

St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Online Safety Policy

Recognising and celebrating the presence of Christ in one another

- ♦ St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School aims to be a positive force within the Catholic Church inspired by the life of Christ in the Gospel.
- ♦ The school is committed to the widest and fullest education with ambition for all pupils in a partnership between home, school, parish and community.
- ♦ The school aims to create a happy, ordered environment where all members feel secure and valued.



Current date approved:	January 2026
Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Date of next review:	January 2027

1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have strong processes in place that protect pupils, staff, volunteers and governors when working online.
- Deliver an effective approach to online safety, which allows us to protect and educate the whole school community in its use of technology.
- Establish clear systems to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate and necessary.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy applies to all members of the St. Mary's community (including staff, students/pupils, volunteers, parents/carers, visitors, community users) who have access to and are users of school technology systems, both in and out of St. Mary of the Angels.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (September 2025), and its advice for schools on:

- [Teaching online safety in schools](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying](#) and [cyber-bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#)

It also refers to the Department guidance on [protecting children from radicalisation](#).

The [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) empowers headteachers to such extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of students/pupils 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 online-bullying or other online safety incidents covered by this policy, which may take place outside of St. Mary's, but is linked to membership of the school. The [Education Act 2011](#) increased these powers with regard to the searching for and of electronic devices and the deletion of data. In the case of both acts, action can only be taken over issues covered by the published Behaviour Policy.

St Mary of the Angels will deal with such incidents within this policy and associated behaviour and anti-bullying policies and will, where known, inform parents/carers of incidents of inappropriate online safety behaviour that take place out of school.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for monitoring the policy and holding the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will co-ordinate regular meetings with appropriate staff to discuss online safety, and monitoring online safety logs as provided by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

The governor who oversees online safety is Mr Gerry Wintrip, safeguarding governor.

All governors will:

- Ensure that they have read and understand this policy.
- Agree and adhere to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and internet.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that staff understand this policy through regular, up-to-date and appropriate training, and for ensuring that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school. The headteacher is also the designated person for child protection and is trained in dealing with online safety issues

3.3 The designated safeguarding lead

Details of the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) are set out in our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

The DSLs take lead responsibility for online safety, in particular:

- Supporting the headteacher in ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.
- Working with the headteacher, ICT manager, Computing Co-ordinator and other staff, as necessary to address any online safety issues or incidents.
- Ensuring that any online 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 headteacher and/or governing board.

3.4 The ICT manager

The ICT manager is responsible for:

- Putting in place appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, which are updated on a regular basis and keep pupils safe from potentially harmful and inappropriate content, 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.
- 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.

3.5 All staff and volunteers

All staff, including contractors and agency staff, and volunteers are responsible for:

- Having an up-to-date awareness of online safety matters and of the SMA Online Safety Policy and practises.
- Implementing this policy consistently.
- Agreeing and adhering to the terms in the Staff Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), when using the school's ICT systems and internet.
- Ensuring that pupils understand and follow the Online Safety Policy and acceptable use policies.
- Reporting any suspected misuse or problem to the headteacher or other DSL so that it can be logged and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy.
- Ensuring that all digital communications with pupils, parents or carers are on a professional level and are only carried out using official school systems.
- Embedding online safety issues in all aspects of the curriculum and other activities.

3.6 Parents and carers

Parents/Carers play a crucial role in ensuring that their children understand the need to use their internet/mobile devices in an appropriate way. St Mary's will take every opportunity to help parents

understand these issues through parents' evenings, newsletters, websites and information about national/local online safety campaigns. Parents and carers will be encouraged to support the school in promoting good online safety practice and to follow guidelines on the appropriate use of digital and video images taken at school events.

Parents are expected to:

- Notify a member of staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding this policy.
- Ensure that their child has read, understood and agreed to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and internet.

Parents can seek further guidance on keeping children safe online from organisations and websites:

- What are the issues? [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- Hot topics – [Childnet International](#)
- Parent factsheet – [Childnet International](#)
- Advice by age – [Internet Matters](#)

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Adhere to this policy, the Acceptable Use Agreement and other relevant policies.
- Ask for help from school staff if they are concerned about something they or a peer has experienced online.
- Report online safety issues in line with the procedures in this policy.

4. Educating pupils about online safety

4.1 Teaching and learning

Online safety is now a statutory part of the programme of study for all key stages. Rules and technical solutions are not infallible and we are aware that outside school, children will be using unfiltered internet provision. We believe it is crucial to educate children about how to behave responsibly online and how to keep themselves and others safe. Children and young people need the help and support of the school and parents to recognise and avoid online safety risks.

Pupils are taught about online safety in every year group at SMA, using a planned progressive online safety curriculum, based on the DFE guidance document published in June 2020 'Education for a Connected World.' It is provided as part of Computing/RSHE and is regularly revisited throughout the year.

Covering the key strands of:

- Online Relationships
- Online Bullying
- Self-Image and Identity
- Online Reputation
- Managing Online Information
- Health, Well-being and Lifestyle
- Privacy and Security
- Copyright and Ownership.

Additionally, all schools have to teach the following elements alongside the current guidance:

[Relationships education and health and education](#) in primary schools – at SMA the Ten:Ten scheme is followed.

In **Key Stage 1**, 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** 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.
- 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 internet will also be covered in other subjects where relevant. Staff model safe practice in use of technologies and mobile devices and guide students to appropriate sites and follow practices for dealing with unsuitable material found in internet searches. Where pupils undertake searching of the internet, staff encourage children to use child-friendly search engines and monitor the content of the websites they are visiting. If they identify pupils who may be vulnerable, for example, who are not adopting safe practices or completing inappropriate searches, this should be logged and appropriate support given to those pupils to help them understand the risks and what to do to keep safe.

The school will use assemblies and events, such as 'Safer Internet Day', to raise pupils' awareness of dangers that can be encountered online and may also invite trained speakers to talk to pupils about this where appropriate as a way of enhancing the embedded online safety curriculum.

4.2 Rules for keeping safe

Underpinning the ICT curriculum are the SMART rules, which are reinforced in school across the curriculum:

- **Safe** – encourages young people to be safe by not giving out their personal details online.
- **Meeting** – draws attention to the risks associated with meeting someone you only know online.
- **Accept** – highlights the risks of accepting emails, pictures and text messages from unknown sources.
- **Reliable** – is a reminder that not all information found online is necessarily reliable.
- **Tell** – encourages children to tell someone if something happens or they meet someone online that makes them feel uncomfortable, or if they or someone they know is being bullied online.

These rules are reinforced through the following:

- Pupils sign an acceptable use agreement and this is also communicated to parents who we hope will reinforce the messages at home.
- Pupils are helped to understand the student acceptable use policy and school rules for online safety and encouraged to act accordingly.

- All classes have online safety rules displayed in their classroom and staff regularly refer to these, for example, during activities where children are searching the internet for information. Rules are also displayed in other areas where ICT is used.
- Staff act as good role models in their own use of ICT.

5. Educating parents/carers about online safety

The school will raise parents' awareness of online safety through:

- Regular inclusion of material in newsletters or other communications home such as 'eschools'. Additional information will also be available via the school website.
- Involvement in high profile events/campaigns such as Safer Internet Day
- Providing copies of Acceptable User Agreements
- Reference to relevant websites, publications and quizzes
- Opportunities to speak to staff and seek further advice during parents' evening

This policy will also be shared with parents.

If parents have any queries or concerns in relation to online safety, these should be raised in the first instance with the headteacher and/or the DSL.

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

6. Dealing with online safety incidents

There are clear reporting mechanisms in place for online safety incidents and all staff are regularly reminded of these and fully aware of their responsibilities to follow up any reported issues.

Staff should report online safety issues as reported to the DSL in person and via CPOMS. If these include allegations of bullying, then the anti-bullying policy is followed. Issues which may impact on the well-being and safety of a child are reported directly to the DSL and Child Protection procedures are followed. Issues impacting on staff or to the detriment of the school should be reported to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors, if the headteacher is absent or the accusation involves the headteacher this should go to the LADO via Walsall MASH 0300 555 2866.

Pupils are encouraged to report any incidents to a trusted adult whether it relates to themselves or a friend.

We encourage children to take responsibility for protecting each other.

6.1 Managing incidents

In the event of suspicion of an infringement of policy on a school device then all the following steps should happen:

- More than one senior member of staff should be involved in investigating to protect possible future accusations.
- Use a computer that will not be used by young people which could be taken off site by the police if required.
- Ensure staff have internet access to investigate, but that sites and content are closely monitored and recorded.
- Record the URL of any site containing alleged misuse and the nature of the content causing concern. It may be useful to record and store screenshots of the content by printing them, signing them and attaching them to the record. **Except for child abuse images including youth produced imagery, nudes and semi nudes, as this would constitute an offence.**
- Once the investigation is complete, the investigating group should identify the appropriate response in line with policies which may include internal procedures, involvement of LA or police.

7. Acceptable use of the internet in school

All pupils, parents, staff, volunteers and governors are expected to adhere to the 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 duties of an individual's role.

Websites visited by pupils, staff, volunteers, governors and visitors will be monitored to ensure they comply with the above.

8. Filtering and monitoring

The Walsall Council school internet service is provided by Fortinet and monitoring is conducted by the Local Authority using two different monitoring solutions, Smoothwall Monitor for Networked and Chromebook devices and Securus for iPad monitoring. This includes a filtering service to limit access to unacceptable material for all users. Internet access is filtered for all users by Walsall Council. Illegal content (child sexual abuse images) is filtered by Walsall Council. Content lists are regularly updated and internet use is logged and regularly monitored. However, we are aware that no filtering is completely infallible and consequently focus on teaching pupils to keep safe through our curriculum and teaching. There are two different levels of filtering which are targeted towards different user groups. As a consequence, teacher and staff users have access to some resources for teaching that are filtered for learners so as to ensure that "over blocking" does not restrict teaching.

Technical staff monitor internet traffic and report any issues to schools. The school reports issues through logging a call to the service desk. Any filtering requests for change and issues are also reported immediately to the technical team. Requests from staff for sites to be removed from the filtered list must be approved by the Head teacher and this is logged and documented by a process that is agreed by the Head teacher.

The school are currently implementing a technical monitoring solution through the local authority in order to fulfil the requirements within Keeping Children Safe in Education. This is being implemented by Nicola Rudge from Walsall Council by:

- active monitoring and automatic alerts for the school to act upon, together with pro-active monitoring by Walsall Council to support the school by drawing attention to concerning behaviours, communications or access
- enhanced filtering integrated with the police assessed list of unlawful terrorist content, produced on behalf of the Home Office
- delegated access to the filtering system allows us to permit or deny access to specific content to support the requirement that "over blocking" does not lead to unnecessary restrictions on what can be taught relating to online teaching and safeguarding - the most severe content will always be filtered
- network level filtering which does not rely on any software on the users' devices which could be disabled
- ability to produce reports on the websites visited by all young people and adults using our systems
- the ability for alerts to be set so that a number of people are informed when they are triggered meaning that monitoring does not need to fall into the remit of only one person which could result in issues being missed or covered up
- external alerts to people outside the school (such as safeguarding, online safety officers or IT technicians) so that monitoring is not reliant wholly on school staff and appropriate actions can be taken immediately to safeguard children and staff
- automated reporting to ensure that processes are followed without fail

- ability to log in from anywhere to see reports via web interface

11. Training

All staff receive regular online safety training so that they understand the risks and their responsibilities. This includes:

- A planned programme of online safety training which is regularly updated and reinforced and linked to the expectations outlined in this policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education and in the Ofsted framework (training at least 2x yearly).
- An audit of online safety training needs of staff is carried out regularly, during this training process.
- All new staff receive online safety training and training on relevant policies and expectations as part of their induction programme.
- The online safety lead receives regular updates and external training to support them to do their role.
- Policies relevant to online safety and their updates are discussed in staff meetings and briefings.
- The online safety lead provides regular guidance and training to support individuals where required

This online safety policy will be reviewed and monitored by the school online safety working group which consists of:

Mrs Natalie Hill (Headteacher and DSL)

Mrs Emma Hayes and Mr Thomas Reynolds (Online Safety Lead Teachers)

Staff (including teaching staff and support staff)

Mr Gerry Wintrip (Governor responsible for Safeguarding)

Consultation has taken place with the wider school community through staff meetings, pupil conference sessions and parental surveys.