CyberBullying

The development of Information Technology has brought with it a change in the way that children and young people are bullied. However, just as with more direct forms of bullying, many children and young people keep silent about abuse they are suffering via mobile phone, e-mail or Internet.

Parents and carers are advised not to wait until cyber bullying happens to know what to do.

- Talk to your children about safe use of technological equipment and about what to do if they have any contact and/or message that makes them feel uncomfortable or worries them.
- When talking to your child or young person about cyber bullying, include the following advice:
- Respect other people online and off
- Do not spread rumours about other people or give out other peoples' phone numbers.
- They are responsible for their own behaviour and, therefore, they need to think about what they are doing
- Consider what it would feel like to be bullied in your own home via things you value, such as a mobile phone or computer, and how distressing this would be
- Do not give out other people's names, addresses, phone numbers, school name or passwords on line
- Make a note of the date and time when a message is received that scares or worries the child or young person and keep the message as evidence
- Encourage your child to tell an adult they trust and who can help them.

If a problem occurs for your child:

- Contact the mobile phone network or the Internet service provider. By working together, you should be able to do something about incidents of cyber bullying

- If messages are threatening, malicious or persistent, inform the police.

- The law is on your side through:
- The Protection from Harassment Act
- The Malicious Communications Act 1998
- Section 43 of the Telecommunications Act
- All of the above Acts may be used to combat cyber bullying.