St John's Primary School and Nursery

7th April 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

ONLINE SAFETY – 2B

This half-term, we have been finding out about cyberbullying. We looked at the difference between bullying in the real world and bullying that takes place online. We talked about what we should do if we see something mean online and how important it is to tell someone. We know that we should tell a trusted adult if we see or receive anything mean and nasty.

From 2B and Miss Baker

Common Sense on Cyberbullying

What's the Issue?

Spreading rumours and bullying is nothing new. Children have always found ways to be cruel to one another, but computers, mobiles and digital technologies make bullying easier and more common. Children now use their mobiles and computers to hurt, humiliate and harass each other. Cyberbullying is defined as repeatedly sending or posting harmful or mean messages, images or videos about someone else using the internet, mobiles or other digital technologies. Children may call each other names, say nasty things about one another, threaten each other or make others feel uncomfortable or scared.

Although cyberbullying is typically associated with tweens and teens, more cases are now being reported with younger children. Younger children may bully to get attention, because they think it will make them popular or because they want to look tough and make others afraid of them. Because it happens online, it can easily go undetected by parents and teachers. Cyberbullying can be constant, inescapable and very public. It can happen at any time – at school or at home – and can involve large groups of children. Being anonymous, and the desire to be seen as cool, can cause a child who normally wouldn't say anything mean face-to-face to show off to other children by cyberbullying someone.

Why Does It Matter?

Younger children are starting to use online communication and, at the same time, are exploring ways to test other people's reactions. Children who send a mean message might not fully understand how another person might react to that message. What's more, hurtful information posted on the internet is extremely difficult to prevent or remove, and anyone can see it. Imagine being publicly humiliated in front of everyone you know. This behaviour usually happens when adults aren't around, so parents and teachers often see only the anxiety or depression that results from their children being hurt or bullied. Parents can help by becoming aware of the issue, learning to identify the warning signs of bullying, and helping children to understand how to be respectful to others online.

What Families Can Do

Make a list together of how talking online is different from talking face-to-face. Get children to think about how it might be easier to say things online that you wouldn't say in person, and how this may be good sometimes and bad at other times.

Practise writing a text or message to a friend. Model for your child how to compliment people and how to avoid mean words or behaviours.

Point out that it's important to stick up for others. Discuss ways in which they can support their friends who are bullied and report bad behaviour they see online or offline.

Limit online socialising. Because there is more risk of bullying on sites where children can openly communicate, avoid open and free chat sites. Look for sites that offer pre-scripted or pre-screened chat options (such as Webkinz or Club Penguin).

Explain the basics of good behaviour online. Remind your children that being mean, lying or telling secrets hurts – both online and offline. And remember to praise your child when you see good behaviour.

Remind your children not to share passwords with their friends. A common form of cyberbullying is when children share passwords, log on to another child's account and pretend to be that person. Children can protect themselves by learning that passwords are strictly private and should be shared only with their parents. Make sure they are also logged out of any shared devices.

Make sure they talk to someone (even if it's not you). A child should tell a parent, teacher or trusted adult if he or she is being bullied online. Tell your child that this isn't tattling – it's standing up for himself or herself.

Advise them how to handle cyberbullying. Even though they might be tempted to, your child should never retaliate against a cyberbully. They can stop the cycle by not responding to the bully. Also, remind them to save the evidence rather than delete it.

Establish consequences for bullying behaviour. If your child is mean to, or humiliates, another child, consider taking phone and computer privileges away and discuss what it means to be respectful to others. Better yet, ask them to write an apology letter.

common sense education

TALKING SAFELY ONLINE / TIP SHEET / DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP / REV DATE 2016
www.commonsense.org/educators | CREATIVE COMMONS: ATTRIBUTION-NONCOMMERCIAL-SHAREALIKE

Screen Out the Mean 💬 ⓘ

Match the words to their definitions

caution	the words you use to search for information about a topic
digital footprint	the information about you on the Internet
cyberbullying	to be careful
keywords	doing something on the Internet, usually again and again, to make another person feel angry, sad, or scared

* WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What is the most important thing to do if someone starts cyberbullying you?

1. Family Activity

* DO YOU REMEMBER ... What you can do when someone is mean to you online?

With a parent or family member, read the following two dilemmas. First, think together about how the kids in the stories might feel when this happens. Then, use the S-T-O-P rules to describe how they should respond. --> Kyle keeps getting IMs from someone saying means things about him. The person who is sending the messages doesn't use a real name, but Kyle can tell the messages are coming from someone who also makes fun of him at school in gym class. --> Sasha is a new girl at school, and she's making a lot of friends. Then Sasha finds out that another girl sent around an email that had a picture of a cow with Sasha's name on it.

2. Tech It Up!

On YouTube, watch Sesame Street's "Because We're Friends" song (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAjXikmipv4). What do the Muppets in the video do because they're friends? What do you think friends should do if another friend is being cyberbullied?

3. Common Sense Says ...

If someone is cyberbullying you, remember the S-T-O-P rules!

S: Stop using the computer until it's safe.

T: Tell an adult you trust.

O: Go Online only when a trusted adult says it's OK

P: Play online only with kids who are nice.