Schools have the power to impose a range of sanctions against pupils who are involved in bullying incidents outside school. Their anti-bullying policy must include measures to be taken with a view to:

"...encouraging good behaviour and respect for others on the part of pupils and, in particular, in preventing all forms of bullying among pupils"

Schools have a duty to work with other agencies, including the police, to safeguard and promote the well being of all pupils.

- Tell the school about the incident.
- Arrange a meeting with school staff.
- Explain why you want the appointment so that they can investigate before the meeting.
- Make evidence available.

At the meeting:

- Show the evidence of cyberbullying.
- Ask for notes to be taken so that there is a record of what is discussed and agreed.
- Ask for a named contact at school for both your child and yourself.
- Agree a plan of action and arrange a time for a follow up meeting.
- Decide if it is best for your child to attend.

If it is a serious incident it may be referred to another agency such as the police.

After the meeting:

- Give the head teacher time to deal with the situation.
- Keep in touch with the school – especially if the incidents continue.
- Keep your child fully informed of what is happening. They will feel safer and happier knowing that adults are working together to support them

What if the cyberbullying continues?

In most cases the school will respond sensitively to incidents of bullying and work with you to successfully resolve the situation.
If the problems persist and you would like the school to do more than they are doing you can write to the Chair of Governors and raise the issue formally.

Contacts, Help & Advice

Help lines

Child Exploitation & Online Protection (CEOP)
www.thinkuknow.co.uk
Report suspected online child abuse or grooming

Childline
0800 1111 - www.childline.org.uk
Free 24hour telephone lines for children and young people:

Family Lives
0808 800 2222 - www.familylives.org.uk
Confidential support and guidance for parents and families

Useful Websites re Cyberbullying information and guidance

Childnet
www.childnet.com
Working to make the internet a great and safe place

Digizen
www.childnet.com
Advice for children and young people about online behaviour and its implications

Anti-Bullying Alliance
www.anti-bullying.org.uk
Provides a wealth of information and advice from an alliance of the leading anti-bullying organisations.

Local Information and Guidance

Leicestershire County Council
www.beyondbullying.com
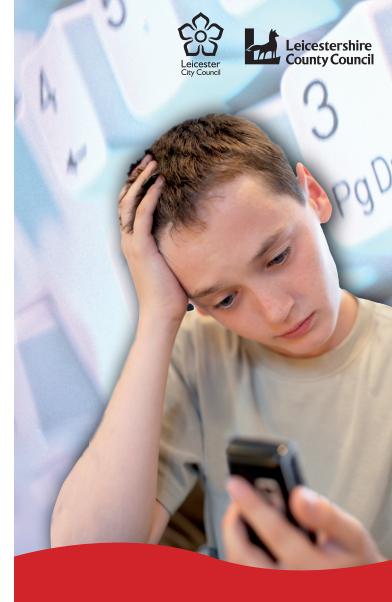Website of Leicestershire County Council's Anti-Bullying Team

Leicester City Council
www.leicester.gov.uk/antibullying
Information, support and guidance for parents/carers, professionals and children and young people.
www.textsomeone.com
Leicester city's anonymous incident reporting system

Cyberbullying

Advice for parents and carers

Supporting your child to be safe and happy

What is Cyberbullying?

"The use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), particularly mobile phones and the internet, deliberately to upset someone else."

In this leaflet Cyberbullying refers to children & young people bullying one another. If an adult is involved it is cyber harassment, stalking or potentially grooming and the police should be contacted.

Cyberbullying behaviour can take many forms. Cyberbullying can include:

Text Messaging	unwelcome or threatening texts
Picture or Video clips	embarrassing or inappropriate images
Phone Calls	silent calls or abusive answerphone messages
Emails	abusive or threatening messages
Online chat rooms	menacing or upsetting comments in web-based conversation
Instant Messaging	hurtful or intimidating real time messages
Websites	the creation of false or defamatory websites about an individual
Social networking	e.g. Instagram, Ask.fm, Twitter, Snapchat – false information, social exclusion or isolation
Online gaming	victimising or intimidating individuals on shared internet-based games

What are the signs of bullying?

Look for changes in your child:
- Being secretive about work on any device with internet access
- Keeping mobile on silent
- Staying in their bedroom
- Changes in relationships with their friends
- Anxious, moody, withdrawn, quiet
- Seeming unhappy but refusing to say why
- Complaining of headaches, stomach ache or other illnesses
- Sleeping difficulties
- Deterioration in their work

Why cyberbullying is different from other forms of bullying:

- Although cyberbullying is perceived as anonymous, it leaves a trail of evidence.
- Initially, your child may not know where or whom it has come from and the bully may attempt to remain anonymous
- It can happen 24/7 and invade home/personal space.
- The offending behaviour can quickly reach a large audience.
- It's hard to control negative comments/images once posted/uploaded.
- Research suggests cyberbullying may have a greater emotional and psychological impact than other forms of bullying.
- Cyberbullying usually takes place out of school hours.

Are you switched on?

- ICT is an important part of your child's education & social life.
- It is essential that you and your child understand the benefits and responsible use of technology.
- Switching off the internet or mobile phones isn't the answer.
- Don't wait for something to happen, make sure you and your child know how to use technology safely including the anti-cyberbullying code. See www.digizen.org for more information in "Key advice to parents and carers on cyberbullying".
- Make sure that you and your child know what to do if they or someone they know are cyberbullied e.g. how to block the bully or report the offensive behaviour.
- Parental control software is widely available. It can limit when and how your child uses technology. This could be on the family computer, a tablet, personal laptop or mobile phone.
- For primary aged children it is important to consider where technology and internet access is available so that you can supervise internet access.

Cyberbullying and the Law

Cyberbullying activities can be offences under a range of different civil and criminal laws related to harassment, threatening behaviour and malicious communications. This includes the Communications Act (2003) and the Defamation Act (2013).

How can you help?

- Encourage your child to talk to you or a trusted adult if there is a problem. Significant numbers of children do not tell anyone.
- Don't let your emotions take over. Talk calmly about what is happening (even though you may feel upset yourself) and reassure them that it is not their fault.
- Listen and take what is said seriously.
- Save the evidence. Learn how to keep records of all offending messages, pictures or online conversations. This will help you demonstrate to others what is happening and can be used by school, internet service providers (ISP), mobile phone companies or even the police, to investigate the cyberbullying.
- Keep talking to your child and keep them involved – it is important that they know what is happening and have a say.
- Talk to the school and report all incidents. Research has shown that most cyberbullying is by someone from the same class or year group.
- Do not respond to the cyberbully or try to take the law into your own hands. See the contacts section on the back of this leaflet for services you can talk to for free, confidential advice before taking any action.

Talking to school/college

Schools must have an anti-bullying policy that addresses all forms of bullying including cyberbullying. It should make clear the measures that can be taken to effectively respond to cyberbullying incidents.