



LESSON PLAN

Cyberbullying

Target audience:
11-16

Duration: 45 mins – 1 hour

Lesson Aims:

- To ensure that young people realise that once something has been posted online, they cannot get it back.
- To understand what cyberbullying is and how it can affect others
- To recognise that cyberbullying can have serious consequences

Curriculum Notes and Resources

The aim of this lesson is to teach pupils about the risks of cyberbullying. Very often a small seemingly insignificant comment can have devastating consequences. This lesson will make pupils aware of some of the differences between online and offline bullying. They need to understand that the internet changes things because anything that is posted is instantly replicable and can reach a much wider audience than a comment that is made in the offline world.

Pupils should be encouraged to think about the messages in the new “*click clever, click safe*” campaign.

This contains the messages “*zip it, block it, flag it*”.

Zip it – tells young people to remember that they need to think carefully about the personal information that they give out online. Giving out too much information or posting inappropriate material (see lesson plan on sexting) can also lead to others having material that they can use in order to cyberbully. The more information that is available online then the more likely it is for a bully to be able to victimise someone.

Block it – is important as it tells young people to remember that they can take control...they can control the information that they post and limit what they tell others about themselves. If they do receive unpleasant messages from someone on a social network site or on Skype or instant messenger, then they can block this contact.

Flag it – this is perhaps the most important part of the message – it is never too late to report a problem and there is always someone there who can help or provide support.

Pupil Opportunities

- Learners reflect on the rewards of cyberspace and then consider bullying scenarios in which they examine their personal feelings.
- They learn to recognize such feelings and responsibly handle the unacceptable behaviour of others.

Desirable Outcomes:

- To be able to negotiate within relationships, recognising that actions have consequences in the online world, just as they would in the offline world.
- To understand what cyberbullying is and to know how to seek help or advice.
- To be able to resist pressure to do wrong and to recognise when others need help and how to support them.

Activity:

It is important that pupils have a clear understanding of what cyberbullying is – essentially, it is important to remember that it is the same as bullying – the only difference is the way in which it is carried out.

Introduction

1. Ask the pupils to define cyberbullying – give them 3 minutes to come up with a definition between 2 or 3 of them.
2. Share these with the whole class – what are the similarities and differences between the findings and discussions of each group? – is there a general class consensus?
3. Share the accepted definition with the class – “Cyberbullying is the use of ICT, particularly mobile phones and the internet to deliberately upset someone else.” This is the definition from the DCSF which can be found in the cyberbullying guidance.¹
4. Ask the class how they feel about cyberbullying. Is it something which concerns them? Who do they think is most likely to be affected? The answer is that anyone can be, but those people who are more vulnerable in the real world are more likely to be vulnerable in the online world too.²

Main Activity

1. Share a cyberbullying case study with the pupils. Use one of the following examples, or, if appropriate choose a more local example.

Hope Witsell story - http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/34236377/ns/today-today_people/
Megan Meier story - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suicide_of_Megan_Meier

These two examples ended tragically, but it is important for pupils to realise the devastation that cyberbullying can cause. Less serious examples will be familiar to most young people and pupils need to be aware that most instances of cyberbullying started as something very small that quickly escalated.

Less serious example: Danielle was on Bebo when she discovered that someone else had set up a profile in her name, and had posted pictures of her, with rude comments about her. Other people at her school had been on the site and added nasty comments too. Danielle contacted the CyberMentors website and was emailed some safety information. She reported the site to Bebo, and got email support from a CyberMentor counsellor, who also contacted Bebo to remove the page.

2. Ask the pupils to work in small groups to find similar stories about cyberbullying online. Are there any common themes?
The TUK presentation refers to the fact that cyberbullying is a 24/7 event. It is very difficult for a victim to escape from this sort of bullying. Victims of offline bullying can

¹ <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tacklingbullying/cyberbullying/>

² The definition of a vulnerable child or young person online is complex. Some people who are considered vulnerable in the offline world may not be when they are online as the technology may actually empower them and help them to stay safe (for example in the case of a child who is deaf or disabled). However the opposite can equally apply hence this is a complex area. Other vulnerable groups such as children who may self harm or have suicidal tendencies may find that new technologies magnify harm or the potential of harm.

usually find some respite when they get home or leave the school or place where the bullying is happening, but in the case of cyberbullying which is done using technology, children and young people are always connected using their mobile devices and as such are unable to escape the bullying.

3. What could have been done to prevent these cyberbullying incidents from taking place? When could action have been taken to stop the chain of events? What can people do who are victims of cyberbullying? The TUK presentation refers to the fact that cyberbullying can break the law and that there are things that can be done. Reporting any abuse is the best way to prevent any long term consequences. Remind the pupils of what was said in the presentation:

“Cyberbullying can include people sending you horrible messages, changing images of you to be mean or encouraging others to be mean in similar ways. You do not have to put up with Cyberbullying, it breaks the law under the Malicious Communications Act 1988. If you or someone you know is being cyberbullied, you should save the conversations or take screenshots of the sites. This can be used as evidence when the person being bullied feels ready to tell someone. “

4. It is important that pupils understand how to report a problem if they are being cyberbullied and they need to remember the following points.
 - a. Save all evidence you have of the bullying. If you have nasty emails or things posted on your profile, save them to your machine so that you can use it as proof. Save texts or voicemails that say anything horrible. Learn how to block the bully on IM or delete them from your contacts. Visit the skills school on Childnet’s Kidsmart website for more information on how to do this (<http://www.kidsmart.org.uk/skills-school>)
 - b. Try not to reply or retaliate to things that a bully may say or do; it might make the situation worse. If you don’t respond they are more likely to get bored and move on.
 - c. If you are being bothered via text, contact your service provider. Each network has a special area for this sort of problem. Check out their website or call them for advice or a free number change.
 - d. Remember you can always report a problem to CEOP using the report abuse button which can be found at www.thinkuknow.co.uk.

Discussion Points:

Research has shown that children and young people feel empowered by the technology that they are using and that this can lead to them losing their inhibitions and saying and doing things that they wouldn’t dream of doing in a face to face situation.

It is important that pupils remember to stop and think before they do anything online.

Extension Activities:

Ask the pupils to prepare a resource to raise awareness of cyberbullying for other pupils – or younger children. This could be a poster or a powerpoint presentation. Visit www.thinkuknow.co.uk or www.cybermentors.org.uk for more information and resources.

Links to National Curriculum:

Online safety is relevant to three key areas of the national curriculum for Key Stage 3, citizenship, ICT and PSHE.

Citizenship:

Key Processes 2.3 Taking informed and responsible action

Pupils should be able to:

- a. explore creative approaches to taking action on problems and issues to achieve intended purposes
- b. work individually and with others to negotiate, plan and [take action](#) on citizenship issues to try to influence others, bring about change or resist unwanted change, using time and resources appropriately
- c. analyse the impact of their actions on communities and the wider world, now and in the future
- d. reflect on the progress they have made, evaluating what they have learnt, what went well, the difficulties encountered and what they would do differently.

Curriculum Opportunities

The curriculum should provide opportunities to:

- i. use and interpret different media and ICT both as sources of information and as a means of communicating ideas.

ICT

Key Concepts

1.4 Impact of technology

- a. Exploring how ICT changes the way we live our lives and has significant social, ethical and cultural implications.
- b. Recognising issues of risk, safety and responsibility surrounding the use of ICT

Key Processes

2.3 Communicating information

Pupils should be able to:

communicate and exchange information (including digital communication) effectively, safely and responsibly. **“Safely and responsibly” is defined as:**

when using digital communication, pupils should develop an understanding of safe practices and follow them. For example, they should be cautious about sharing personal information and viewing and uploading digital content. They should also recognise the need to show respect towards others.

Range and content

The study of ICT should include

- d. developing an understanding of the need to:
 - Keep information secure – for example keeping copies safe, backing up work and protecting passwords or PINs to avoid identity theft.
- e. the impact of ICT on individuals, communities and society, including the social, economical, legal and ethical implications of access to, and use of, ICT. – This could include, issues relating to ownership, copyright, plagiarism and privacy of information; effects on employment and working practices; effects on local communities; sustainability issues; the causes and implications of unequal access to ICT locally, nationally and globally; and the abuse of ICT, including the issue of cyberbullying.

PSHE

Key Concepts

1.3 Risk

- a. Understanding risk in both positive and negative terms and understanding that individuals need to manage risk to themselves and others in a range of situations.
- b. Appreciating that pressure can be used positively or negatively to influence others in situations involving risk.

Key Processes

2.1 Critical reflection

Pupils should be able to:

- a. reflect on feelings and identify [positive ways of understanding](#), managing and expressing strong emotions and challenging behaviour
- b. develop self-awareness by reflecting critically on their behaviour and its impact on others.

2.2 Decision making and managing risk

Pupils should be able to:

- a. use knowledge and understanding to make informed choices about safety, health and wellbeing
- b. find information and support from a variety of sources
- c. assess and manage the element of risk in personal choices and situations
- d. use strategies for resisting unhelpful peer influence and pressure
- e. know when and how to get help
- f. identify how managing feelings and emotions effectively supports decision-making and risk management.

2.3 Developing relationships and working with others

Pupils should be able to:

- a. use social skills to build and maintain a range of positive relationships
- b. use the social skill of negotiation within relationships, recognising their rights and responsibilities and that their actions have consequences
- c. use the social skills of communication, [negotiation](#), assertiveness and collaboration
- d. value differences between people and demonstrate empathy and a willingness to learn about people different from themselves
- e. challenge prejudice and discrimination assertively.