CYBERBULLYING POLICY

Implemented   : April 2014

Reviewed   : May 2020

Next Review   : May 2021

Compiled by : SLT & SMT

Approved by: Ms. Asma Gilani, Principal & CEO

STATEMENT OF INTENT

OOS 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 on cyber safety are given by the Principal, Headmistress, Head Primary, Head KG, Supervisors and Counsellors.

Bullying of any kind, including cyberbullying is unacceptable at our school. If cyberbullying does occur, pupils should be able to report 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 CYBERBULLYING?

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 rumors, etc.)
- Racist   racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual   sexual content or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic   All areas of internet. Such as email & internet chat room.
- 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.

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 by 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 for lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating 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 behavior could indicate other problems, but cyberbullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

PROCEDURES

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 counseled. As soon as the school receives a report that a child has been cyberbullied, the Principal / HM/ Head of Department/ Supervisors/Administrative Officer are informed.

- A committee is constituted comprising of the Principal/Headmistress/Administrative Officer and the School Counselor.
- 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 counseled/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/SPEA/MOE 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.