

Federation of St James the Great and St John's Catholic Primary Schools



Online Safety Policy



Policy Aims The purpose of the Federation online safety policy is to:

- Safeguard and protect all members of the Federation community online.
- Identify approaches to educate and raise awareness of online safety throughout the community.
- Enable all staff to work safely and responsibly, to role model positive behaviour online and to manage professional standards and practice when using technology.
- Identify clear procedures to use when responding to online safety concerns.
- Support parents in their duty to keep their children safe online.

The schools in the Federation identify that the issues classified within online safety are considerable, but can be broadly categorised into four areas of risk:

Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, misinformation, disinformation (including fake news), conspiracy theories, 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 the user 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

The schools in the Federation use a wide range of technology. This includes access to:

- Computers, laptops, tablets and other digital devices
- Internet which includes search engines and educational websites
- School intranet
- Email
- Digital cameras, video cameras, web cams and audio recording equipment.

Policy Scope

- The schools in the Federation believe that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledge its duty to ensure that all pupils and staff are protected from potential harm online.
- The schools in the Federation identify that the internet and associated devices, such as computers, tablets, mobile phones and games consoles, are an important part of everyday life.

This policy was reviewed by the PPC Committee in the Autumn Term 2024

- The schools in the Federation believe that pupils should be empowered to build resilience and to develop strategies to manage and respond to risk online.
- This policy applies to all staff including the teachers, support staff, governing body, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of the school (collectively referred to as 'staff' in this policy) as well as pupils and parents/carers.
- This policy applies to all access to the internet and use of technology, including personal devices, or where staff or other individuals have been provided with school issued devices for use off-site, such as a work laptops.

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 \(RSE\) and health 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](#).

1. Roles and Responsibilities

St John's Catholic School has appointed Jamie Phillips to be the online safety lead.

St James the Great Catholic School has appointed Denis O' Regan to be the online safety lead.

The governing board will:

- Have overall responsibility for monitoring this policy and holding the headteachers to account for its implementation.
- 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.
- 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.
- Co-ordinate meetings with appropriate staff to discuss online safety and requirements for training, and monitor online safety logs as provided by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).
- Make sure that the school teaches pupils how to keep themselves and others safe, including online.
- Make sure that 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's filtering and monitoring standards](#), and discuss with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting the standards, which include:
 - 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 the school's safeguarding needs

All governors will:

- Make sure they have read and understand this policy

This policy was reviewed by the PPC Committee in the Autumn Term 2024

- Make sure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing the whole-school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and/or procedures
- Make sure 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).

The leadership teams of both schools will:

- Ensure that online safety is viewed as a safeguarding issue and that practice is in line with national and local recommendations and requirements.
- Ensure there are appropriate and up-to-date policies regarding online safety; including a Code of conduct.
- Ensure that suitable and appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
- Work with technical staff to monitor the safety and security of school systems and networks.
- Ensure that online safety is embedded within a progressive whole school curriculum, which enables all pupils to develop an age-appropriate understanding of online safety.
- Support the online safety leads by ensuring they have sufficient time and resources to fulfil their online safety responsibilities.
- Ensure there are robust reporting channels for the school community to access regarding online safety concerns, including internal, local and national support.
- Ensure that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken regarding the safe use of technology. Audit and evaluate online safety practice to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

The Online Safety Lead will:

- Act as a named point of contact on all online safeguarding issues and liaise with other members of staff or other agencies, as appropriate.
- Keep up-to-date with current research, legislation and trends regarding online safety and communicate this with the school community, as appropriate.
- Ensure all members of staff receive regular, up-to-date and appropriate online safety training.
- Work with the wider staff team, and particularly the safeguarding leads to coordinate participation in local and national events to promote positive online behaviour, such as Safer Internet Day.
- Ensure that online safety is promoted to parents, carers and the wider community, through a variety of channels and approaches, which can include webinars and streamed videos.
- Maintain records of online safety concerns, as well as actions taken, as part of the schools safeguarding recording mechanisms.
- Monitor online safety incidents to identify gaps and trends, and use this data to update the education response, policies and procedures.
- Report online safety concerns, as appropriate, to the leadership team and Governing Body.
- Work with the leadership team to review and update online safety policies on a regular basis.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to:

- Read and adhere to the online safety policy
- Take responsibility for the security of school systems and the data they use, or have access to.
- Model good practice when using technology and maintain a professional level of conduct in their personal use of technology, both on and off site.
- Embed online safety education in curriculum delivery, wherever possible.
- Have an awareness of a range of online safety issues and how they may be experienced by the children in their care.
- Identify online safety concerns and take appropriate action by following the Federation Safeguarding Policy.
- Know when and how to escalate online safety issues, including signposting to appropriate support, internally and externally.

This policy was reviewed by the PPC Committee in the Autumn Term 2024

- Take personal responsibility for professional development in this area.

It is the responsibility of staff managing the technical environment to:

- Provide technical support and perspective to the DSL and leadership team, especially in the development and implementation of appropriate online safety policies and procedures.
- Implement appropriate security measures (password/ encryption) to ensure that the school's IT infrastructure/system is secure and not open to misuse or malicious attack, whilst allowing learning opportunities to be maximised.
- Ensure that the schools filtering policy is applied and updated on a regular basis; responsibility for its implementation is shared with the leadership team.
- Report any filtering breaches to the DSL and leadership team, as well as, logging the fault with school's IT technician.
- Ensure that any safeguarding concerns, identified through monitoring or filtering breaches are reported to the DSL, in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Pupils will be taught, at a level that is appropriate to their age/ability, to:

- Respect the feelings and rights of others both on and offline.
- Take responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe online.
- Seek help from a trusted adult, if there is a concern online, and support others that may be experiencing online safety issues.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to:

- Support the school in their online safety approaches by discussing online safety issues with their children and reinforce appropriate, safe online behaviours at home.
- Role model safe and appropriate use of technology and social media.
- Abide by the school's home-school agreement. Identify changes in behaviour that could indicate that their child is at risk of harm online.
- Seek help and support from the school, or other appropriate agencies, if they or their child encounter risk or concerns online.
- Take responsibility for their own awareness in relation to the risks and opportunities posed by new and emerging technologies.

2. Education and Engagement Approaches Education and engagement with pupils:

The school will establish and embed a progressive online safety curriculum throughout the whole school, to raise awareness and promote safe and responsible internet use amongst pupils by:

- Ensuring education regarding safe and responsible use precedes internet access.
- Including online safety in the PSHE and Computing programmes of study, covering use both at school and home.
- Reinforcing online safety messages whenever technology or the internet is in use.
- Educating pupils in the effective use of the internet to research; including the skills of knowledge location, retrieval and evaluation.
- Teaching pupils to be critically aware of the materials they read and shown how to validate information before accepting its accuracy.

Training and engagement with staff the schools in the Federation will:

- Provide the online safety policy to all members of staff as part of induction.
- Provide up-to-date and appropriate online safety training for all staff on a regular basis.
- Staff will be reminded to behave professionally and in accordance with school's policies when accessing school systems and devices.
- Make staff aware that their online conduct out of school, including personal use of social media, could have an impact on their professional role and reputation within school.
- Highlight useful educational resources and tools which staff should use, according to the age and ability of the pupils.
- Ensure all members of staff are aware of the procedures to follow regarding online safety concerns affecting pupils, colleagues or other members of the school community.

Awareness and engagement with parents and carers

- The schools in the Federation recognise that parents and carers have an essential role to play in enabling children to become safe and responsible users of the internet and associated technologies.
- The school will build a partnership approach to online safety with parents and carers by providing information and guidance on online safety in a variety of formats; this will include offering specific online safety awareness training and highlighting online safety at parent meetings.
- Drawing parent's attention to the school online safety policy and expectations in newsletters and on the website.

3. Reducing Online Risks

The schools in the Federation recognise that the internet is a constantly changing environment with new apps, devices, websites and material emerging at a rapid pace. We will:

- Regularly review the methods used to identify, assess and minimise online risks.
- Examine emerging technologies for educational benefit and undertake appropriate risk assessments before use in school is permitted.
- Ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring is in place and take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users can only access appropriate material. However, due to the global and connected nature of the internet, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material cannot be accessed via a school computer or device.
- Ensure all members of the school community are made aware of the school's expectations regarding safe and appropriate behaviour online and the importance of not posting any content, comments, images or videos which could cause harm, distress or offence to members of the community. This is explicitly taught in PSHE, RSE and whole school assemblies throughout the year.

Reviewed September 2025

Next review: Autumn 2026