



# Online Safety Policy

January 2026

| Approved by | Date         | Review Schedule | Date of next review |
|-------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Trust Board | January 2026 | Annual          | January 2027        |

*Saint Paul teaches, 'the body is not made up of one part but of many.'*

*Chester Diocesan Learning Trust recognises and nurtures the unique gifts, skills and talents within our whole community.*

*We will empower adults and children to grow in character and mind, shaping a better future.*

*Shaping better futures; one body, many parts.*

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Please note that this document includes links to external documents and guidance, which can be accessed by clicking on the underlined references.

## 1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Identify and support groups of pupils 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.
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate

## 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, 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; 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'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](#)
- [Relationships and sex education](#)
- [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](#). 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 pupils' electronic devices where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

The policy also takes into account the National Curriculum computing programmes of study.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 The Local Governance Committee

The Local Governance Committee (LGC) has overall responsibility for monitoring this policy and holding the headteacher to account for its implementation.

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

The LGC will appoint a member of the committee to oversee online safety. This may be the safeguarding governor.

The LGC 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 LGC will review the [DfE's meeting digital and technology standards](#) and discuss with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting the standards. The school will also utilise the self-assessment tool available through the DfE Sign In service to identify the level of compliance and actions to meet all core standards.

All members of the LGC 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 (appendix 1).
- 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 pupils 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)**

Details of the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy/deputies where applicable 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:

- 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 LGC to review this policy annually 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.
- Providing governors with assurance that filtering and monitoring systems are working effectively and reviewed regularly.
- Working with the ICT manager to make sure the appropriate systems and processes are in place.
- Working with the headteacher, 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's child protection policy.
- Responding to safeguarding concerns identified by filtering and monitoring.
- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged (see appendix 2) 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 LGC.
- Undertaking annual risk assessments that consider and reflect the risks children face.
- 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.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

### **3.4 The ICT Manager/ICT Managed Service Provider**

The ICT Manager or school managed service provider is responsible for:

- Putting in place and maintaining an appropriate level of security protection procedures, such as filtering and monitoring systems on school devices and networks. These will be reviewed and updated as required to assess their effectiveness and to ensure pupils 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 kept up to date.
- Undertaking appropriate security checks as required and ensuring that monitoring of the school's ICT systems is ongoing and proportionate to risk.
- 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 2) 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 1) and ensuring that pupils follow the school's terms on acceptable use.
- 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 if they need to bypass the filtering and monitoring systems for educational purposes.
- Working with the DSL to ensure that any online safety incidents are logged (see appendix 3) 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'.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

### 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 ICT systems and internet (appendices 1 and 2).

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](#)
- Online safety topics for parents/carers – [Childnet](#)
- Parent resource sheet – [Childnet](#)

### 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 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 Pupils About Online Safety

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

**All** schools have to teach:

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

In **Key Stage (KS1)**, pupils 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.

Pupils in **Key Stage (KS2)** 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.

- Be discerning in evaluating digital content.

By the **end of primary school**, pupils 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 benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

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 pupils with SEND.

## 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 or other communications portals. This policy will also be available to parents/carers.

The school will let parents/carers know:

- What systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use.
- What their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the school (if anyone) their child will be interacting with online.

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 1 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 pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. We will ensure that pupils 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 pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be.

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 pupils, as part of safeguarding training.

The school may 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 our behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, 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 pupils, 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 pupils and staff. If the search is not urgent, they will seek advice from the headteacher or DSL.
- Explain to the pupil why they are being searched, how the search will happen, and give them the opportunity to ask questions about it.
- Seek the pupil's co-operation.

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 should be referred to the headteacher and/or DSL. 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 may delete it if:

- They reasonably suspect that its continued existence is likely to cause harm to any person, and/or;
- The pupil and/or the parent/carers 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 pupils 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 pupils' electronic devices will be dealt with through the school complaints procedure.

## **7. Acceptable use of the Internet in School**

All pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors are expected to follow the Trust's applicable acceptable use policies.

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 pupils, staff, volunteers, governors and visitors (where relevant) to ensure they comply with the above and restrict access through filtering systems where appropriate.

## **8. Pupils Using Mobile Devices in School**

Please see separate Mobile Phone Policy.

## **9. Staff Using Work Devices Outside School**

All staff are required to follow the applicable acceptable use policy and information security policy.

## **10. 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 policies on behaviour and ICT acceptable use. 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 disciplinary procedures. 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**

### **11.1 Staff, Governors and Volunteers**

All new staff members will receive training, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues. All staff will have access to safeguarding training through the Smartlog portal and will receive refresher training each academic year, 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 pupils can recognise dangers and risks in online activity and can weigh up the risks.
- Develop the ability to influence pupils to make the healthiest long-term choices and keep them safe from harm in the short term.

The DSL and, where applicable the DDSL, will undertake child protection and safeguarding training, which will include online safety, at least every two 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.

### **11.2 Pupils**

All pupils will receive age-appropriate training on safe internet use.

## **12. Monitoring Arrangements**

The DSL logs behaviour and safeguarding issues related to online safety. An incident report log can be found in appendix 2.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the CDLT Trust Board and will be updated, as appropriate to reflect statutory requirements. After every review the policy will be shared with the LGC for adoption.

### **Appendix 1: Acceptable Use Policies**

CDLT has acceptable use policies for the workforce and for pupils. These policies can be found at:  
<https://cdlt.org.uk/policies/>

## Appendix 2: Online Safety Incident Report Log Template

This template can be adapted for school-specific use.

| ONLINE SAFETY INCIDENT LOG |                               |                             |              |                                                           |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Date                       | Where the incident took place | Description of the incident | Action taken | Name and signature of staff member recording the incident |
|                            |                               |                             |              |                                                           |
|                            |                               |                             |              |                                                           |
|                            |                               |                             |              |                                                           |
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