Online Safety Policy

Oakmoor School

Contents

1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of students, staff, volunteers and governors.
- Identify and support groups of students that are potentially at greater risk of harm online than others.
- Deliver an effective approach to online safety, which empowers us to protect and educate the whole school community in its use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’).
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate.

The four key categories of risk

The breadth of issues classified within the field of online safety is considerable, but they can be categorised as follows:

- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- **Contact** – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- **Conduct** – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
- **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’s) statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and its advice for schools on:

- Teaching online safety in schools
- Preventing and tackling bullying and cyber-bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff
- Searching, screening and confiscation

It also refers to the DfE’s guidance on protecting children from radicalisation.

It reflects existing legislation, including but not limited to

- The Education Act 1996 (as amended),
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010.
- 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 students’ electronic devices where they believe there is a ‘good reason’ to do so.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

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

The governing board will make sure all staff undergo online safety training as part of child protection and safeguarding training, and ensure staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring.

The governing board will also make sure all staff receive regular online safety updates (via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required and at least annually, to ensure they are continually provided with the relevant skills and knowledge to effectively safeguard children.

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

The governing board should ensure children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including keeping safe online.

The governing board must ensure the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place on school devices and school networks, and will regularly review their effectiveness. The board will review the DfE filtering and monitoring standards, and discuss with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting the standards, which include:

- Identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems;
- Reviewing filtering and monitoring provisions at least annually;
- Blocking harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning;
- Having effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

All governors will:

- Ensure 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
- Ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme while devising and implementing their whole-school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and/or procedures
- Ensure that, where necessary, teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, is adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is because of the importance of recognising that a 'one size fits all' approach may not be appropriate for all children in all situations, and a more personalised or contextualised approach may often be more suitable

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher 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 (DSL)

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

- Supporting the headteacher in ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school
- Working with the headteacher and governing board to review this policy and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly
- Taking the lead on understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place on school devices and school networks
- Working with the IT team to make sure the appropriate systems and processes are in place
- Working with the headteacher, IT team 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's child protection policy
- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy
- Updating and delivering staff training on online safety
- Liaising with other agencies and/or external services if necessary
- Providing regular reports on online safety in school to the headteacher and/or governing board
- Providing regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively

3.4 The IT Team

The IT team is 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.

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.
- Modelling good online behaviours.
- Maintaining a professional level of conduct in their personal use of technology.
- Knowing that the DSL is responsible for the filtering and monitoring systems and processes, and being aware of how to report any incidents of those systems or processes failing.
- Following the correct procedures by liaising with the DSL and IT Team if they need to bypass the filtering and monitoring systems for educational purposes.
- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged and dealt with appropriately.
- 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'
- Where relevant to their role, ensuring online safety is embedded in their teaching.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Notify a member of staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding this policy
- Ensure their child has read, understood and agreed to the terms on acceptable use of the school's IT systems and internet.

Parents/carers 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
- Parent resource sheet – Childnet

3.7 Visitors and members of the community

Visitors and members of the community who use the school's IT 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.

4. Educating students about online safety

This school:

- has a clear, progressive online safety education programme as part of the Computing curriculum, Experience Days/PSHE curriculum, mentoring programme and assembly programme. This policy covers a range of skills and behaviours appropriate to the age and experience of the school's students, including:

- to STOP and THINK before they CLICK
- to develop a range of strategies to evaluate and verify information before accepting its accuracy;
- to be aware that the author of a web site/page may have a particular bias or purpose and to develop skills to recognise what that may be
- to understand acceptable behaviour when using an online environment/email, i.e. be polite, no bad or abusive language or other inappropriate behaviour; keeping personal information private;
- to understand how photographs can be manipulated and how web content can attract the wrong sort of attention
- to understand why on-line 'friends' may not be who they say they are and to understand why they should be careful in online environments
- to understand why they should not post or share detailed accounts of their personal lives, contact information, daily routines, location, photographs and videos and to know how to ensure they have turned-on privacy settings
- to understand why they must not post pictures or videos of others without their permission;
- to know not to download or install any unapproved software or any files
- to have strategies for dealing with receipt of inappropriate materials;
- to understand why and how some people will 'groom' young people for sexual reasons;
- to understand the impact of cyber-bullying, grooming, online radicalisation, sexting and trolling and know how to seek help if they are affected by any form of online harassment or unkindness
- to know how to report any abuse including cyber-bullying and how to seek help if they experience problems when using the Internet and related technologies, i.e. parent/carer, teacher or trusted staff member, or an organisation such as ChildLine or the CLICK CEOP button.

- plans online use carefully to ensure that it is age-appropriate and supports the learning objectives for specific curriculum areas.
- will remind students about their responsibilities through a Student Acceptable Use agreement which every student will sign and agree to when they log on to the school network.
- ensures staff will model safe and responsible behaviour in their own use of technology during lessons.

5. Educating parents/carers about online safety

The school will raise parents/carers' awareness of internet safety in letters or other communications home, and in information via our website as well as information evenings. This policy will also be shared with parents/carers.

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

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

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 one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

6.2 Preventing and addressing cyber-bullying

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

Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyber-bullying.

All staff, governors and volunteers, (where appropriate), receive training on cyber-bullying, its impact and ways to support students, as part of safeguarding training.

The school will also send information/leaflets on cyber-bullying to parents/carers so 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 students, 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

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

- poses a risk to staff or students, and/or
- is identified in the school rules as a banned item for which a search can be carried out, and/or
- is evidence in relation to an offence

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

- make an assessment of how urgent the search is, and consider the risk to other students and staff. If the search is not urgent, they will seek advice from the DSL
- explain to the student why they are being searched, how the search will happen, and give them the opportunity to ask questions about it
- seek the student’s co-operation
- contact parents where necessary

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

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

- cause harm, and/or
- undermine the safe environment of the school or disrupt teaching, and/or

- commit an offence

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

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

- They reasonably suspect that its continued existence is likely to cause harm to any person, and/or
- The student and/or the parent/carer refuses to delete the material themselves

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

- **Not** view the image
- Confiscate the device and report the incident to the DSL (or equivalent) immediately, who will decide what to do next. The DSL will make the decision in line with the DfE's latest guidance on screening, searching and confiscation and the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people

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

- The DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- UKCIS guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- Our behaviour policy

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

6.4 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, students and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

Oakmoor School recognises that AI has many uses to help students learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. This includes deepfake pornography: pornographic content created using AI to include someone's likeness.

Oakmoor School will treat any use of AI to bully students in line with our behaviour policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out a risk assessment where new AI tools are being used by the school.

6.5 Sharing nudes and semi-nude images (Sexting)

Sexting is now more prevalent than ever before and an upscaling trend. Sexting is defined as the sending or posting of nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online by young people under the age of 18. Nudes and semi-nudes can be shared online via social media, gaming platforms, chat apps, forums, or involve sharing between devices using offline services.

For anybody under the age of 18, it is against the law to:

- Take, have or distribute a sexual photo, including selfies.
- Have or pass on indecent images of someone under 18
- Encourage or incite someone to take or send ‘sexts’ or nudes
- Take a photo of your own genitals, whether the image is shared or not.

As well as the legal consequences, sexting can cause other emotional and reputational issues.

Oakmoor School will follow the procedures set out in both the Behaviour Policy and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for all guidance where there may be a concern for sexting.

7. Acceptable use of the internet in school

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

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

We will monitor the websites visited by students, staff, volunteers, governors and visitors (where relevant) to ensure they comply with the above and restrict access through filtering systems where appropriate.

8. Students using mobile devices in school

Students may bring mobile devices into school, but must turn them off and not access their device at all during the school day. Oakmoor School is a phone free school.

Students have clear guidelines of breaches, which will result in the confiscation of their device and collection by parents/carers as well as systems in place to not have a phone onsite where necessary.

9. 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
- Keeping operating systems up to date by always installing the latest updates

Staff members must not use the device in any way that would violate the school’s terms of acceptable use.

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

10. How the school will respond to issues of misuse

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

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

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

11. Training

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

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

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

- Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, and that children are at risk of online abuse
- Children can abuse their peers online through:
    - Abusive, threatening, 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 students can recognise dangers and risks in online activity and can weigh up the risks
- Develop the ability to influence students to make the healthiest long-term choices and keep them safe from harm in the short term

The DSL 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.

12. Monitoring arrangements

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 students face online. This is important because technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly.

Ratification date:	27th June 2024
Last reviewed on:	June 2024
Next review due by:	June 2027