

Cybersecurity Policy



Introduction

A cybersecurity incident can have a major impact on any organisation for extended periods of time. For a school, this can range from minor reputational damage and the cost of restoring systems from existing backups, to major incidents such as losing student work or access to learning platforms and safeguarding systems, which could lead to data-protection fines or even failing an inspection.

This Cybersecurity Policy outlines Wandle Valley Academy's guidelines and security provisions which are there to protect our systems, services and data in the event of a cyberattack.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all Wandle Valley Academy staff, contractors, volunteers and anyone else granted permanent or temporary access to our systems and hardware. It also covers the physical and technical elements that are used to deliver IT services for the school.

Risk Management

Wandle Valley Academy will include cybersecurity risks on its organisational risk register, regularly reporting on the progress and management of these risks to Governors throughout the year.

Physical Security

Wandle Valley Academy will ensure there is appropriate physical security and environmental controls protecting access to its IT Systems, including but not limited to air conditioning, lockable cabinets, and secure server/communications rooms.

Asset Management

To ensure that security controls to protect the data and systems are applied effectively, Wandle Valley Academy will maintain asset registers for, files/systems that hold confidential data, and all physical devices (servers, switches, desktops, laptops etc) that make up its IT services.

User Accounts

Users are responsible for the security of their own accounts. If at any time they believe their credentials may have been compromised, for example after a phishing scam, they must change their password and

Cybersecurity Policy

inform IT Support as soon as possible. Personal accounts should not be used for work purposes. Wandle Valley Academy will implement multi-factor authentication where it is practicable to do so.

Devices

To ensure the security of all Wandle Valley Academy issued devices and data, users are required to:

- Lock devices that are left unattended
- Update devices when prompted
- Report lost or stolen equipment as soon as possible to IT Support
- Change all account passwords at once when a device is lost or stolen (and report immediately to IT Support)
- Report a suspected threat or security weakness in Wandle Valley Academy's systems to Risk Register Owner

Devices will be configured with the following security controls as a minimum:

- Password protection
- Full disk encryption
- Client firewalls
- Anti-virus / malware software [eg Sophos and Malwarebytes for LGfL schools – see sophos.lgfl.net / malwarebytes.lgfl.net]
- Automatic security updates
- Removal of unrequired and unsupported software
- Autorun disabled
- Minimal administrative accounts

Data Security

Wandle Valley Academy will take appropriate measures to reduce the likelihood of the loss of availability to, or the disclosure of, confidential data.

Wandle Valley Academy's defines confidential data as:

- [Personally identifiable information](#) as defined by the ICO
- [Special Category personal data](#) as defined by the ICO
- Unpublished financial information

Critical data and systems will be backed up on a regular basis following the 3-2-1 backup methodology

- 3 versions of data
- 2 different types of media
- 1 copy offsite/offline

Sharing Files

Wandle Valley Academy recognises the security risks associated with sending and receiving confidential data. To minimise the chances of a data breach users are required to:

Cybersecurity Policy

- Consider if an email could be a phishing email or that a colleague's account could be 'hacked'. If something does not feel right check with the sender by another method, particularly in relation to financial transactions, attachments, or links to websites
- Wherever possible, keeping Wandle Valley Academy's files on school systems
- Not sending school files to personal accounts
- Verifying the recipient of data prior to sending
- Using file encryption where possible, sending passwords/keys via alternative communication channels
- Alerting [IT Support/DPO] to any breaches, malicious activity or suspected scams

Training

Wandle Valley Academy recognises that it is not possible to maintain a high level of Cybersecurity without appropriate staff training. It will integrate regular Cybersecurity training into Inset days, provide more specialist training to staff responsible for maintaining IT systems and promote a "No Blame" culture towards individuals who may fall victim to sophisticated scams. [LGfL offer Cyber Security Training for School Staff and Sophos Phish, a phishing simulation tool that links to training material]

System Security

IT Support will build security principles into the design of IT services for Wandle Valley Academy

- Security patching – network hardware, operating systems and software
- Pro-actively plan for the replacement of network hardware, operating systems and software before vendors stop providing security support for them
- Actively manage anti-virus systems
- Actively manage and test backups
- Regularly review and update security controls that are available with existing systems
- Segregate wireless networks used for visitors' & staff personal devices from school systems
- Review the security risk of new systems or projects

Exams Security

The awarding bodies will maintain high standards of cyber security to:

- Safeguard sensitive information provided by centres, including personal candidate data.
- Protect the integrity of secure electronic assessment materials.

The head of centre will ensure there are procedures in place to maintain the security of user accounts by:

- Providing training for authorised staff on the importance of creating strong unique passwords and keeping all account details secret.
- Providing training for staff on awareness of all types of social engineering/ phishing attempts;
- Enabling additional security settings wherever possible.
- Updating any passwords that may have been exposed.
- Setting up secure account recovery options.
- Reviewing and managing connected applications;
- Monitoring accounts and regularly reviewing account access, including removing access when no longer required.

Cybersecurity Policy

- Ensuring authorised members of staff securely access awarding bodies' online systems in line with awarding body regulations regarding cyber security and the JCQ document Guidance for centres on cyber security: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>. Authorised staff will have access, where necessary, to a device which complies with awarding bodies' multi-factor authentication (MFA) requirements.
- Reporting any actual or suspected compromise of an awarding body's online systems immediately to the relevant awarding body.

Major Incident Response Plan

Wandle Valley Academy will develop, maintain, and regularly test a Cybersecurity Major Incident Response Plan. This will include identifying or carrying out:

- Key decision-makers
- Key system impact assessments and restoration priorities (i.e. which backups needs to be restored first for the school to become operational again)
- Emergency plans for the school to function without access to systems or data
- Alternative methods of communication, including copies of contact details
- Emergency budgets and who can access them / how
- Key agencies for support (e.g. IT support company)

Maintaining Security

Wandle Valley Academy understands that the financial cost of recovering from a Major Cybersecurity Incident can far outweigh the ongoing investment in maintaining secure IT systems. Wandle Valley Academy will budget appropriately to keep cyber related risk to a minimum.

 Wandle Valley Academy	Headteacher:	Lynda Harris
	Interim Chair:	David White
	Network manager / other technical support:	James Boampong
	Date this policy was reviewed and by whom:	July 2025 James Boampong
	Date of next review and by whom:	July 2026 James Boampong