Online Safety Policy

Implementation Date: November 2026
Review Date: November 2027

Introduction

Wheelock Primary School recognises that digital technologies are an integral part of children's lives both within and beyond school. The internet and related technologies provide valuable educational opportunities, supporting learning, communication, creativity and achievement.

Alongside these benefits, pupils must be protected from potential risks including inappropriate content, cyberbullying, online grooming, misinformation, breaches of privacy, copyright infringement and excessive use of technology. The school is committed to educating pupils so they can use technology safely, responsibly and legally.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all members of the school community including pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, visitors and parents/carers who have access to the school's ICT systems or are involved in online activity linked to the school.

The policy should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Acceptable Use, Mobile Phone and Data Protection policies.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

Governors are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the Online Safety Policy and ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place.

Headteacher and Senior Leaders

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for online safety throughout the school and ensures that appropriate training, monitoring and safeguarding procedures are implemented.

Online Safety Officer

The Online Safety Officer:

- Provides guidance and training for staff.
- Supports the investigation of online safety incidents.
- Keeps up to date with current online safety guidance.
- Liaises with relevant agencies and professionals.

Staff

All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting online safety.
- Modelling safe and professional use of technology.
- Monitoring pupils' online activity during school activities.
- Reporting concerns through safeguarding procedures.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Follow the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Use technology safely and responsibly.
- Report concerns or inappropriate online content to an adult.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are encouraged to support safe technology use at home and work in partnership with the school to promote online safety.

Online Safety Education

Online safety is embedded throughout the curriculum and is taught through:

- Computing lessons.
- PSHE education.
- Assemblies.
- National Online Safety resources.
- Purple Mash resources.
- Safer Internet Day activities.

Pupils are taught how to:

- Stay safe online.
- Protect personal information.
- Recognise online risks.
- Report concerns appropriately.
- Evaluate the reliability of online information.

Filtering, Monitoring and Security

The school maintains appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to reduce the risk of access to unsuitable content.

The school's ICT infrastructure is regularly reviewed to ensure systems remain secure. Virus protection, password protection and network security measures are implemented and monitored.

Staff and pupils may only access school networks through approved accounts and secure passwords.

Use of the Internet and Email

Internet access is provided to support learning.

Pupils are taught how to use the internet responsibly, evaluate information critically and respect copyright.

School email accounts must be used for school business. Staff must not communicate with pupils or parents using personal email accounts or personal social media accounts.

Any concerns relating to inappropriate online content or communications must be reported immediately.

Social Networking

The school uses approved social media platforms in line with its Social Media Policy.

Pupils are taught:

- Not to share personal information online.
- Not to publish personal photographs without appropriate consideration.

- How to use social networking sites safely and responsibly.

Access to social networking sites may be filtered or restricted on school devices.

Data Protection

The school processes personal data in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

All staff must:

- Protect personal information.
- Use secure devices and passwords.
- Transfer information safely.
- Adhere to data protection procedures at all times.

Personal Mobile Devices

Wheelock Primary School recognises that some pupils, particularly those in Key Stage 2 who travel independently to and from school, may need to bring a mobile phone to school.

Pupils are not permitted to access or use personal mobile phones during the school day.

Any pupil bringing a mobile phone to school must switch the device off and hand it directly to the school office immediately upon arrival and before morning registration. Mobile phones will be stored securely by the school office throughout the school day and returned to pupils at the end of the day.

The school is not responsible for the loss, damage or theft of personal devices. The sending or sharing of inappropriate messages, images or content is strictly prohibited and will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour, Safeguarding and Online Safety procedures.

Responding to Online Safety Incidents

Online safety concerns will be dealt with in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Serious incidents involving:

- Cyberbullying,
- Grooming,
- Illegal content,
- Inappropriate communications,
- Child protection concerns,

will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and, where appropriate, external agencies.

Monitoring and Review

The school will regularly review the effectiveness of its online safety arrangements and update procedures in response to changes in technology, legislation or safeguarding guidance.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

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