A-Z Guide: Language and Media of Cyber-Bullying

Site/Term:	Description/Definition:
about.me:	Among the lesser-known Facebook-style social-networking sites, and important for that reason. Pupils may use more obscure sites to 'hide' malicious activity, often posting URLs to peers to extend their 'fun'.
Adding:	To add someone online is to accept or initiate a connection with someone, usually on a social networking site. You may or may not already know them. See also Friending.
ask.fm:	The Latvian social-networking site at the heart of the Hannah Smith tragedy, ask.fm allows users to ask and answer each other's questions. Users may control the anonymity of their profiles, meaning that any malicious behaviour is immensely difficult to trace. Note too the difficulties of content regulations given its overseas status.
bebo.com:	Originally founded in 2005, MySpace competitor Bebo was eventually sold to AOL in 2008 for $850 million and has since faded into obscurity. The brand is set to be re-launched as an 'apps' publisher this year. Their flagship products include the video walkie-talkie app 'Blab', and another two releases that are yet to be named. Definitely one to be aware of for the future.
Blog:	Short for 'web log', a blog is an online space where users can record their thoughts (usually in considered prose), opinions and links to other pages and sites.
blogspot.com:	A 'blogging' site where users can post extended thoughts, comments and analysis. You should be aware that those who suffer from bullying, as well as those who perpetrate it, may write online about the way they are feeling.
buzzfeed.com:	This is one of the most popular producers of online news, entertainment and visual content in the world. Its features – from politics and current affairs to the more trivial quizzes and 'ten things you need to know about…' pages – frequently go viral (see 'viral' below). Users may send each other articles which, though they contain nothing personally relevant to the reader, could be used malevolently, e.g. 'ten reasons why you're failing at life'.
chatroulette.com:	As its name implies, chat roulette allows users with webcams and microphones to cycle through a selection of other online users around the world, see and speak to them both directly and via instant messaging. It is notorious for its numerous sex webcam users, and presents a real danger to young people. You should prohibit accessing it using school/college equipment, and you should warn your pupils that using it light-heartedly on any electronic device is not acceptable.
dropbox.com:	Dropbox is a real boon for teachers who may wish to back-up and/or share large amounts of information, larger files, images, videos or documents among their pupils. But that capability can also be used maliciously, allowing instantaneous transfer of material to potentially thousands of users.
facebook.com:	Arguably the biggest social-networking phenomenon in the history of the internet, Facebook is used by millions of people worldwide, and combines individual profiling with content sharing and an instant messenger service. You should beware of the use of invite-only and approval-only Facebook groups that can be used to deliberately exclude specific individuals from participating in content sharing and its instant messaging service being used to harass others. Note too the dangers of location tracking. Unless it is turned off, users' Facebook posts will include details of their exact geographical location, putting them at risk of contact with those who might wish to use physical intimidation instead. Ensure your internet policy specifically includes Facebook use.

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FaceTime:	This live videophone app is only found on Apple products and is most commonly found on the iPhone. Effectively the Apple version of Skype, it offers the opportunity to intimidate vocally and visually, but also to exclude owing to its selected distribution across the Apple family only.
flickr.com:	Originally a photo-posting and sharing website for professional and semi-professional photographers, Flickr is now emulating Facebook but with even greater emphasis on visual content. Less likely to be used by bullies, but certainly a place where malicious imagery can be hidden among millions of other photographs.
Friending:	The act of accepting a connection with another social networker, regardless of whether you know them or not.
Fraping:	Controversial because of its sexual connotations, fraping involves using – 'raping' – another user's Facebook account without their permission (though do note the term now applies to other social media, e.g. Twitter). This typically involves an unattended phone or computer being commandeered for the posting of embarrassing or malicious statuses on the user's behalf and without their permission. Make sure your staff and students know that this is unacceptable behaviour and that they do everything they can to protect themselves against invasions of personal internet space. Above all, never leave accounts open when you are not at the computer or phone.
Google+:	Google's own-brand social-networking site is by no means as popular as Facebook remains, but it has several features which could pose risks to your pupils. Firstly, its in-built photo editor allows users to add a variety of Instagram-like (see below) filters and more complex hues and taints. If a victim's account is hacked their pictures could potentially be deliberately tampered with using this service. Note too that Google+ also offers location tracking.
Gifboom:	A gif (graphic interchange format) is a visual animation made of sequenced images, and Gifboom allows you to make them using your own phone camera and add captions or text. A gif's animation speed makes for a potentially amusing format which may be used to mock or harass your pupils. Definitely a step up from the camera phone capability that allows students, for instance, to 'happy slap' their peers.
Grindr:	The app that inspired 'Tinder', Grindr offers the same package as Tinder but for homosexuals. It is to be noted for its highly sexual content. Allowing users to quickly flick or 'swipe' through each other's profiles and make split-second judgements about their sex appeal, Grindr is dangerous not least for its potential to put its users in written and physical contact with those they meet online. It may also be used to harass the pupils at your school, e.g. bullies may deliberately set up an account on behalf of someone else in an effort to 'out' them.
'Happy Slapping':	A malicious phenomenon that emerged following the widespread inclusion of cameras in phones, happy slapping involves bullying someone (usually involving physical violence) and deliberately filming it. These videos may be uploaded to the internet (YouTube) and then deleted from the culprit's phone, making it a difficult thing to police and regulate.
I Can Has Cheezburger?:	Originally one of the biggest sites for 'memes' featuring the so-called 'lol-cat', I Can Has Cheezburger features viral visual content of all kinds. It may be a source of animations and visual content for those who want to humiliate others, e.g. a student who is bullied for being small may be sent a 'gif' of a chihuahua as a means of emphasising their size.

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Instagram	A photo-editing and much-criticised sharing application that allows users to add a 'professional' tint to their handiwork. Beware its location tracker and the potential for exclusion by other users, who have the choice whether or not to 'add' or 'follow' their peers or not.
Last.fm:	A music website that uses the music recommending system "Audioscrobbler", Last.fm builds lists of music that are tailored to the styles of music you access on the internet, your computer or any corresponding music-playing devices. You should be aware that it accesses information on your computer or corresponding devices and that its focus on 'trending' music offers ammunition for the exclusion of others.
LinkedIn:	A networking site and application for professionals looking to connect with colleagues old and new, or look for a new job. Perhaps not commonly found in use by younger pupils, but does give bullies real ammunition if they wish to tarnish their victim's reputation or image online. A hacked account could result in real embarrassment, especially in front of potential employers.
LOL:	An abbreviation of 'laugh out loud'.
Myspace:	Once the talk of the social-networking world, Myspace has now decreased in popularity and is now being marketed as a social-networking/personal music sharing site. Users who did not delete their accounts before switching to other sites will provide ammunition to bullies who may use older photos and posts to embarrass their victims.
OM(F)G or OM(FU)G:	An abbreviation of 'oh my (f******g) God'.
PM:	Private, or instant, messaging, PM denotes a live messaging system internal to a social networking site, e.g. 'I think I left my jacket in the library yesterday, PM me if you find it tomorrow'.
Ratemyteachers.com:	This site provides an online space for pupils to anonymously rate their teachers. Pupils score their teachers out of 100 for easiness, helpfulness and clarity respectively, and there is also a comment box. Pupils' anonymity means that it is extremely difficult to catch those who post malicious things about their teachers, and your staff may be shocked by the fact that their pupils control whether they are registered on the site or not. Definitely one to watch for pupil-teacher cyber-bullying.
Selfies:	Short for 'self-portrait', the selfie is typically a photograph taken on a camera or camera phone. Popularised by (often irresponsible) celebrity endorsement, selfies can be used to cyber-bully if they are used to foreground the user's indifference towards another pupil being mistreated. For instance, a pupil who takes a picture of themselves smiling while another pupil is being beaten up is behaving inappropriately. They also count as 'sexts' if taken in an illicit way. The distribution of selfie sexts without the takers' permission is likewise inappropriate and illegal.
Sexting:	A portmanteau of 'sex' and 'texting', sexting is the sending of sexually explicit messages and/or images, often between phones but also via instant messaging services. Their content is inappropriate in schools. They pose a risk both to pupils who may feel pressured to engage in underage sexual activity, and to those whose privacy is compromised by the malicious distribution of sexual imagery or writing.
Skype:	An online video-calling service which allows users with webcams and microphones to talk to each other for free. Note too its instant messaging service.

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Status:	A term born with Facebook, a status is a user's most recent post. It could be a thought, feeling, location, picture or video.
Tinder:	The heterosexual incarnation of Grindr, Tinder is dangerous not least because it has become a marketplace for sex. Profile images are usually in some way sexualised and escort services advertise using its free profiles. Its 'swipe-right' culture – whereby users can quickly flick through others' descriptions and choose 'matches' – can bring strangers into written and physical contact with one another. Its internal messaging system is likewise a potential breeding ground for malicious behaviour, and, though it does not offer the precise location of other users, it is possible to ascertain a rough estimate.
Trolling:	The act of deliberately annoying someone on the internet by sending or responding to internet content with provocative imagery, text or audio. An example might be responding to another user's Facebook post about their love for family with a 'meme' that uses deliberately misspelled text and a relevant image from a popular film or television show to belittle the original poster.
Tumblr:	An online blogging platform that allows users to share multimedia to build their own blog, Tumblr is immensely popular and features nearly 200 million blogs. Users can search blogs and will be presented with matches based on the hash-tagged topics they search for. Much of its content is fun and/or meaningful, but you should be aware too of its sometimes sexualised content, and the easy access the site provides to private 'soft-porn' imagery.
twitter.com:	Arguably Facebook's biggest competitor, Twitter is a social networking program that allows users to share and view multimedia, and post their thoughts in 140-character-or-less 'tweets'. 'Tweeters' will receive a feed of information from other users based on the people that they 'follow', and the opportunity here to follow celebrities is one of the brand's unique selling points. Twitter feuds are all too common though, as it offers users ample opportunity for communication with complete strangers from around the world.
Viral:	An adjective used to describe online content that has become globally popular. Viral content would typically receive millions of views in a short space of time.
Whatsapp:	A multi-platform messaging and multimedia sharing app available for iPhone, Android, Blackberry, Nokia, Symbian and Windows phones, Whatsapp offers users the opportunity to message one another whilst bypassing the cost of normal texting via mobile phone networks. It requires an internet connection, and you should be aware that pupils using it need not necessarily have access to your school or college's Wi-Fi network to use it and be online. Be aware also of the risk of exclusion bullying and/or bullying via photo sharing and sending.
YouTube:	Now owned by Google, YouTube is globally the most famous video-posting and sharing site. From amateur video blogs to official film trailers and the music channels of world-famous bands, users can access an enormous collection of visual and audio multimedia at the click of a button. Though its sexual content is strictly regulated, its chat room-style comment forums under each video are certainly not and have become a breeding ground for 'trolls', racists, and the politically incorrect. You should inform your pupils that they should exercise extreme caution when accessing any video and reading its corresponding comments. Users can see how many times a clip has been viewed, this may help decide the extent of a bullying case.