

# St. John's CEVA Primary School

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## RE: Safeguarding children from cyberbullying

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

During these unprecedented times, in the midst of a global pandemic, where children are expected to work remotely on laptops and other devices, we should be mindful of the digital online risks and harm that they may encounter or be drawn into. As online safety lead at St John's it is vital that I keep all families in our school community informed and advised on how to look out for our children and keep them protected as best we can. Therefore, I would like to highlight the growing concern of cyberbullying that is taking place amongst some of our children during this lockdown period and would ask that all parents and guardians carefully monitor, and address inappropriate use on all digital devices, as well as guide and support their children to make good choices and be positive digital citizens.

Below are some common examples of cyberbullying you should be aware of:

- **Harassment** - This is the act of sending offensive, rude, and insulting messages and being abusive. Nasty or humiliating comments on posts, photos and in chat rooms. Being explicitly offensive on gaming sites.
- **Denigration** – This is when someone may send information about another person that is fake, damaging and untrue. Sharing photos of someone for the purpose to ridicule, spreading fake rumours and gossip. This can be on any site online or on apps. We even hear about people altering photos of others and posting in online for the purpose of bullying.
- **Exclusion** – This is when others intentionally leave someone out of a group such as group messages, online apps, gaming sites and other online engagement. This is also a form of social bullying and a very common.
- **Outing and Trickery** – This is when someone may share personal information about another or trick someone into revealing secrets and forward it to others. They may also do this with private images and videos too.
- **Cyber Stalking** – This is the act of repeatedly sending messages that include threats of harm, harassment, intimidating messages, or engaging in other online activities that make a person afraid for his or her safety. The actions may be illegal too depending on what they are doing.

Please find time talk to your children about cyberbullying and discuss what it is to be a positive digital citizen. Get them to think how being bullied, whether online or in the “real” world can affect someone enormously. Any kind of bullying can affect self-esteem, confidence and socialising. Children should consider the impact and harmful words may have, or the effect of being excluded from online activities, and think twice before posting. Also, remember to block and record as evidence.

Further information and guidance on all subjects around online safety can be found at the following website:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>

Yours sincerely,  
Mr B. Dunne



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