Loughborough Schools Foundation

Nursery • Fairfield • Grammar • High

Online Safety Policy

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Revision History

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1.0	Updated policy format and content. Key revisions made to resources for Parents and Staff.	16/06/26
1.1	Appendix 2 added. Consistency of naming. Update of resources. Additions to roles and responsibilities of governors.	05/11/26

1. Introduction

1.1 At the Loughborough Schools Foundation ("LSF"), we are committed to preparing our pupils to be active, responsible citizens in the digital world.

1.2 Our approach to online safety education is integrated throughout PSHCE, life skills lessons, computing lessons, assemblies, and special events, utilising both external resources and our own materials. We promote mature and considerate online behaviour, mirroring the high standards expected within our schools. Understanding the evolving digital landscape is crucial, and we encourage pupils to stay informed and to share knowledge about potential online risks. It's vital for pupils to appreciate the public nature of the internet, striving to maintain a positive digital footprint. Our schools address the main online risks: inappropriate content, harmful contacts, and unsafe conduct, emphasising the importance of reporting any concerns. Through a collaborative effort among pupils, staff, and parents, we aim to foster a safe and respectful online community.

1.3 This policy aligns with the online safety guidance provided in the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education.

2. Scope

This online safety policy applies to the whole LSF community—this includes our staff, pupils, volunteers, parents/carers, visitors, and anyone using the school's digital facilities. It ensures safe and responsible use of our IT systems, both on the school premises and elsewhere.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 empowers Headteachers to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of students when they are off the school site and empowers members of staff to impose disciplinary penalties for inappropriate behaviour. This is pertinent to incidents of cyber-bullying or other e-safety incidents covered by this policy, which may take place outside of the school, but is linked to membership of the school.

The 2011 Education Act increased these powers with regard to the searching for and of electronic devices and the deletion of data. According to the British Government's guidance on Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools (July 2022) a staff member may examine any data or files on an electronic device they have confiscated as a result of a search if there is good reason to do so.

2.1 The schools will deal with such incidents within this policy and associated behaviour and anti-bullying policies and will, where known,

inform parents/carers (when appropriate) of incidents of inappropriate online behaviour that take place out of school.

2.2 In serious cases of abuse with social media, or general internet use involving instances of pornography, violent or threatening behaviour, sexually explicit language, and bullying or intention to bully, the schools within the Loughborough Schools Foundation reserves the right to inform outside agencies such as the Police, Prevent and /or Social Services. Sanctions and disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion remain options for the school Head to apply, subject to application of the appropriate policies.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

- Receive reports on online safety incidents and monitoring from the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).
- Ensure online safety is a priority within the school's safeguarding arrangements
- Should review the standards and discuss with IT staff and service providers what more needs to be done to support the schools in meeting this standard.

Headteachers and Senior Leadership Team

- Ensure the school's online safety measures are robust and comply with relevant legislation and guidance.
- Support the DSL in their online safety role and ensure they have sufficient time, resources, and training to carry out their duties effectively.
- Promote a culture of safe and responsible technology use throughout the school community.
- Ensure appropriate sanctions and disciplinary measures are in place to address online safety misconduct.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs)

- Take lead responsibility for online safety within the school, working closely with the IT department and other relevant staff.
- Manage online safety incidents in line with the Foundation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Provide regular online safety updates and training for staff, students, and parents.
- Monitor and evaluate the school's online safety measures, addressing any areas for improvement.
- Liaise with external agencies, such as the Police, Prevent or Social Services, when necessary.

IT Department (Information & Network Services)

- Maintain a secure and robust technical infrastructure to protect the school's networks and devices from online threats.
- Implement and manage appropriate web filtering and monitoring systems to block access to harmful or inappropriate content.
- Provide technical support and expertise to the DSL and other staff in investigating and addressing online safety incidents.

- Keep up-to-date with the latest online safety trends and technologies, advising the school on potential risks and solutions.

All Staff
- Promote and model safe, responsible, and professional use of technology in line with LSF and/or school policies.
- Embed online safety education within the curriculum and broader school activities.
- Supervise and guide students in their use of technology, reporting any concerns to the DSL.
- Complete regular online safety training and stay informed about the latest online safety risks and best practices.
- Adhere to the Staff Acceptable Use Policy and report any breaches or concerns promptly.

Students, pupils, children and boarders
- Use technology and the internet safely, respectfully, and responsibly, in accordance with the Student Acceptable Use Policy.
- Report any online safety concerns or incidents to a trusted adult, such as a teacher or parent.
- Engage positively in online safety education and develop the skills and knowledge needed to navigate the digital world safely.
- Respect the rights, privacy, and well-being of others when using technology and the internet.

Parents and Carers
Support the school's online safety policies and procedures, reinforcing safe and responsible technology use at home.
Report any online safety concerns to the school via their child's tutor or to a Designated Safeguarding Lead and work in partnership to address them.

For boarders, the Housemaster or Housemistress will operate as loco parentis and will communicate with parents and guardians about matters of online safety.

4. Aims

Secure Technology and Systems
- Maintaining a robust and secure technical infrastructure to protect the school's networks and devices from online threats.
- Implementing appropriate web filtering and monitoring systems to block access to harmful or inappropriate content and alert us to concerning online behaviour.
- Regularly reviewing and updating our technical measures to ensure they remain effective in the face of evolving risks.

Policies and Procedures
- Establishing clear policies and procedures for the safe and responsible use of technology, including Acceptable Use Policies for staff and pupils.
- Promptly addressing any reported online safety concerns or incidents in line with our safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

- Working closely with external agencies, such as the Police, Prevent or Social Services, when necessary to address serious online safety incidents.

Continuous Improvement

- Regularly reviewing and evaluating our online safety measures to identify areas for improvement and ensure we remain responsive to new risks and technologies.
- Seeking input and feedback from our pupils, staff, and parents to inform our online safety approach and ensure it remains relevant and effective
- Staying informed about the latest online safety trends, research, and best practices, and adapting our policies and procedures accordingly.
- By adopting a multi-faceted approach that combines education, technology, policies, and continuous improvement, we aim to empower our pupils to be safe, responsible, and resilient digital citizens, well-equipped to navigate the opportunities and challenges of the online world.

5. Legal Framework

The Online Safety Policy at Loughborough Schools Foundation is underpinned by a range of legislation and guidance, which includes but is not limited to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Online Safety Act 2023
- Education Act 2011
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Prevent Duty 2015 (updated, 2023)
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools (DfE, 2019) - updated 2023
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (DfE, 2022)
- Sharing Nudes and Semi-nudes: How to respond to an incident (2024)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Communications Act 2003
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Public Order Act 1986
- Obscene Publications Act 1959 and 1964
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Children's Wellbeing and School's Act 2026

5.1 This policy also takes into account the specific statutory responsibilities outlined in the Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance, which requires schools to have appropriate filters and systems in place to protect children from harmful online material.

5.2 In accordance with the Education Act 2011 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Headteachers within the Foundation have the power to regulate the online behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site and to impose disciplinary penalties for inappropriate behaviour. This includes incidents of cyber-bullying or other online safety breaches that occur outside of school but

are linked to membership of the school community.

5.3 Furthermore, the Searching, Screening and Confiscation: Advice for Schools (DfE, 2022) provides guidance on the powers schools have to search pupils' electronic devices if there is reasonable suspicion that they may contain prohibited items or materials that could cause harm. The Foundation recognises its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty 2015 (updated 2024) to identify and support pupils who may be at risk of radicalisation and extremism, including through online channels.

By adhering to this comprehensive legal framework, Loughborough Schools Foundation ensures that its Online Safety Policy is robust, compliant, and effective in safeguarding the welfare of its pupils in the digital world.

6. Online Safety Education and Curriculum

At Loughborough Schools Foundation, we recognise the importance of educating our pupils about online safety to help them become responsible, resilient digital citizens. Online safety education is embedded throughout our curriculum, pastoral care, and extra-curricular activities.

- Pupils receive age-appropriate online safety lessons as part of assemblies, PSHCE, computing, and other relevant subjects. These lessons cover topics such as responsible technology use, privacy and security, online relationships, cyberbullying, and digital wellbeing.
- Online safety messages are reinforced through regular assemblies, tutor sessions, and special events. Pupils are encouraged to participate in online safety initiatives and share their knowledge with peers.
- Pupils are taught to critically evaluate online content, respect intellectual property rights, and understand the importance of reporting any concerns or inappropriate behaviours to a trusted adult.
- Pupils are provided with the opportunity to develop their digital literacy skills, including the ability to create, collaborate, and communicate online in a safe and responsible manner.
- Staff receive regular online safety training and updates to ensure they have the knowledge and confidence to teach online safety effectively and respond to any concerns or incidents.
- The online safety curriculum is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect the latest risks, technologies, and best practices, in consultation with staff, pupils, and parents.

Incident Management

Loughborough Schools Foundation takes any online safety incident seriously and has clear procedures in place for reporting, investigating, and responding to such incidents.

- All staff, pupils, and parents are responsible for reporting online safety concerns or incidents to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) as soon as possible. This includes any suspected misuse of technology, harmful or inappropriate content, cyberbullying, or other online risks.
- The DSL and/or DDSL will investigate the incident, collaborating with other relevant staff where necessary, documenting the details and gathering evidence where appropriate. The DSL and/or DDSL will assess the nature and severity of the incident and determine the appropriate course of action in line with the school's safeguarding and disciplinary policies.
- For minor incidents, the DSL and/or DDSL may address the issue through informal discussions, support, and guidance for those involved. More serious incidents may result in formal disciplinary action, such as sanctions, suspension, or exclusion, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.
- Where an incident involves potentially illegal activity, such as the sharing of illegal content or images, the DSL and/or DDSL will report the matter to the Police and other relevant external agencies as appropriate. The school will support any subsequent investigation and take steps to prevent further harm.
- In the event of a data breach or cyber-security incident, the school will follow its data protection and incident response procedures, notifying the relevant authorities and affected individuals as required.
- The school will keep detailed records of all online safety incidents, including the actions taken and any lessons learned. These records will be used to inform future online safety planning and decision-making.
- The school will provide support for any pupils or staff affected by an online safety incident, such as counselling, pastoral care, or additional training, as appropriate.

Review and Monitoring

The Online Safety Policy is reviewed annually by the DSL Committee, comprising Designated Safeguarding Leads from each of the schools within the Loughborough Schools Foundation. The review considers online safety incidents, changes in legislation or guidance, technological developments, and feedback from the school community.

The IT department conducts regular technical reviews of filtering, monitoring, and security systems across the Foundation. Online safety education is evaluated through surveys and feedback, informing curriculum development.
The policy is updated as needed and approved by the Executive. Best practices are shared within the Foundation and with external experts to ensure a proactive approach to online safety.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

Online Safety Resources and Support

Resources for Staff

- UK Safer Internet Centre: UK Safer Internet Centre | SWGfL
- NSPCC Online Safety: Keeping Children Safe Online | NSPCC
- Childnet International: Childnet — Online safety for young people Teachers & professionals | Childnet
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): UK Council for Internet Safety - GOV.UK
- Department for Education - Teaching Online Safety in Schools: Teaching online safety in schools - GOV.UK

Resources for Pupils

- Thinkuknow: Thinkuknow - advice from CEOP - UK Safer Internet Centre
- BBC Own It: Primary online safety for teachers
- Childline: Online safety | Childline
- NSPCC - Online Safety for Children: Talking to your child about online safety | NSPCC

Resources for Parents and Carers

- Internet Matters: Keep Children Safe Online: Information, advice, support - Internet Matters
- NSPCC - Online Safety for Parents: Use Parental Controls to Keep Your Child Safe | NSPCC
- UK Safer Internet Centre - Parent Resources: Parents and Carers - UK Safer Internet Centre
- Common Sense Media: Parenting, Media, and Everything in Between | Common Sense Media

Local and National Support Organisations

- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Childline: 0800 1111
- Samaritans: 116 123
- The Mix (support for under 25s): 0808 808 4994
- Leicestershire Police - Non-emergency: 101
- Leicestershire County Council - Children and Family Services: 0116 305 0005
- Leicestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership: Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Partnerships Business Office - Home

Appendix 2:

Definitions

Student, pupil or child – where these words are used, these refer to all young people in LSF (including those in the EYFS and the nursery).

School – where this word is used children from the nursery are also included.