful tips:

5. Text/video messaging

- You can easily stop receiving text messages for a while by turning off incoming messages for a couple of days. This might stop the person texting you by making them believe you've changed your phone number. To find out how to do this, visit **www.wiredsafety.org** .

- If the bullying persists, you can change your phone number. Ask your mobile service provider.

- Don't reply to abusive or worrying text or video messages. Your mobile service provider will have a number for you to ring or text to report phone bullying. Visit their website for details.

- Don't delete messages from cyberbullies. You don't have to read them, but you should keep them as evidence.

- Text harassment is a crime. If the calls are simply annoying, tell a teacher or parent. If they are threatening or malicious and they persist, report them to the police, taking with you all the messages you've received.

Phone

If you get an abusive or silent phone call, don't hang up immediately. Instead, put the phone down and walk away for a few minutes. Then hang up or turn your phone off. Once they realise they can't get you rattled, callers usually get bored and stop bothering you.

- Always tell someone else: a teacher or parent.
- Be careful to whom you give personal information such as your phone number
- If you have a mobile phone, make sure you set it to lock down after 20 seconds of not being used – then others cannot use your phone to send message

6. Emails

- Never reply to unpleasant or unwanted emails ('flames') — the sender wants a response, so don't give them that satisfaction.
- Keep the emails as evidence. Tell an adult about them.
- Ask an adult to contact the sender's Internet Service Provider (ISP)
- Never reply to someone you don't know, even if there's an option to 'unsubscribe'.
- Replying simply confirms your email address as a real one.

7. Web bullying

If the bullying is on a website (e.g. Facebook) tell a teacher or parent, just as you would if the bullying were face-to-face – even if you don't actually know the bully's identity. Serious bullying should be reported to the police - for example threats of a physical or sexual nature.

Your parent or teacher will help you do this.

8. Chat rooms and instant messaging

- Never give out your name, address, phone number, school name or password online.
- It's a good idea to use a nickname. Don't give out photos of yourself.
- Don't accept emails or open files from people you don't know. Remember it might not just be people your own age in a chat room.
- Stick to public areas in chat rooms and get out if you feel uncomfortable.
- Tell your parents or a teacher if you feel uncomfortable or worried about anything that happens in a chat room.
- Think carefully about what you write; don't leave yourself open to bullying.
- Don't ever give out passwords to your mobile or email account.

- Respect other people - online and off. Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords.

- If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm – and ignore them.

- 'Do as you would be done by.' Think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for your own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.

Remember the law is on your side. The **Protection from Harassment Act**, the **Malicious Communications Act 1988** and Section 43 of the **Telecommunications Act** may be used to combat cyber-bullying. People may be fined or sent to prison for up to six months.

9. This policy is reviewed annually