CYBERBULLYING

The same rules apply online as in the 'real world' about how to treat other people. Unfortunately, people don't always treat each other well online, and you, or a friend, may find that you are the target of cyberbullying. You might be teased or have rumours spread about you online, receive nasty messages or even threats. It can happen in school, or out of it, any hour of the day, from people you know, and sometimes people you don't know. It can leave you feeling unsafe and alone.

No-one has the right to bully another person. At its most serious, cyberbullying is illegal and can be investigated by the police.

If you are being cyberbullied......

- **Ignore it.** Don't respond to the bully. If they don't get a response they may get bored and go away.
- **Block the person.** This will stop you seeing messages or texts from a particular person.
- **Tell someone.** Tell your Mum or Dad, or another adult you trust. Or you can call Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800, visit their website or contact the Cybersmart Online Helpline service.
- **Keep the evidence.** This can be useful in tracking the bully down. Save texts, emails, online conversations or voicemails as proof.
- **Report it to:**
  - your school—they should have policies in place about bullying and cyberbullying.
  - your ISP and/or phone provider or the website administrator—there are actions they can take to help.
  - the police—if there is a threat to your safety the police will help. Call 000 or Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.
Help stop cyberbullying

It can be hard to know if your friends are being cyberbullied. They might keep it to themselves. If they are being cyberbullied, you might notice that they may not chat with you online as much, suddenly receive lots of SMS messages or are unhappy after they have been on the computer or checked their phone messages. They may stop hanging around with friends or have lost interest in school or social activities.

- **Stand up and speak out!** If you see or know about cyberbullying happening to a friend, *support them and report the bullying*. You’d want them to do the same for you.
- **Don’t forward on messages or pictures** that may hurt or be upsetting to someone. Even though you may not have started it, you will be seen to be part of the cyberbullying cycle.
- **Remember to treat others as you would like to be treated** when communicating online.