

Cyberbullying

At Canterbury Girls High School we are committed to positive, respectful online communication. Cyberbullying is 'the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others', (Bill Belsey, President of Bullying.org Canada).

Cyberbullying can involve email, mobile phones, instant messaging, chatrooms, weblogs, and personal websites in online communities such as Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram. Just like other types of bullying it is about relationships, power and control. And just like all other forms of bullying and harassment it is not tolerated at school. Cyberspace is often removed from adult supervision and awareness, so cyber bullying can help a bully to keep their unacceptable behaviour secret. Cyberbullies sometimes hide behind the anonymity of the internet as well. The behaviour can happen outside of school time via computers at home, then taken to school in the day to day relationships of the school community.

At school, we have a policy which is mindful of the need to prevent a mobile phone being used to bully while at school. Phones must be switched off and out of sight.

Students must have parent/carer permission **to use their digital devices** and access the internet while at school. In class, only sites relevant to class work may be accessed. The Department of Education uses filters and blocking of sites which may expose students to bullying or other unacceptable cyber behaviour while at school. Students are expected to use the internet responsibly and for learning when they are at school. If there are serious breaches of behaviour, student access to the internet may be blocked at school.

Students and their families are reminded to use the Internet with caution. We ask parents and carers to support the school by providing supervision and guidelines at home. Some of the points considered important include:

- Not giving out or posting personal information on the Internet
- Never arrange to meet people you have met online without adult supervision
- Avoid sending messages when angry or upset. Just like in face to face conversation, it is best to walk away and wait until you calm down
- Don't open messages from people you don't know
- Limit your Internet time. Virtual reality is a place you should take a break from. Connect with family and friends offline as well as online!

Parents and carers can access more ideas at <https://esafety.gov.au/>.

This is the Australian Broadcasting Authority's official site on this topic. The most common advice to families is to increase your own awareness and knowledge of cyberspace in order to prevent your children having any cyber based problems. Keep the computer in a supervised common area of the home and limit time online to a reasonable amount.

What to do if you are cyberbullied

Just like with other types of bullying you must get help from an adult. You or your parents can inform your ISP (Internet Service Provider), your Instant Messaging or mobile phone service provider. **The police should be contacted if threats or serious issues arise.**

- Do not reply to messages from bullies.
- Keep messages as evidence, do not delete them.

At school, talk to your class teacher, Year Adviser or Deputy Principal if you have been cyberbullied. Families can contact the Deputy Principal or Year Adviser for advice. We are committed to preventing Cyberbullying affecting the school learning community. Cyberbullying affecting students at school which has originated outside of school time or via computers outside of school will be referred to the police for investigation.