

Online safety policy

(including mobile technology)



Approved by:	Gerry Oliver Head of School & DSL/ Ben Pearse Head of Curriculum & DSLs / Board of Governors
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Last reviewed on:	September 2024
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Next review due by:	September 2025
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1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of children, 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 (mobile phones)
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate
- Review child protection and safeguarding policy, including filtering and monitoring processes, annually responsibility of the DSLs.

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, fakenews, 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

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#), and its advice for schools on:

- [Teaching online safety in schools](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying](#) and [cyber-bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff](#)

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

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 children's electronic devices where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The board of governors

The school proprietor and the board of governors, have overall responsibility for monitoring this policy and holding the Head of School to account for its implementation.

The DSLs (Head of School and Head of Curriculum) 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 (appendix 3)
- Ensure that, where necessary, teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, is adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some children with SEND 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

3.2 The head of school

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

3.3 The designated safeguarding lead

Details of the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) 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:

- Ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school
- Working with the ICT 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 (see appendix 5) 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 (appendix 4 contains a self-audit for staff on online safety training needs)
- Liaising with other agencies and/or external services if necessary
- Providing regular reports on online safety in school to the head of school and governing board

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.4 DSLs liaising with offsite IT Support Manager

The DSLs & IT Support Manager are 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 children 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 regular 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 (see appendix 5) 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

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.5 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 (appendix 3), and ensuring that children follow the school's terms on acceptable use (appendices 1 and 2)
- › Working with the DSL to ensure that any online safety incidents are logged (see appendix 5) 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'
- › Recording and reporting any concerns about exposure to radicalising content

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.6 Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Notify a member of staff or the head of school 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 (appendices 1 and 2)

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](#)

3.7 Visitors and members 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 (appendix 3).

4. Educating children about online safety

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

It is also taken from the [guidance on relationships education, relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#).

All schools have to teach:

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

6 – 9 year old (Elementary) , children will be taught to:

- Use technology safely and respectfully, keeping personal information private
- Identify where to go for help and support when they have concerns about content or contact on the internet or other online technologies

9 – 12 year old (Elementary) children will be taught to:

- Use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly
- Recognise acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- Identify a range of ways to report concerns about content and contact
- By the **end of the second plane of development**, children will know:
 - That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not
 - That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
 - The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
 - How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met
 - How information and data is shared and used online
 - What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
 - How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know

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 children with SEND.

5. 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. This policy will also be shared with parents.

Online safety will also be covered during parents' evenings.

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 head of school.

6. Cyber-bullying

6.1 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.)

6.2 Preventing and addressing cyber-bullying

To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that children understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. We will ensure that children 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 children, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be. Teachers will discuss cyber-bullying with their class.

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 children, as part of safeguarding training (see section 11 for more detail).

The school also sends information 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 children, 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.

6.3 Examining electronic devices

School staff have the specific power under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (which has been increased by the Education Act 2011) to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files on children's electronic devices, including mobile phones, iPads and other tablet devices, where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

When deciding whether there is a good reason to examine or erase data or files on an electronic device, staff must reasonably suspect that the data or file in question has been, or could be, used to:

- › Cause harm, and/or
- › Disrupt teaching, and/or
- › Break any of the school rules

If inappropriate material is found on the device, it is up to the staff member in conjunction with the DSL or other member of the senior leadership team to decide whether they should:

- › Delete the material, or
- › Retain it as evidence (of a possible criminal offence* or a breach of school discipline), and/or
- › Report it to the police**

* If a staff member **believes** a device **may** contain a nude or semi-nude image or an image that it's a criminal offence to possess, they will not view the image but will report this 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](#).

** Staff will also confiscate the device to give to the police, if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that it contains evidence in relation to an offence.

Any searching of children 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](#)

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

7. Online Radicalisation

Radicalisation refers to the process by which people come to support terrorism and extremist ideologies that could lead to harmful behaviour. It can occur through exposure to materials, people, or online content that promotes violence, hatred, or other extreme ideas.

Identifying Online Risks

- › Content: Extremist and radicalising content may be shared on websites, social media, and forums. Children may come across such content inadvertently through innocent searches or social interactions.
- › Grooming: Extremist groups may target children by building relationships online, often hiding their true intentions and trying to influence young minds over time.
- › Echo Chambers and Algorithms: Some online platforms may reinforce extreme views by showing users more of the same type of content, creating echo chambers that further radicalisation.

The Role of Education in Preventing Radicalisation

- › Teach children about the importance of critical thinking when consuming online content.
- › Encourage a respectful and open-minded attitude to different perspectives while understanding the dangers of hateful or violent ideologies.
- › Equip children with the skills to recognise manipulative behaviour and harmful content.

Reporting Concerns

- › The school's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedure outlines a clear process for staff, children, and parents to report any concerns about exposure to radicalising content.
- › Staff receive guidance on the importance of early intervention and on recognising signs of radicalisation, such as:
 - Sudden changes in behaviour or opinion.
 - Withdrawal from friends or a noticeable shift in online activity.
- › We provide a supportive environment for children to voice their concerns about anything they encounter online.

8. Acceptable use of the internet in school

All children, parents, staff, volunteers and governors are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet (appendices 1 to 3). 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 children, 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 appendices 1 to 3.

9. Staff using mobile devices in school

Staff may bring mobile devices into school:

- › They must be switched off and kept with their personal belongings and not used in the classroom.
- › Staff have access to a work mobile phone in both the Children's House and the Elementary class. This is for work use only, collecting images/observations of children and their work for the children's folders, and for use on the school website and social media channels where appropriate.
- › School Mobile phones are used when staff are off site with children at any time.
- › Can be used to contact the office
- › Communications with parents/families are to happen through the office and not on these work phones unless in the case of an emergency off site.

9.1 Use of AI in education to be reviewed and discussed with staff throughout the year, when more information available rewrite policy.

10. Children using mobile devices in school

Children may bring mobile devices into school, such as mobile phones for those children walking to and from school but are not permitted to use them during the school day.

- › They will be given to the office for safe keeping until the end of the school day.

Any breach of the acceptable use agreement by a pupil may trigger disciplinary action in line with the school behaviour policy, which may result in the confiscation of their device.

11. 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 install 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 appendix 3.

Work devices must be used solely for work activities.

If staff have any concerns over the security of their device, they must seek advice from the DSL who will when necessary contact the offsite IT support manager.

12. 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 Behaviour Management Procedure. 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 Behaviour Policy. 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.

13. Training

All new staff members will receive training, as part of their induction, on safe internet use, including information on filtering and monitoring systems 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 (through emails 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 children can recognise dangers and risks in online activity and can weigh up the risks
- develop the ability to influence children to make the healthiest long-term choices and keep them safe from harm in the short term

The DSLs 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.

14. Filtering and Monitoring arrangements

The School uses a Draytek router with built-in firewall. All incoming traffic is filtered.

The DSL logs behaviour and safeguarding issues related to online safety. An incident report log can be found in appendix 4.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the DSL. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board. The review will be supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks children face online. This is important because technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly.

The governing body and leadership team, led by the DSL, are responsible to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's or college's IT system. The leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place, manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified. The governing body and leadership team consider those who are potentially at greater risk of harm and how often they access the IT system.

We:

- review filtering and monitoring provision at least annually.
- block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning.
- have effective monitoring strategies in place that meet our safeguarding needs.

We meet the Cyber security standards for schools and colleges as set out on Gov.uk.

The appropriateness of our filtering and monitoring systems are informed in part by our Prevent risk assessment.

15. Links with other policies

This online safety policy is linked to our:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff behaviour policy
- Data protection policy
- Complaints procedure

Appendix 1: (Elementary) KS1, KS2 and KS3 acceptable use agreement (children and parents/carers)

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE SCHOOL'S ICT SYSTEMS AND INTERNET: AGREEMENT FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS/CARERS

Name of pupil:

I will read and follow the rules in the Online Safety policy (including mobile technology).

When I use the school's ICT systems (like computers) to get onto the internet in school I will:

- Always use the school's ICT systems and the internet responsibly and for educational purposes only
- Only use the classroom laptop on the small table next to the main computer when a teacher is nearby.
- Keep my private information safe at all times and not give my name, address or telephone number to anyone without the permission of my teacher or parent/carer
- Tell a teacher (or sensible adult) immediately if I find any material which might upset, distress or harm me or others
- Always log off or shut down a computer when I've finished working on it

I will not:

- Access any inappropriate websites including: social networking sites, chat rooms and gaming sites unless my teacher has expressly allowed this as part of a learning activity
- Open any attachments in emails, or follow any links in emails, without first checking with a teacher
- Use any inappropriate language when communicating online, including in emails
- Create, link to or post any material that is pornographic, offensive, obscene or otherwise inappropriate
- Log in to the school's network using someone else's details
- Arrange to meet anyone offline without first consulting my parent/carer, or without adult supervision

If I bring a personal mobile phone or other personal electronic device into school:

- I will hand it over to the office and collect at the end of the school day.

I agree that the school will monitor the websites I visit and that there will be consequences if I don't follow the rules.

Signed (pupil):

Date:

Parent/carer's agreement: I agree that my child can use the school's ICT systems and internet when appropriately supervised by a member of school staff. I agree to the conditions set out above for children using the school's ICT systems and internet, and for using personal electronic devices in school, and will make sure my child understands these.

Signed (parent/carer):

Date:

Appendix 2: acceptable use agreement (staff, governors, volunteers and visitors)

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE SCHOOL'S ICT SYSTEMS AND INTERNET: AGREEMENT FOR STAFF, GOVERNORS, VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS

Name of staff member/governor/volunteer/visitor:

When using the school's ICT systems, personal mobile phones and accessing the internet in school, or outside school on a work device (if applicable), I will not:

- Access, or attempt to access inappropriate material, including but not limited to material of a violent, criminal or pornographic nature (or create, share, link to or send such material)
- Personal mobile phones to be switched off or on mute while on the school site.
- Use them in any way which could harm the school's reputation
- Access social networking sites or chat rooms
- Use any improper language when communicating online, including in emails or other messaging services
- Install any unauthorised software, or connect unauthorised hardware or devices to the school's network
- Share my password with others or log in to the school's network using someone else's details
- Take photographs of children without checking with the school office or head teacher.
- Share confidential information about the school, its children or staff, or other members of the community
- Access, modify or share data I'm not authorised to access, modify or share
- Promote private businesses, unless that business is directly related to the school

I will only use the school's ICT systems and access the internet in school, or outside school on a work device, for educational purposes or for the purpose of fulfilling the duties of my role.

I agree that the school will monitor the websites I visit and my use of the school's ICT facilities and systems.

I will take all reasonable steps to ensure that work devices are secure and password-protected when using them outside school, and keep all data securely stored in accordance with this policy and the school's data protection policy.

I will let the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) know if a pupil informs me they have found any material which might upset, distress or harm them or others, and will also do so if I encounter any such material.

I will always use the school's ICT systems and internet responsibly, and ensure that children in my care do so too.

Signed (staff member/governor/volunteer/visitor):

Date: