



Online Safety Policy

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Agreed by	Headteacher
Date agreed	12.12.2022
Date to be reviewed	December 2025

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AIMS

Our school aims to:

Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors

Deliver an effective approach to online safety, which empowers us to protect and educate the whole school community in its use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')

Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- **Commerce** – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), and its advice for schools on:

[Teaching online safety in schools](#)

[Preventing and tackling bullying](#) and [cyber-bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff](#)

[Relationships and sex education](#)

[Searching, screening and confiscation](#)

It also refers to the DfE's guidance on [protecting children from radicalisation](#).

It reflects existing legislation, including but not limited to the [Education Act 1996](#) (as amended), the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#). In addition, it reflects the [Education Act 2011](#), which has given teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by, if necessary, searching for and deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

The policy also takes into account the National Curriculum computing programmes of study.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE GOVERNING BOARD

The governing board has overall responsibility for monitoring this policy and holding the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will co-ordinate regular meetings with appropriate staff to discuss online safety, and monitor online safety logs as provided by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

All governors will:

Ensure that they have read and understand this policy

Agree and adhere to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet (ICT Acceptable Use Policy)

Ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme while devising and implementing their whole school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and/or procedures

Ensure that, where necessary, teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, is adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is because of the importance of recognising that a 'one size fits all' approach may not be appropriate for all children in all situations, and a more personalised or contextualised approach may often be more suitable

THE HEADTEACHER

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that staff understand this policy, and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.

THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

Details of the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies are set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy as well as relevant job descriptions.

The DSL takes lead responsibility for online safety in school, in particular:

Supporting the headteacher in ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school

Working with the headteacher, Network Manager and other staff, as necessary, to address any online safety issues or incidents

Managing all online safety issues and incidents in line with the school child protection policy

Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy

Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy

Updating and delivering staff training on online safety

Liaising with other agencies and/or external services if necessary

Providing regular reports on online safety in school to the headteacher and/or governing board

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

THE NETWORK MANAGER

The Network Manager is responsible for:

Putting in place an appropriate level of security protection procedures, such as filtering and monitoring systems, which are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to assess effectiveness and ensure pupils are kept safe from potentially harmful and inappropriate content and contact online while at school, including terrorist and extremist material

Ensuring that the school's ICT systems are secure and protected against viruses and malware, and that such safety mechanisms are updated regularly

Conducting a full security check and monitoring the school's ICT systems on a weekly basis

Blocking access to potentially dangerous sites and, where possible, preventing the downloading of potentially dangerous files

Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged and forwarded to the appropriate members of staff

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff, including contractors and agency staff, and volunteers are responsible for:

Maintaining an understanding of this policy

Implementing this policy consistently

Agreeing and adhering to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet and ensuring that pupils follow the school's terms on acceptable use

Working with the DSL to ensure that any online safety incidents are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy

Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy

Responding appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or harassment, both online and offline and maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

PARENTS

Parents are expected to:

Notify a member of staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding this policy

Ensure their child has read, understood and agreed to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and internet

Parents can seek further guidance on keeping children safe online from the following organisations and websites:

What are the issues? – [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

Hot topics – [Childnet International](#)

Parent resource sheet – [Childnet International](#)

VISITORS AND MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY

Visitors and members of the community who use the school's ICT systems or internet will be made aware of this policy, when relevant, and expected to read and follow it. If appropriate, they will be expected to agree to the terms on acceptable use.

EDUCATING PUPILS ABOUT ONLINE SAFETY

Pupils will be taught about online safety as part of the curriculum:

All schools have to teach:

[Relationships education and health education](#) in primary schools

[Relationships and sex education and health education](#) in secondary schools

In **Key Stage 3**, pupils will be taught to:

Understand a range of ways to use technology safely, respectfully, responsibly and securely, including protecting their online identity and privacy

Recognise inappropriate content, contact and conduct, and know how to report concerns

Pupils in **Key Stage 4** will be taught:

To understand how changes in technology affect safety, including new ways to protect their online privacy and identity

How to report a range of concerns

By the **end of secondary school**, pupils will know:

Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online

About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online

Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them

What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online

The impact of viewing harmful content

That specifically sexually explicit material (e.g. pornography) presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners

That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail

How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

How to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours

How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)

The safe use of social media and the internet will also be covered in other subjects where relevant.

Where necessary, teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, will be adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some pupils with SEND.

EDUCATING PARENTS ABOUT ONLINE SAFETY

The school will raise parents' awareness of internet safety in letters or other communications home, and in information via our website.

Online safety will also be covered during parents' evenings.

The school will let parents know:

What systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use

What their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the school (if anyone) their child will be interacting with online

If parents have any queries or concerns in relation to online safety, these should be raised in the first instance with the headteacher and/or the DSL.

Concerns or queries about this policy can be raised with any member of staff or the headteacher.

CYBER BULLYING

DEFINITION

Cyber-bullying takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites. Like other forms of bullying, it is the repetitive, intentional harming of 1 person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. (See also the school behaviour policy.)

PREVENTING AND ADDRESSING CYBER-BULLYING

To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. We will ensure that pupils know how they can report any incidents and are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than the victim.

The school will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be. Form teachers will discuss cyber-bullying with their tutor groups.

Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyber-bullying. This includes personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, and other subjects where appropriate.

All staff, governors and volunteers (where appropriate) receive training on cyber-bullying, its impact and ways to support pupils, as part of safeguarding training (see section 11 for more detail).

The school also sends information/leaflets on cyber-bullying to parents so that they are aware of the signs, how to report it and how they can support children who may be affected.

In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, the school will follow the processes set out in the school behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained.

The DSL will report the incident and provide the relevant material to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable, if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that possessing that material is illegal. They will also work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

EXAMINING ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The headteacher, and any member of staff authorised to do so by the headteacher, can carry out a search and confiscate any electronic device that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting:

Poses a risk to staff or pupils, and/or

Is identified in the school rules as a banned item for which a search can be carried out, and/or

Is evidence in relation to an offence

Before a search, if the authorised staff member is satisfied that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting any of the above, they will also:

Make an assessment of how urgent the search is, and consider the risk to other pupils and staff. If the search is not urgent, they will seek advice from the Headteacher or DSL

Explain to the pupil why they are being searched, how the search will happen, and give them the opportunity to ask questions about it

Seek the pupil's cooperation

Authorised staff members may examine, and in exceptional circumstances erase, any data or files on an electronic device that they have confiscated where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

When deciding whether there is a 'good reason' to examine data or files on an electronic device, the staff member should reasonably suspect that the device has, or could be used to:

Cause harm, and/or

Undermine the safe environment of the school or disrupt teaching, and/or

Commit an offence

If inappropriate material is found on the device, it is up to Headteacher or DSL to decide on a suitable response. If there are images, data or files on the device that staff reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk, they will first consider the appropriate safeguarding response.

When deciding if there is a good reason to erase data or files from a device, staff members will consider if the material may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In these instances, they will not delete the material, and the device will be handed to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. If the material is not suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence, staff members may delete it if:

They reasonably suspect that its continued existence is likely to cause harm to any person, and/or

The pupil and/or the parent refuses to delete the material themselves

If a staff member **suspects** a device **may** contain an indecent image of a child (also known as a nude or semi-nude image), they will:

Not view the image

Confiscate the device and report the incident to the DSL (or equivalent) immediately, who will decide what to do next. The DSL will make the decision in line with the DfE's latest guidance on [screening, searching and confiscation](#) and the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance on [sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

Any searching of pupils will be carried out in line with:

The DfE's latest guidance on [searching, screening and confiscation](#)

UKCIS guidance on [sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#)

Our behaviour policy

Any complaints about searching for or deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices will be dealt with through the school complaints procedure.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF INTERNET IN SCHOOL

All pupils, parents, staff, volunteers and governors are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet. Visitors will be expected to read and agree to the school's terms on acceptable use if relevant.

Use of the school's internet must be for educational purposes only, or for the purpose of fulfilling the duties of an individual's role.

We will monitor the websites visited by pupils, staff, volunteers, governors and visitors (where relevant) to ensure they comply with the above.

More information is set out in the acceptable use agreements in the ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

PUPILS USING MOBILE DEVICES IN SCHOOL

Mobile phones may be brought to school but at the students' own risk.

The school's insurance only covers students' mobile phones when the phone is in the care of a member of staff.

Mobile phones must be switched off and remain out of sight at all times whilst inside the school buildings and whilst on the main drive through school.

Headphones are not to be used whilst inside the school buildings and whilst on the main drive through school.

For PE and games lessons mobile phones (and any other valuables) should be placed in the lockers provided. This is the responsibility of students.

During all public examinations, students are responsible for ensuring that they do not have their phones with them. Students are responsible for ensuring they are securely stored away from exam rooms.

If any member of staff asks a student to put their phone away, students are expected to comply without debate. This may include whilst outside the buildings if the member of staff deems the use to be inappropriate at that time.

Acceptable use:

If a teacher asks a student to use their mobile phone as part of a lesson.

Mobile phones may be used during break or lunchtime outside of the school buildings and away from the main drive, and when waiting for buses in the bus shelter area.

On a curriculum trip to contact parents about return times or in the event of an emergency.

Unacceptable use:

To be read in conjunction with the Behaviour policy

Using phones anywhere on the school site for calls, texting, playing games or for any other reason during lesson time.

Using mobile phones whilst walking to and from school, especially when crossing roads.

Using mobile phones whilst walking around school, especially when in congested areas, and areas that traffic can access.

MOBILE PHONES MUST NOT BE USED ON THE MAIN DRIVE AT ANY POINT.

Mobile phones are not to be used in the canteen OR INSIDE ANY SCHOOL BUILDING AT ANY POINT DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.

Sixth Form use:

Mobile phones can be used by Year 12 and Year 13 students on the Sixth Form site, provided they are not used when walking around the buildings or across the car park.

On the MAIN SITE, students in Year 12 and Year 13 are subject to the same rules as other students with the following exceptions: In Room 1 or in the Library during study periods, Sixth Form students may use their mobile phones for study, UCAS or other similar reasons. They may also use headphones to listen to music privately. Phones and headphones may also be used in appropriate, departmental areas where staff have given permission for students to do so.

SIXTH FORM STUDENTS MUST NOT USE MOBILE PHONES IN THE CORRIDORS. PHONES SHOULD BE OUT OF SIGHT WHEN MOVING AROUND THE MAIN SITE. YEAR 12 AND YEAR 13 ARE EXPECTED TO SET AN EXAMPLE FOR YOUNGER YEARS TO FOLLOW.

STAFF USING WORK DEVICES OUTSIDE SCHOOL

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Keeping the device password-protected – strong passwords are at least 8 characters, with a combination of upper and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters (e.g. asterisk or currency symbol)
- Ensuring their hard drive is encrypted – this means if the device is lost or stolen, no one can access the files stored on the hard drive by attaching it to a new device
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time
- Not sharing the device among family or friends
- Installing anti-virus and anti-spyware software
- Keeping operating systems up to date by always installing the latest updates

Staff members must not use the device in any way which would violate the school's terms of acceptable use, as set out in the ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

If staff have any concerns over the security of their device, they must seek advice from the Network Manager.

HOW THE SCHOOL WILL RESPOND TO ISSUES OF MISUSE

Where a pupil misuses the school's ICT systems or internet, we will follow the procedures set out in our policies Behaviour Policy. The action taken will depend on the individual circumstances, nature and seriousness of the specific incident, and will be proportionate.

Where a staff member misuses the school's ICT systems or the internet, or misuses a personal device where the action constitutes misconduct, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the staff code of conduct and staff disciplinary procedures. The action taken will depend on the individual circumstances, nature and seriousness of the specific incident.

The school will consider whether incidents which involve illegal activity or content, or otherwise serious incidents, should be reported to the police.

TRAINING

All new staff members will receive training, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation.

All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year as part of safeguarding training, as well as relevant updates as required (for example through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

By way of this training, all staff will be made aware that:

Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, and that children are at risk of online abuse

Children can abuse their peers online through:

- Abusive, harassing, and misogynistic messages

- Non-consensual sharing of indecent nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, especially around chat groups
- Sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content

Physical abuse, sexual violence and initiation/hazing type violence can all contain an online element

Training will also help staff:

- Develop better awareness to assist in spotting the signs and symptoms of online abuse
- Develop the ability to ensure pupils can recognise dangers and risks in online activity and can weigh up the risks
- Develop the ability to influence pupils to make the healthiest long-term choices and keep them safe from harm in the short term

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training, which will include online safety, at least every 2 years. They will also update their knowledge and skills on the subject of online safety at regular intervals, and at least annually.

Governors will receive training on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues as part of their safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training and updates, if applicable.

More information about safeguarding training is set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This online safety policy is linked to our:

Child protection and safeguarding policy

Behaviour policy

Staff disciplinary procedures

Data protection policy and privacy notices

Complaints procedure

ICT and internet acceptable use policy