

Online Safety Policy

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1. Introduction and Context

Keys Group is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and empowering environment for all pupils, including those with complex needs, emotional and behavioural difficulties, or challenging behaviours. Our online safety policy recognises the unique vulnerabilities of our pupils, many of whom have experienced exclusion or trauma, and prioritises safeguarding them from online risks while enabling positive and educational use of technology.

2. Policy Aims

- Ensure robust online safety processes that protect pupils, staff, volunteers, and governors.
- Identify and support pupils who may be at greater risk of harm online.
- Deliver an effective, flexible, and adaptive approach to online safety education tailored to individual pupil needs.
- Establish clear mechanisms for identifying, intervening in, and escalating online safety incidents.
- Provide training and resources that empower staff to support pupils' safe use of technology.

3. Key Online Risks Addressed

Our approach addresses risks under four categories:

- **Content:** Exposure to harmful or inappropriate material including extremist content, self-harm, or misinformation.
- **Contact:** Harmful interactions such as grooming, peer pressure, or exploitation.
- **Conduct:** Risky personal behaviour online including cyberbullying, sharing of explicit images, or misuse of social media.
- **Commerce:** Risks such as online scams, gambling, or inappropriate advertising.

4. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy aligns with:-

- The OFSTED Inspection Toolkit for Non-Association Independent Schools.

- Department for Education statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025.
- Education Act 1996, Education and Inspections Act 2006, Equality Act 2010.
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance.
- Relevant safeguarding and child protection legislation.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Governing Body

- Monitor policy implementation and hold leadership to account.
- Ensure staff receive regular online safety training and updates.
- Oversee filtering and monitoring systems and review their effectiveness annually.
- Ensure online safety education is embedded and adapted for pupils with SEND or vulnerabilities.

5.2 Headteacher / School Leader

- Ensure consistent implementation of the policy.
- Lead on online safety culture within the school.
- The school will provide regular communications and training opportunities for parents and carers to support safe and responsible technology use at home.

5.3 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Lead responsibility for online safety incidents and training.
- Oversee filtering and monitoring systems with IT support.
- Log and respond to online safety incidents in line with safeguarding procedures.
- Liaise with external agencies as necessary.

5.4 IT Department

- Maintain secure filtering and monitoring systems tailored to the needs of special school pupils.
- Regularly update security measures and report attempts to access harmful content.
- Support DSL investigations with technical expertise.

5.5 All Staff and Volunteers

- Understand and implement the policy consistently.
- Report online safety concerns promptly.
- Support pupils in safe use of technology, respecting their individual needs.

5.6 Parents/Carers

- Support the school's online safety measures.
- Engage with communications and training about online safety.
- Reinforce safe online behaviours at home.

6. Online Safety Education for Pupils

- Online safety education is integrated into the curriculum, including PSHE, computing, and bespoke interventions.
- Tailored approaches ensure pupils with SEND or complex needs receive accessible and relevant learning.
- Topics include safe technology use, recognising risks, respectful online behaviour, and reporting concerns.
- Pupils are supported to understand and manage their online presence safely.
- Pupils will be supported to develop digital resilience and self-management skills through peer education, bespoke interventions, and curriculum integration.

7. Cyberbullying and Incident Management

- Cyberbullying is addressed through education, clear reporting routes, and swift, proportionate responses.
- The school's behaviour policy guides responses to online misconduct.
- Searches and confiscations of electronic devices are conducted in line with DfE guidance and safeguarding considerations.
- AI-related risks, including misuse for bullying or misinformation, are monitored and managed.

8. Acceptable Use of Technology

- Clear agreements for pupils, staff, parents/carers, and visitors outline expectations for responsible use.
- Use of mobile devices by pupils is managed to prevent disruption and risk.
- Staff use of work devices outside school follows strict security protocols.

9. Monitoring, Reporting, and Review

- All concerns and incidents are logged on CPOMS or equivalent safeguarding systems.
- Regular monitoring of filtering and incident logs informs ongoing risk assessments.
- The policy is reviewed annually with input from governors, staff, pupils, and parents.

- The school will monitor and manage risks associated with emerging technologies, including AI tools and new digital platforms, updating policies and training accordingly.

10. Training and Support

- Induction and ongoing training for all staff on online safety risks and safeguarding.
- Awareness sessions for parents/carers to support safe online behaviours at home.