Cumbria Education Trust

RESPECT | RESPONSIBILITY | RESILIENCE

Online Safety Policy (Part 1)

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Approved/Ratified by	Trust Board	**Date**: 30 September 2026

Please note that a record of the changes made to the original issue of this document can be found at Schedule 1 after any Appendices to the Policy/Procedure.

1. BACKGROUND/RATIONALE

New technologies have become integral to the lives of children and young people in society, both within schools and in their lives outside school.

The Internet and other digital and information technologies are powerful tools, which open new opportunities for everyone. Electronic communication helps teachers and pupils learn from each other. These technologies can stimulate discussion, promote creativity, and increase awareness of context to promote effective learning. Children and young people have an entitlement to safe internet access.

Online safety is a key element in Cumbria Education Trust's overall safeguarding strategy.

The requirement to ensure that children and young people can use online and related communications technologies appropriately and safely is addressed as part of the wider duty of care to which all who work in schools are bound. The schools' Online Safety Procedures (Part 2) will help to ensure safe and appropriate use, and the development and implementation of such a strategy will involve all the stakeholders in a child's education from the Trust Board, Local Advisory Board, Headteachers and senior leaders to classroom teachers, support staff, parents, carers, members of the community and the pupils themselves.

The use of these exciting and innovative tools in school and at home has been shown to raise educational standards and promote pupil achievement. However, the use of these new technologies can put young people at risk within and outside the school. Some of the dangers they may face include:

- Access to illegal, harmful, or inappropriate images or other content;
- Unauthorised access to/loss of/sharing of personal information;
- The risk of being subject to grooming by those with whom they make contact on the internet;
- The risk of being targeted by extremists in order to promote and encourage radicalisation;
- The risk of being targeted by those involved in child sexual exploitation;
- The sharing/distribution of personal images without an individual's consent or knowledge;
- Being drawn into taking part in unsuitable online challenges and/or hoaxes;
- Inappropriate communication/contact with others, including strangers;
- Cyberbullying (including prejudiced-based and discriminatory bullying);
- Access to gambling/gaming sites;
- Access to unsuitable video/internet games;
- An inability to evaluate the quality, accuracy, and relevance of information on the Internet;
- Plagiarism and copyright infringement;
- Illegal downloading of music or video files;
- The potential for excessive use which may impact on the social and emotional development and learning of the young person.

Many of these risks reflect situations in the off-line world and it is essential that this Online Safety Policy and the schools' Online Safety Procedures are used in conjunction with other school Policies and procedures including the Overarching Safeguarding Statement, Child Protection, Data Protection and Behaviour and Culture.

As with all other risks, it is impossible for Cumbria Education Trust to eliminate those risks completely. It is therefore essential, through good educational provision to build pupils' resilience to the risks to which they may be exposed, so that they have the confidence and skills to face and deal with these risks.

The Trust will ensure that all schools provide the necessary safeguards to help ensure that they have done everything that could reasonably be expected of them to manage and reduce these risks.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document a child, young person, pupil, or student is referred to as a 'child' or a 'pupil' and they are normally under 18 years of age.

Wherever the term 'parent' is used this includes any person with parental authority over the child concerned e.g. carers, legal guardians etc.

Wherever the term 'Headteacher' is used this also refers to any Manager with the equivalent responsibility for children.

3. ASSOCIATED SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following school Policies/procedures and, where they exist, addendums to those Policies and procedures:

- Overarching Safeguarding Statement
- Child Protection Policy Parts 1 and 2
- Data Protection Policy including procedures for CCTV
- Health and Safety Policy and procedures

And in conjunction with the school Online Safety Procedures (Part 2).

4. COMMUNICATION/MONITORING/REVIEW OF THIS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This Policy and procedures will be communicated to staff, pupils, and the wider community by:

- Posting it on the Trust website
- Posting it on the school/academy websites
- Discussing policy and procedures during induction with new staff and other relevant adults including (where relevant) the staff Acceptable Use Agreement
- Discussing Acceptable Use Agreements with pupils at the start of each year or on admission
- Issuing Acceptable Use Agreements to external users of the school systems (e.g. LAB members) usually on entry to the school
- Holding Acceptable Usage Agreements in pupil and personnel files

5. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This Policy and the procedures apply to all members of the Cumbria Education Trust community (including Directors, LAB members, staff, pupils, volunteers, parents, visitors, community users) who have access to and are users of our school/academy ICT systems, both internally and externally.

All Trust schools/academies will take all reasonable precautions to ensure online safety. However, owing to the international scale and linked nature of internet content, the availability of mobile technologies and speed of change, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable materials will never appear on Trust school/academy computer or mobile device. Neither the Trust, LAB or staff nor can accept liability for material accessed, or any consequences of internet access. Complaints will be dealt with under the Trust's Complaints Procedure.

The schools will deal with such incidents within this Policy and procedures and the Behaviour and Culture Policy and procedures which includes anti-bullying procedures and will, where known, inform parents of incidents of inappropriate online safety behaviour that take place out of school.

ONLINE SAFETY LINKS

This list provides links to relevant government guidance and a range of national organisations who can offer support to schools.

Related guidance is available on:

- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education
- National curriculum in England: computing programmes of study
- National curriculum in England: citizenship programmes of study
- Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education
- Using AI in education settings: support materials

Support and resources are also available from:

- National Centre for Computing Education (NCCE)
- UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS)
- UK Safer Internet Centre (UKSIC)
- Education for a Connected World
- CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre)
- CEOP Education Programme (Thinkuknow.co.uk)
- Cumberland Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) | Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP)
- Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
- Teaching online safety in schools
- The PREVENT Duty: an introduction for those with safeguarding responsibilities in schools
- How social media is used to encourage travel to Syria and Iraq: briefing note for schools – Home Office advice
- Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)
- Smoothwall

Schools can also get advice from national organisations such as:

- Anti-Bullying Alliance
- Association for Citizenship Teaching
- The Diana Award
- Hopes and Streams (survey report from LGfL)
- Internet Matters
- NSPCC learning
- Parent Zone's school resources
- PSHE Association
- SWGfL
- Better Internet for Kids
- We protect Global Alliance: Global Taskforce on child sexual abuse online - Report abuse
- Cyberbullying.org

You can refer parents to the following national organisations for support:

- Internet Matters
- NSPCC
- Parent Zone
- Facebook Advice to Parents
- Family Online Safety Institute (FOSI)
- Get safe online - Test your online safety skills

You can refer pupils to the following national organisations for support:

- BBC Own It
- Childline
- Childnet

SCHEDULE 1

DOCUMENT CONTROL – RECORD OF CHANGES

Version Number:	Publication Date:	Nature of, and Reason for, Change(s)
001	November 2019	Original. Complete rewrite to take into account current national guidance on Online Safety.
002	September 2020	Updated in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020. No legal or significant policy changes just updates to link document mentions to the latest versions of them online (not highlighted). Minor policy addition in Section 3 to draw attention to policy or procedure addendums staff and others must be aware of (usually Covid-19 related). Minor policy clarification in Section 9.1 (BYOD procedures) just to specifically reference wearable technologies and the broadcasting of location data (highlighted).
003	March 2021	Updated to include additional information on sharing nude and semi-nude images and online challenges and hoaxes.
004	September 2021	Updated in light of statutory DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Sept 2021 which newly references schools having an online safety policy and what it should contain, the 4Cs, and the continuing DfE expectation that all schools responsible for the provision of compulsory schooling (including independent schools with pupils funded by the taxpayer i.e., children looked after or children from military families attending boarding schools) will provide remote education and do it safely. Minor updates to appendices to reflect language/KCSiE updates.
005	September 2022	Updated in line with statutory DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Sept 2022. Changed BYOD into section 9.2 to make it easier to find and reference (no content changes). Significant chunks of the Remote Learning section removed and replaced with links to government guides. Appendices removed and replaced with links to separate documents that are easier to use, update and distribute. Other links all checked as correct.
006	September 2023	Updated in line with KCSiE 2023 (filtering and monitoring) and to various links.
---	September 2024	Reviewed – no changes required.
007	September 2025	Minor changes in line with KCSiE 2025 and for clarity. Updated with references to DFE guidance on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and updated broken links. Updated links to LA Safeguarding Children Partnership websites and change of name of the former Cumberland Safeguarding Hub (09/09).
---	September 2026	Reviewed – no changes required.