POULTON ST CHAD'S
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL

LOVE LEARNING. LOVE GOD. LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

Online Safety Policy

Issue Number	Date	Author	Approver	Changes
1	September 23	M.Blackburn	Curriculum Committee October 2023	Newly Written
2	March 26	C Graham	FGB 19.3.26	-Updated to include KCSiE 2025 guidance on misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories. -Updated Mission Statement to reflect whole-school change. -Updated to include responsibilities of Subject Leader -Addition of Section 14 (Review of Online Safety) in accordance with KCSiE guidance -Updated to include reference to school AI policy. -Amendment to Section 12 (Training) to include the UKCIS Audit tool for staff new to teaching.

ONLINE SAFETY POLICY

Mission Statement

At Poulton St Chad's, we believe every child is a gift from God, blessed with their own gifts and talents. It is our mission to ensure children are safe, happy and can thrive. We aim to give our children a love for learning through our engaging curriculum and enrichment opportunities; a love for God within our distinctly Christian setting and a love for one another through our nurturing environment and inclusive relationships.

Every day we are guided by our biblical root: "Let all that you do be done in love." (1 Corinthians 16:14) and by our school motto: LOVE LEARNING. LOVE GOD. LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

1. Aims

Here at Poulton St Chad's Church Of England Primary School we aim 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, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate

2. Categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following four categories of risk as outlined in the Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) document:

- Content – Being exposed to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful content, for example: pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news) and conspiracy theories.
- Contact – Being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example: 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 – Online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example, 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.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory safeguarding guidance, which can be found here:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf

It also follows the DFEs advice on the following:

- Teaching online safety in schools https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-online-safety-in-schools
- Preventing and tackling bullying https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- Cyber-bullying - advice for headteachers and school staff https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- Relationships and sex education https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

- Searching, screening and confiscation https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation
- Protecting children from radicalisation. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty

It reflects existing legislation, including but not limited to the Education Act 1996, 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.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4a. Roles of 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 those 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 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.

4b. Role of the Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that every member of staff understands this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.

4c. Roles of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Details of the school's DSL and deputies are set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. The DSL (Headteacher at Poulton St Chad's) takes lead responsibility for online safety in school, in particular:

- Ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.
- Working with the governing board 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
- Working with the ICT manager to make sure the appropriate systems and processes are in place
- Working with the 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.
- 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 governing board.
- 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.

4d. Roles of the ICT manager

The ICT manager is responsible for:

- Putting in place an appropriate level of security protection procedures, such as filtering and monitoring systems on school devices and school networks, which are reviewed and updated at least annually to assess effectiveness and 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 updated regularly.
- Conducting a full security check and monitoring the school's ICT systems on a monthly basis.
- Blocking access to potentially dangerous sites and, where possible, preventing the downloading of potentially dangerous files.
- 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 dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy.

4e. Role of the Computing Subject Leader

- To regularly monitor and ensure all staff are effectively teaching and emphasising the importance of Online Safety.
- To ensure Online Safety is well covered in the curriculum.

- To regularly review and update policy in line with updates to DfE policy and safeguarding legislation.
- To carry out an annual review of the school's approach to online safety.

4f. Roles of 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, and ensuring that pupils follow the school's terms on acceptable use.
- 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 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'.

4g. Roles of all parents/carers

All 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.

Parents/carers can seek further guidance on keeping children safe online from the following organisations and websites:

- What are the issues?
  https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/what-are-issues
- Hot Topics
  http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/hot-topics
- Parent Resource Sheet
  https://www.childnet.com/resources/parents-and-carers-resource-sheet

4h. Roles of all Visitors

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

5. Educating Pupils About Online Safety

All Primary Schools have to teach Relationships Education and Health Education
https://schoolleaders.thekeysupport.com/uid/8b76f587-7bf6-4994-abf0-43850c6e8d73/

In **Key Stage 1 (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 2 (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.

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 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.

6. 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. This policy will also be available to parents/carers via the school website.
Online safety will also be covered during parents' evenings and in some individual examples a parent – teacher conversation may be had with the DSL or headteacher.

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.

7.Cyber-Bullying

7a. Preventing and Addressing Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying takes place online and is the repetitive, intentional harming of a person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. (See also the school behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy)

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. Class teachers will discuss cyber-bullying with their tutor groups.

Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyberbullying. 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 also sends 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 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.

7b. Examining Electric 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.
- Is identified in the school rules as a banned item for which a search can be carried out.
- 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 / DSLs.
- 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.
- Undermine the safe environment of the school or disrupt teaching.
- Commit an offence.

If inappropriate material is found on the device, it is up to the staff member in conjunction with the DSL / headteacher / another member of the senior leadership team, 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 may delete it if:

- They reasonably suspect that its continued existence is likely to cause harm to any person.
- The pupil 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 member of the management team) 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.

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

- The DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.
  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation

- UKCIS guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people.
- Any complaints about searching for or deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices will be dealt with through the school complaints procedure.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people

7c. Artificial Intelligence

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

Poulton St Chad's Church of England Primary School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils 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.

Poulton St Chad's Church of England Primary School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils 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.

For further information please refer to our AI Policy (2025).

8. Acceptable use of the internet in school

All pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the school's ICT 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 pupils, staff, volunteers, governors and visitors (where relevant) to ensure they comply with the above and restrict access through filtering systems where appropriate.

9. Pupils using mobile devices in school

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

Pupils in Year 6 may bring mobile devices into school but must also bring a letter from home explaining why the phone is in school (e.g., the child is walking home and needs to contact the parent on the way home). The letter and phone will be stored safely will the class teacher. Children are not permitted to use their phones during: lessons, break time or clubs before or after school, or any other activities organised by the school.

Any breach of the acceptable use agreement by a pupil may trigger disciplinary action in line with the school behaviour policy, which may result in the confiscation of their device.

10. Staff using work devices outside of 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.

- 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.
- Installing and regularly updating anti-virus and anti-spyware software.
- 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. Work devices must be used solely for work activities.

11. How the school will respond to instances 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. 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.

12. 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 in staff meetings).

The DSL /deputies 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.

All trainees or ECT's inducted to the school will carry out the UKCIS 'Online Safety Audit', this ensures all new members of staff are aware of the school policy and procedure and supports them in developing a greater awareness and ability to carry out the vital role they have in helping children stay safe online. Please find the tool below…

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/633e965fe90e0709d835c519/UKCIS_Online_Safety_Audit_for_ECTs_and_ITTs_final_2022.pdf

13. Monitoring Arrangements

The DSL logs behaviour and safeguarding issues related to online safety. This policy will be reviewed every year by the ICT Curriculum lead and/or a member of the school leadership team. 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 pupils face online. This is important because technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly.

14. Review of Online Safety

Technology and the risks associated evolve and change rapidly, policy should be regularly reviewed to reflect this. The Computing Subject Leader will carry out an annual risk assessment that considers

and reflects the risk that pupils may face. The LGfL Online Safety audit will be used for this, once completed a copy will be sent to and kept by SLT and all members of the safeguarding team.

15. Links with other policies

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Staff code of conduct
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- Complaints procedure
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy
- Mobile Phone Policy