



St Cecilia's
R. C. High School

Discover • Develop • Rejoice

Online Safety Policy 2026 - 2027

Reviewed: July 2026

Next Review Date: July 2027

Statement of intent

St Cecilia's RC High School understands that using online services is an important aspect of raising educational standards, promoting pupil achievement, and enhancing teaching and learning. The use of online services is embedded throughout the school; therefore, there are a number of controls in place to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but they can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- **Content**: Being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material, for example:
 - Pornography.
 - Racism.
 - Misogyny.
 - Self-harm.
 - Suicide.
 - Discrimination.
 - Radicalisation.
 - Extremism.
 - Misinformation.
 - Disinformation, including fake news.
 - Conspiracy theories.
- **Contact**: Being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, for example:
 - Peer to peer pressure.
 - Commercial advertising.
 - Adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit children for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct**: Personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, for example:
 - Making, sending and receiving explicit messages.
 - Consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes.
 - Sharing of pornography.
 - Sharing other explicit images.
 - Online bullying.
- **Commerce**: Risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

The measures implemented to protect pupils and staff will revolve around these areas of risk.

Our school has created this policy with the aim of ensuring appropriate and safe use of the internet and other digital technology devices by all pupils and staff.

The school recognises that online risks continue to evolve rapidly. Emerging risks include artificial intelligence (AI) generated content, deepfake imagery and audio, online financial exploitation, cryptocurrency scams, algorithm-driven exposure to harmful content, anonymous communication platforms, livestreaming services and immersive technologies.

Online safety is recognised as an integral part of safeguarding and child protection and should not be viewed in isolation from the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities. The school recognises that some children are more vulnerable to online harm and may require additional support, including pupils with SEND, looked after children, previously looked after children, young carers and children with social workers. The school is committed to ensuring that pupils develop the knowledge, resilience and critical thinking skills required to navigate these risks safely and responsibly.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Online Safety Act 2023
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
- DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (latest edition)
- DfE 'Filtering and Monitoring Standards for Schools and Colleges' (latest edition)
- DfE 'Teaching Online Safety in Schools'
- DfE 'Searching, Screening and Confiscation'
- DfE 'Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education'
- DfE 'Generative AI Product Safety Expectations'
- DfE guidance regarding harmful online challenges and hoaxes
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance
- UKCIS 'Education for a Connected World'
- National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) guidance
- Ofcom guidance and Codes of Practice issued under the Online Safety Act 2023.

The school recognises that online safety legislation, regulation and statutory guidance continue to evolve. The school will undertake periodic reviews of this policy to ensure that emerging risks and statutory requirements are reflected appropriately.

Roles and responsibilities

The **governing board** will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy is effective and complies with relevant laws and statutory guidance.
- Ensuring the DSL's remit covers online safety.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Ensuring their own knowledge of online safety issues is up-to-date.
- Ensuring all staff undergo safeguarding and child protection training, including online safety, at induction and at regular intervals.
- Ensuring that there are appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place.
- Ensuring that the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems is reviewed at least annually in liaison with ICT staff and service providers.
- Ensuring that the SLT and other relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the filtering and monitoring provisions in place, and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.
- Ensuring that all relevant school policies have an effective approach to planning for, and responding to, online challenges and hoaxes embedded within them.
- Ensuring compliance with the DfE's 'Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges', with particular regard to the filtering and monitoring standards in relation to safeguarding.
- Receiving regular reports regarding filtering and monitoring arrangements, online safety incidents and emerging online risks.
- Ensuring that an annual filtering and monitoring review is completed and recorded.
- Ensuring that online safety, cyber security and AI-related safeguarding risks are considered within the school's wider safeguarding and risk management arrangements.

The **headteacher** will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that online safety is a running and interrelated theme throughout the school's policies and procedures, including in those related to the curriculum, teacher training and safeguarding.
- Supporting the DSL and the deputy DSL by ensuring they have enough time and resources to carry out their responsibilities in relation to online safety.
- Ensuring staff receive regular, up-to-date and appropriate online safety training and information as part of their induction and safeguarding training.
- Ensuring online safety practices are audited and evaluated.
- Organising engagement with parents to keep them up-to-date with current online safety issues and how the school is keeping pupils safe.

- Working with the DSL and ICT technicians to conduct light-touch reviews of this policy when necessary.
- Working with the DSL and governing board to update this policy on an annual basis.
- Identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage the school's filtering and monitoring systems.
- Appointing an SLT digital lead in line with the Cyber-security Policy.

The **DSL** will be responsible for:

- Taking the lead responsibility for online safety in the school.
- Undertaking training so they understand the risks associated with online safety and can recognise additional risks that pupils with SEND face online.
- Liaising with relevant members of staff on online safety matters, e.g. the SENCO and ICT technicians.
- Ensuring online safety is recognised as part of the school's safeguarding responsibilities and that a coordinated approach is implemented.
- Ensuring safeguarding is considered in the school's approach to remote learning.
- Establishing a procedure for reporting online safety incidents and inappropriate internet use, both by pupils and staff, and ensuring all members of the school community understand this procedure.
- Understanding the filtering and monitoring processes in place at the school.
- Providing specialist knowledge in relation to filtering system management, e.g. the content and websites pupils should and should not be able to access.
- Ensuring that all safeguarding training given to staff includes an understanding of the expectations, roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring systems at the school.
- Maintaining records of reported online safety concerns as well as the actions taken in response to concerns.
- Monitoring online safety incidents to identify trends and any gaps in the school's provision, and using this data to update the school's procedures.
- Reporting to the governing board about online safety.
- Working with the headteacher and ICT technicians to conduct light-touch reviews as and when necessary.
- Working with the headteacher and governing board to update this policy on an annual basis.
- Maintaining awareness of emerging online risks including AI-generated content, deepfakes, online financial exploitation, harmful online communities and evolving social media trends.
- Ensuring appropriate safeguarding responses are in place for incidents involving AI-generated or manipulated content.
- Supporting staff to identify and respond to online harms associated with emerging technologies.

ICT technicians will be responsible for:

- Providing technical support in the development and implementation of the school's online safety policies and procedures.
- Implementing appropriate security measures as directed by the headteacher.
- Ensuring that the school's filtering and monitoring systems are updated as appropriate.
- Working with the DSL and headteacher to conduct light-touch reviews of this policy as and when necessary.
- Providing specialist support in relation to the implementation of filtering and monitoring software.

All staff members will be responsible for:

- Taking responsibility for the security of ICT systems and electronic data they use or have access to.
- Modelling good online behaviours.
- Maintaining a professional level of conduct in their personal use of technology.
- Having an awareness of online safety issues.
- Ensuring they are familiar with, and understand, the indicators that pupils may be unsafe online.
- Reporting concerns in line with the school's reporting procedure.
- Where relevant to their role, ensuring online safety is embedded in their teaching of the curriculum.

Pupils will be responsible for:

- Adhering to the Acceptable Use Agreement and other relevant policies.
- Seeking help from school staff if they are concerned about something they or a peer have experienced online.
- Reporting online safety incidents and concerns in line with the procedures within this policy.

Managing online safety

All staff will be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues affecting young people, particularly owing to the rise of social media and the increased prevalence of children using the internet.

The DSL has overall responsibility for the school's approach to online safety, with support from deputies and the headteacher where appropriate, and will ensure that there are strong processes in place to handle any concerns about pupils' safety online. The DSL should liaise with the police or children's social care services for support responding to harmful online sexual behaviour.

The importance of online safety is integrated across all school operations in the following ways:

- Staff and governors receive regular training
- Staff receive regular email updates regarding online safety information and any changes to online safety guidance or legislation
- Online safety is integrated into learning throughout the curriculum
- Students receive keeping safe assemblies / external speakers regarding keeping safe online

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Generated Harm

The school recognises that artificial intelligence technologies are increasingly capable of generating realistic text, images, audio and video content.

AI-generated content may present safeguarding risks including:

- Deepfake imagery and videos.
- AI-generated sexualised images.
- Voice cloning and impersonation.
- AI-enabled bullying and harassment.
- AI-assisted grooming and exploitation.
- Misinformation and disinformation.
- Fraud and financial exploitation.

Any report involving AI-generated content that may place a child at risk will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Behaviour Policy if it is an incident of child-on-child abuse. Where necessary, incidents involving AI-generated content will be referred to appropriate external agencies. Staff should not rely solely upon AI-generated outputs when making safeguarding, behaviour or educational decisions and should verify information using trusted sources

Handling online safety concerns

Any disclosures made by pupils to staff members about online abuse, harassment or exploitation, whether they are the victim or disclosing on behalf of another child, will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Staff will be aware that harmful online sexual behaviour can progress on a continuum, and appropriate and early intervention can prevent abusive behaviour in the future. Staff will also acknowledge that pupils displaying this type of behaviour are often victims of abuse themselves and should be suitably supported.

The victim of online harmful sexual behaviour may ask for no one to be told about the abuse. The DSL will consider whether sharing details of the abuse would put the victim in a more harmful position, or whether it is necessary in order to protect them from further harm. Ultimately the DSL will balance the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and other young people. The DSL and other appropriate staff members will meet with the victim's parents to discuss the safeguarding measures that are being put in place to support their child and how the report will progress.

Confidentiality will not be promised, and information may be still shared lawfully, for example, if the DSL decides that there is a legal basis under UK GDPR such as the public task basis whereby it is in the public interest to share the

information. If the decision is made to report abuse to children's social care or the police against the victim's wishes, this must be handled extremely carefully – the reasons for sharing the information should be explained to the victim and appropriate specialised support should be offered.

Concerns regarding a staff member's online behaviour are reported to the headteacher, who decides on the best course of action in line with the relevant policies. If the concern is about the headteacher, it is reported to the chair of governors.

Concerns regarding a pupil's online behaviour are reported to the DSL or safeguarding team, who investigates concerns with relevant staff members, e.g. the headteacher and ICT technicians, and manages concerns in accordance with relevant policies depending on their nature, e.g. the Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where there is a concern that illegal activity has taken place, the headteacher contacts the police.

The school avoids unnecessarily criminalising pupils, e.g. calling the police, where criminal behaviour is thought to be inadvertent and as a result of ignorance or normal developmental curiosity, e.g. a pupil has taken and distributed indecent imagery of themselves. The DSL will decide in which cases this response is appropriate and will manage such cases in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

All online safety incidents and the school's response are recorded by the safeguarding team.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Threatening, intimidating or upsetting text messages
- Threatening or embarrassing pictures and video clips sent via mobile phone cameras
- Silent or abusive phone calls or using the victim's phone to harass others, to make them think the victim is responsible
- Threatening or bullying emails, possibly sent using a pseudonym or someone else's name
- Unpleasant messages sent via instant messaging
- Unpleasant or defamatory information posted to blogs, personal websites and social networking sites, e.g. Facebook
- Abuse between young people in intimate relationships online i.e. teenage relationship abuse
- Discriminatory bullying online i.e. homophobia, racism, misogyny/misandry.

The school will be aware that certain pupils can be more at risk of abuse and/or bullying online, such as LGBTQ+ pupils and pupils with SEND.

Cyberbullying against pupils or staff is not tolerated under any circumstances. Incidents of cyberbullying are dealt with quickly and effectively wherever they occur in line with the Anti-bullying Policy.

Child-on-child sexual abuse and harassment

Pupils may also use the internet and technology as a vehicle for sexual abuse and harassment. Staff will understand that this abuse can occur both in and outside of school, off and online, and will remain aware that pupils are less likely to report

concerning online sexual behaviours, particularly if they are using websites that they know adults will consider to be inappropriate for their age.

The following are examples of online harmful sexual behaviour of which staff will be expected to be aware:

- Threatening, facilitating or encouraging sexual violence
- Upskirting, i.e. taking a picture underneath a person's clothing without consent and with the intention of viewing their genitals, breasts or buttocks
- Sexualised online bullying, e.g. sexual jokes or taunts
- Unwanted and unsolicited sexual comments and messages
- Consensual or non-consensual sharing of sexualised imagery
- Abuse between young people in intimate relationships online, i.e. teenage relationship abuse

All staff will be aware of and promote a zero-tolerance approach to sexually harassing or abusive behaviour, and any attempts to pass such behaviour off as trivial or harmless. Staff will be aware that allowing such behaviour could lead to a school culture that normalises abuse and leads to pupils becoming less likely to report such conduct.

Staff will be aware that creating, possessing, and distributing indecent imagery of other children, i.e. individuals under the age of 18, is a criminal offence, even where the imagery is created, possessed, and distributed with the permission of the child depicted, or by the child themselves.

The school will be aware that interactions between the victim of online harmful sexual behaviour and the alleged perpetrator(s) are likely to occur over social media following the initial report, as well as interactions with other pupils taking "sides", often leading to repeat harassment. The school will respond to these incidents in line with the Behaviour Policy and the Anti-bullying policy.

The school will respond to all concerns regarding online child-on-child sexual abuse and harassment, regardless of whether the incident took place on the school premises or using school-owned equipment. Concerns regarding online child-on-child abuse will be reported to the DSL, who will investigate the matter in line with the Behaviour Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The school recognises that sexually explicit or abusive content may be generated or manipulated through the use of artificial intelligence technologies. Deepfake imagery, synthetic media and digitally altered images will be treated with the same seriousness as other forms of image-based abuse and safeguarding concerns.

Grooming and exploitation

Grooming is defined as the situation whereby an adult builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child with the intention of manipulating, exploiting and/or abusing them.

Staff will be aware that grooming often takes place online and that pupils who are being groomed are commonly unlikely to report this behaviour for many reasons, e.g. the pupil may have been manipulated into feeling a strong bond with their groomer and may have feelings of loyalty, admiration, or love, as well as fear, distress and confusion.

Due to the fact pupils are less likely to report grooming than other online offences, it is particularly important that staff understand the indicators of this type of abuse. The DSL will ensure that online safety training covers online abuse, the importance of looking for signs of grooming, and what the signs of online grooming are, including:

- Being secretive about how they are spending their time online.
- Having an older boyfriend or girlfriend, usually one that does not attend the school and whom their close friends have not met.
- Having money or new possessions, e.g. clothes and technological devices, that they cannot or will not explain.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) and child criminal exploitation (CCE)

Although CSE often involves physical sexual abuse or violence, online elements may be prevalent, e.g. sexual coercion and encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways through the internet. In some cases, a pupil may be groomed online to become involved in a wider network of exploitation, e.g. the production of child pornography or forced child prostitution and sexual trafficking.

CCE is a form of exploitation in which children are forced or manipulated into committing crimes for the benefit of their abuser, e.g. drug transporting, shoplifting and serious violence. While these crimes often take place in person, it is increasingly common for children to be groomed and manipulated into participating through the internet.

Where staff have any concerns about pupils with relation to CSE or CCE, they will bring these concerns to the DSL without delay, who will manage the situation in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. This process can occur through direct recruitment, e.g. individuals in extremist groups identifying, targeting and contacting young people with the intention of involving them in terrorist activity, or by exposure to violent ideological propaganda. Children who are targets for radicalisation are likely to be groomed by extremists online to the extent that they believe the extremist has their best interests at heart, making them more likely to adopt the same radical ideology.

Staff members will be aware of the factors which can place certain pupils at increased vulnerability to radicalisation. Staff will be expected to exercise vigilance towards any pupils displaying indicators that they have been, or are being, radicalised. Where staff have a concern about a pupil relating to radicalisation, they will report this to the DSL without delay.

Mental health

Staff will be aware that online activity both in and outside of school can have a substantial impact on a pupil's mental state, both positively and negatively. The DSL will ensure that training is available to help ensure that staff members understand popular social media sites and terminology, the ways in which social media and the internet in general can impact mental health, and the indicators that a pupil is suffering from challenges in their mental health.

Staff will be aware that online activity both in and outside of school can have a significant impact on pupils' wellbeing and mental health.

The school recognises that social media platforms, recommendation algorithms and online communities may expose pupils to harmful content including:

- Self-harm content.
- Suicide-related content.
- Eating disorder content.
- Extremist material.
- Misinformation and conspiracy theories.
- Harmful body image messaging.
- Content promoting unrealistic lifestyles or expectations.

Staff will also be aware of risks associated with excessive screen use, sleep disruption, online dependency and social isolation. Where concerns regarding a pupil's wellbeing are identified, appropriate support and safeguarding procedures will be implemented.

Online hoaxes and harmful online challenges

For the purposes of this policy, an **“online hoax”** is defined as a deliberate lie designed to seem truthful, normally one that is intended to scaremonger or to distress individuals who come across it, spread on online social media platforms.

For the purposes of this policy, **“harmful online challenges”** refers to challenges that are targeted at young people and generally involve users recording themselves participating in an online challenge, distributing the video through social media channels and daring others to do the same. Although many online challenges are harmless, an online challenge becomes harmful when it could potentially put the participant at risk of harm, either directly as a result of partaking in the challenge itself or indirectly as a result of the distribution of the video online – the latter will usually depend on the age of the pupil and the way in which they are depicted in the video. Where staff suspect there may be a harmful online challenge or online hoax circulating amongst pupils in the school, they will report this to the safeguarding team immediately.

The DSL/safeguarding team will conduct a case-by-case assessment for any harmful online content brought to their attention, establishing the scale and nature of the possible risk to pupils, and whether the risk is one that is localised to the school or the local area, or whether it extends more widely across the country. Where the harmful content is prevalent mainly in the local area, the DSL will consult with the LA about whether quick local action can prevent the hoax or challenge from spreading more widely.

Prior to deciding how to respond to a harmful online challenge or hoax, the DSL/safeguarding team and the headteacher will decide whether each proposed response is:

- In line with any advice received from a known, reliable source, e.g. the UK Safer Internet Centre, when fact-checking the risk of online challenges or hoaxes.
- Careful to avoid needlessly scaring or distressing pupils.
- Not inadvertently encouraging pupils to view the hoax or challenge where they would not have otherwise come across it, e.g. where content is explained to younger pupils but is almost exclusively being shared amongst older pupils.
- Proportional to the actual or perceived risk.
- Helpful to the pupils who are, or are perceived to be, at risk.

- Appropriate for the relevant pupils' age and developmental stage.
- Supportive.
- In line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Where the DSL/safeguarding team's assessment finds an online challenge to be putting pupils at risk of harm, they will ensure that the challenge is directly addressed to the relevant pupils, e.g. those within a particular age range that is directly affected or individual pupils at risk where appropriate.

The DSL/safeguarding team and headteacher will only implement a school-wide approach to highlighting potential harms of a hoax or challenge when the risk of needlessly increasing pupils' exposure to the risk is considered and mitigated as far as possible.

Cyber-crime

Cyber-crime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. There are two key categories of cyber-crime:

- **Cyber-enabled** – these crimes can be carried out offline; however, are made easier and can be conducted at higher scales and speeds online, e.g. fraud, purchasing and selling of illegal drugs, and sexual abuse and exploitation.
- **Cyber-dependent** – these crimes can only be carried out online or by using a computer, e.g. making, supplying or obtaining malware, illegal hacking, and 'booting', which means overwhelming a network, computer or website with internet traffic to render it unavailable.

The school will factor into its approach to online safety the risk that pupils with a particular affinity or skill in technology may become involved, whether deliberately or inadvertently, in cyber-crime. Where there are any concerns about a pupil's use of technology and their intentions with regard to using their skill and affinity towards it, the DSL will consider a referral to the **Cyber Choices programme**, which aims to intervene where children are at risk of committing cyber-crime and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests.

The school recognises that children and young people may be targeted by online financial exploitation schemes including:

- Phishing attacks.
- Cryptocurrency scams.
- Investment fraud.
- Money mule recruitment.
- Online gambling.
- Fraudulent employment opportunities.
- Social engineering techniques.

The DSL and headteacher will ensure that pupils are taught, throughout the curriculum, how to use technology safely, responsibly and lawfully, to help them identify and avoid such risks.

Online safety training for staff

The DSL will ensure that all safeguarding training given to staff includes elements of online safety, including how the internet can facilitate abuse and exploitation, and understanding the expectations, roles and responsibilities relating to

filtering and monitoring systems. All staff will be made aware that pupils are at risk of abuse, by their peers and by adults, online as well as in person, and that, often, abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life.

*-Staff training will include a specific focus on **harmful online narratives such as misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories**, helping staff to recognise the signs of influence or vulnerability among pupils.*

-Training will equip staff with the knowledge and confidence to identify signs of online harm, respond appropriately to disclosures or concerns, and support pupils in developing critical thinking skills and safe online behaviours.

Online safety and the curriculum

Online safety is embedded throughout the curriculum; however, it is particularly addressed in the following subjects:

- RSE
- PSHE
- ICT

Online safety teaching is always appropriate to pupils' ages and developmental stages.

Pupils are taught the underpinning knowledge and behaviours that can help them to navigate the online world safely and confidently regardless of the device, platform or app they are using. The underpinning knowledge and behaviours pupils learn through the curriculum include the following:

- How to evaluate what they see online
- How to recognise techniques used for persuasion
- Acceptable and unacceptable online behaviour
- How to identify online risks
- How and when to seek support
- Knowledge and behaviours that are covered in the government's online media literacy strategy

The online risks pupils may face online will always be considered when developing the curriculum.

The school's approach to teaching online safety in the curriculum will reflect the ever-evolving nature of online risks, ensuring pupils develop the knowledge and resilience to navigate digital spaces safely and responsibly. Online safety education will address four key categories of risk: content, contact, conduct, and commerce.

Content Risks

Pupils will be taught how to critically evaluate online content and identify material that is illegal, inappropriate, or harmful. The curriculum will include discussions around harmful content such as pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news), and conspiracy theories. Lessons will equip pupils with the skills to question sources, verify information, and understand the dangers of engaging with such content.

Contact Risks

The school will educate pupils about the potential dangers of interacting with others online. Pupils will explore topics such as peer pressure, commercial exploitation, and grooming tactics used by adults who pose as children or young adults. They will learn how to recognise unsafe interactions, use privacy settings effectively, and report any concerning behaviour or messages to trusted adults and platforms.

Conduct Risks

Pupils will be guided on how their own online behaviour can impact both themselves and others. The curriculum will address the risks associated with creating, sharing, or receiving explicit images, including both consensual and non-consensual exchanges of nudes and semi-nudes. Online bullying, including the use of social media and messaging platforms to harass or intimidate others, will also be a key focus. Pupils will be taught responsible digital conduct and the legal and emotional consequences of harmful behaviour.

Commerce Risks

The curriculum will also include education on online commercial risks. Pupils will be informed about the dangers of online gambling, exposure to inappropriate advertising, and financial scams such as phishing. They will learn how to recognise fraudulent schemes, protect their personal and financial information, and seek help when confronted with suspicious online activity.

The DSL will be involved with the development of the school's online safety curriculum. Pupils will be consulted on the online safety curriculum, where appropriate, due to their unique knowledge of the kinds of websites they and their peers frequent and the kinds of behaviours in which they engage online.

Relevant members of staff, e.g. the SENCO and designated teacher for LAC, will work together to ensure the curriculum is tailored so that pupils who may be more vulnerable to online harms, e.g. pupils with SEND and LAC, receive the information and support they need.

The school will also endeavour to take a more personalised or contextualised approach to teaching about online safety for more susceptible children, and in response to instances of harmful online behaviour from pupils.

Class teachers will review external resources prior to using them for the online safety curriculum, to ensure they are appropriate for the cohort of pupils.

External visitors may be invited into school to help with the delivery of certain aspects of the online safety curriculum. The headteacher and DSL will decide when it is appropriate to invite external groups into school and ensure the visitors selected are appropriate.

Before conducting a lesson or activity on online safety, the class teacher and DSL will consider the topic that is being covered and the potential that pupils in the class have suffered or may be suffering from online abuse or harm in this way. The DSL will advise the staff member on how to best support any pupil who may be especially impacted by a lesson or activity. Lessons and activities will be planned carefully so they do not draw attention to a pupil who is being or has been abused or harmed online, to avoid publicising the abuse.

During an online safety lesson or activity, the class teacher will ensure a safe environment is maintained in which pupils feel comfortable to say what they feel and ask questions, and are not worried about getting into trouble or being judged.

If a staff member is concerned about anything pupils raise during online safety lessons and activities, they will make a report in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

If a pupil makes a disclosure to a member of staff regarding online abuse following a lesson or activity, the staff member will follow the reporting procedure outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The curriculum will also support pupils to develop AI literacy and media literacy skills, including:

- Understanding how AI systems generate content.
- Recognising AI-generated imagery and deepfakes.
- Evaluating the reliability and accuracy of AI-generated information.
- Understanding the ethical use of AI technologies.
- Recognising misinformation, disinformation and manipulated content.
- Developing critical thinking and fact-checking skills.

Use of technology in the classroom

A wide range of technology will be used during lessons, including the following:

- Computers
- Laptops
- Tablets
- Intranet
- Email

Prior to using any websites, tools, apps or other online platforms in the classroom, or recommending that pupils use these platforms at home, the class teacher will review and evaluate the resource. Class teachers will ensure that any internet-derived materials are used in line with copyright law.

Pupils will be supervised when using online materials during lesson time – this supervision is suitable to their age and ability.

Use of smart technology

While the school recognises that the use of smart technology can have educational benefits, there are also a variety of associated risks which the school will ensure it manages.

Pupils will be educated on the acceptable and appropriate use of personal devices and will use technology in line with the school's Acceptable Use Agreement and Mobile Phone Policy.

Staff will use all smart technology and personal technology in line with the school's Staff Code of Conduct.

The school recognises that pupils' unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks means that some pupils may use the internet in a way which breaches the school's acceptable use of ICT agreement for pupils.

Pupils will not be permitted to use mobile phones/smart devices or any other personal technology whilst on the school site.

Where there is a significant problem with the misuse of smart technology among pupils, the school will discipline those involved in line with the school's Behaviour Policy/Mobile phone policy.

The school will hold assemblies, where appropriate, which address any specific concerns related to the misuse of smart technology and outline the importance of using smart technology in an appropriate manner.

The school will seek to ensure that it is kept up to date with the latest devices, platforms, apps, trends and related threats.

The school will consider the 4Cs (content, contact, conduct and commerce) when educating pupils about the risks involved with the inappropriate use of smart technology and enforcing the appropriate disciplinary measures.

Educating parents

The school will work in partnership with parents to ensure pupils stay safe online at school and at home. Parents will be provided with information about the school's approach to online safety and their role in protecting their children. Parents will also receive a code of conduct in addition to the pupil code of conduct and are encouraged to go through this with their child to ensure their child understands the document. Parents will be made aware of the various ways in which their children may be at risk online and they will also receive supportive information helping them prevent their child from accessing harmful content at home, e.g. by implementing parental controls to block age-inappropriate content.

Parental awareness regarding how they can support their children to be safe online will be raised in the following ways:

- Newsletters
- Online resources

Internet access

Pupils, staff and other members of the school community may only be granted access to the school's internet network once they have read and signed the Acceptable Use Agreement.

All members of the school community will be encouraged to use the school's internet network, instead of 3G, 4G and 5G networks, as the network has appropriate filtering and monitoring to ensure individuals are using the internet appropriately.

Filtering and monitoring online activity

The governing board will ensure the school's ICT network has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and that it is meeting the DfE's '**Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges**'. The governing board will ensure 'over blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what pupils can be taught with regards to online teaching and safeguarding.

The DSL will ensure that specific roles and responsibilities are identified and assigned to manage filtering and monitoring systems and to ensure they meet the school's safeguarding needs. Filtering and monitoring alerts are reviewed promptly and acted upon where safeguarding concerns are identified.

The headteacher and ICT technicians will undertake a risk assessment to determine what filtering and monitoring systems are required. The filtering and monitoring systems will be scaled appropriately to meet the safeguarding needs of all pupils. ICT technicians will undertake regular checks on the filtering and monitoring systems to ensure they are effective and appropriate.

Requests regarding making changes to the filtering system will be directed to the headteacher. Prior to making any changes to the filtering system, ICT technicians and the DSL will conduct a risk assessment. Any changes made to the system will be recorded by ICT technicians. Reports of inappropriate websites or materials will be made to an ICT technician immediately, who will investigate the matter and makes any necessary changes.

Deliberate breaches of the filtering system will be reported to the DSL and ICT technicians, who will escalate the matter appropriately. If a pupil has deliberately breached the filtering system, they will be disciplined in line with the Behaviour Policy. If a member of staff has deliberately breached the filtering system, they will be disciplined in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

If material that is believed to be illegal is accessed, inadvertently or deliberately, this material will be reported to the appropriate agency immediately, e.g. the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), CEOP and/or the police.

The school's network and school-owned devices will be appropriately monitored. All users of the network and school-owned devices will be informed about how and why they are monitored. Concerns identified through monitoring will be reported to the DSL who will manage the situation in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

All staff will receive regular training on the operation and purpose of filtering and monitoring systems, including their role in safeguarding.

Personal devices connected to the school's network will be subject to the same filtering and monitoring standards to ensure consistent safeguarding measures.

The school will complete and document an annual filtering and monitoring review to assess the effectiveness of current arrangements.

The review will consider:

- Emerging safeguarding risks.
- New technologies and applications.
- Artificial intelligence tools.
- Cyber security threats.
- Trends identified through safeguarding records.
- Feedback from staff and pupils.

The governing board will receive assurance that filtering and monitoring arrangements remain effective and proportionate.

Senior leaders, the DSL and relevant technical staff will maintain an appropriate understanding of the school's filtering and monitoring systems, including their capabilities, limitations and escalation procedures.

Network security

Technical security features, such as anti-virus software, will be kept up-to-date and managed by ICT technicians. Firewalls will be switched on at all times. ICT technicians will review the firewalls on to ensure they are running correctly, and to carry out any required updates.

Staff and pupils will be advised not to download unapproved software or open unfamiliar email attachments and will be expected to report all malware and virus attacks to ICT technicians.

All members of staff will have their own unique usernames and private passwords to access the school's systems. Pupils in class, year or key stage and above will be provided with their own unique username and private passwords. Staff members and pupils will be responsible for keeping their passwords private. Passwords will have a minimum and maximum length and require a mixture of letters, numbers and symbols to ensure they are as secure as possible. Passwords will expire after 90 days, after which users will be required to change them.

Users will inform ICT technicians if they forget their login details, who will arrange for the user to access the systems under different login details. Users will not be permitted to share their login details with others and will not be allowed to log in as another user at any time. If a user is found to be sharing their login details or otherwise mistreating the password system, the pastoral/safeguarding team will be informed and will decide the necessary action to take.

Users will be required to lock access to devices and systems when they are not in use.

The SLT digital lead will be responsible for implementing appropriate network security measures in liaison with the DPO and DSL.

Emails

Staff and pupils will be given approved school email accounts and will only be able to use these accounts at school and when doing school-related work outside of school hours. Prior to being authorised to use the email system, staff and pupils must agree to and sign the Acceptable Use Agreement. Personal email accounts will not be permitted to be used on the school site. Any email that contains sensitive or personal information will only be sent using secure and encrypted email.

Staff members and pupils will be required to block spam and junk mail, and report the matter to ICT technicians. The school's monitoring system can detect inappropriate links, malware and profanity within emails – staff and pupils will be made aware of this. Chain letters, spam and all other emails from unknown sources will be deleted without being opened. ICT technicians will explain what a phishing email and other malicious emails might look like – this assembly will include information on the following:

- How to determine whether an email address is legitimate
- The types of address a phishing email could use
- The importance of asking “does the email urge you to act immediately?”
- The importance of checking the spelling and grammar of an email

Any cyber-attacks initiated through emails will be managed in line with the **Cyber Response and Recovery Plan**.

Generative artificial intelligence (AI)

The school recognises the increasing use of generative AI technologies within education and wider society.

Any use of AI within the school will prioritise safeguarding, data protection, educational value and pupil wellbeing.

The school will ensure that:

- AI systems are used safely, responsibly and ethically.
- Age restrictions and provider terms of service are followed.
- Appropriate filtering and monitoring arrangements are in place.
- Personal, confidential or safeguarding information is not entered into public AI systems.
- Staff understand the limitations of AI-generated outputs and verify information before use.

- Pupils receive age-appropriate education regarding AI technologies.
- Risks associated with deepfakes, hallucinations, bias, manipulation and misinformation are addressed.
- Appropriate controls are implemented to maintain academic integrity and prevent malpractice.

The school will undertake regular AI risk assessments and review the educational, safeguarding and data protection implications of AI technologies before implementation.

The school will maintain a separate Safe Use of AI Policy which provides further operational guidance for staff and pupils.

Social networking

The use of social media by staff and pupils will be managed in line with the school's staff code of conduct.

The school website

The headteacher will be responsible for the overall content of the school website – they will ensure the content is appropriate, accurate, up-to-date and meets government requirements.

Use of devices

Staff members and pupils will be issued with school-owned devices to assist with their work, where necessary. Requirements around the use of school-owned devices can be found in the school's Device User Agreement.

The use of personal devices on the school premises and for the purposes of school work will be managed in line with the Staff code of conduct.

Monitoring and review

The school recognises that online technologies, safeguarding risks and statutory requirements continue to evolve.

The DSL, SLT Digital Lead, ICT technicians and headteacher will undertake regular reviews of online safety arrangements throughout the year.

An annual review will include:

- Online safety incident trends.
- Filtering and monitoring effectiveness.
- Cyber security arrangements.
- AI risk assessments.
- Staff training requirements.
- Curriculum provision.
- Parent engagement activities.
- Emerging technologies and risks.
- Compliance with statutory guidance.

The governing board will receive an annual report regarding online safety and associated safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be formally reviewed annually or sooner where changes in legislation, statutory guidance or local circumstances require.