



DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The Internet is a network that connects millions of computers worldwide and being online is an integral part of children's lives. Social media, online games, websites and apps can be accessed through mobile phones, computers, laptops, tablets and other electronic devices – all of which form part of children's online world. The Internet and online technology provides new opportunities for their learning and growth but it can also expose them to new types of risks.

Digital safeguarding is a fundamental part of Boyne Hill CE Infant & Nursery School's safeguarding measures and our whole school approach to online safety helps ensure the risks to our pupils when accessing the Internet are minimised.

Introduction

As a school, we have a duty to provide our pupils with quality Internet access as part of their learning experience but we also have a duty to ensure that every child is safe whilst in our care and this principle applies to the 'virtual' or 'digital' world too.

This Policy is drawn up to protect the pupils, staff and volunteers at our school and aims to provide clear advice and guidance on how to minimise risks and how to deal with any infringements.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the 21st Century has an all-encompassing role within the lives of children and adults. Internet and online technologies are enhancing communication and the sharing of information. Current online technologies used in school and, more importantly in many cases, used outside of school by children, may include:

- The Internet – World Wide Web
- e-mail
- Instant messaging
- Web based voice and video calling
- Online chat rooms
- Online discussion forums
- Social networking sites
- Blogs
- Podcasting
- Video broadcasting sites
- Music and video downloading
- Mobile phones with camera and video functionality
- Smart phones with e-mail, messaging and Internet access

The purpose of Internet use in school is to raise educational standards, promote pupil achievement, support the professional work of staff, enhance the school's management, information and business administration systems and increase communication with parents/carers and the wider community.

Our whole school approach to the safe use of ICT

1. Internet use is a part of the statutory Computing curriculum and a necessary tool for staff and pupils.
2. Inappropriate material must not be visible to pupils using the Internet and every effort will be made to ensure that they are protected.

3. Pupils are not allowed to download any material from the Internet unless directed to do so by an appropriate staff member.
4. The school broadband is password protected and the password will not be made available to anyone other than staff employed by the school or the local authority.
5. We do not allow pupils to have any personal mobile devices in school, including smart watches with call, text or photographic capability.

All computer software is run from a server and managed by Revolve IT who also provide the technical support to school. The broadband, firewall and filtering system (safetynet) are provided and managed by RM. The filtering system uses a sophisticated content filter to ensure that, as far as possible, only appropriate content from the Internet finds its way into school. Internal settings are also set up to enforce safe searching for pupils.

Whilst this filtering technology is robust and generally effective at blocking unsuitable material, it is still possible for unsuitable material to occasionally get past the filter. For this reason, pupils in our school will be supervised by a responsible adult whenever they have access to the Internet. Staff are also instructed not to open email attachments unless they are certain it is safe to do so in order to reduce the risk of computer viruses or malware. Teaching and office-based staff also complete Cyber Security training every two years.

Roles and Responsibilities

Leadership team

The school leadership team ensures that this policy is implemented across the school via the usual school monitoring procedures.

Digital Safeguarding Coordinator

Our school digital safeguarding coordinator is the Head Teacher who is responsible for keeping up to date on digital safety issues and ensuring that staff are updated as necessary.

The Governing Board

Governors play a pivotal role in ensuring the safeguarding of children and this includes online safeguarding and the impact of digital technology.

The Governing Board should:

- understand their online safety responsibilities and accountabilities;
- have an awareness of online threats, risks and trends in technology and internet use;
- support and critically challenge the school in implementing effective online safety policy, procedure and practice;
- ensure the school provides an appropriate level of filtering and monitoring which safeguards pupils from risky online content and contact;
- ensure pupils are taught about online safeguarding through teaching and learning opportunities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

School Staff

All staff are responsible for promoting and supporting safe behaviours in the classrooms and following school digital safety procedures. Class teachers should ensure that pupils are aware of the digital safety rules, introducing them at the beginning of each new school year and revisiting them throughout the academic year. Teachers should ensure that digital safety posters are visible in their classrooms.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to adhere to the rules for safe Internet use in school and report any concerns immediately to the class teacher.

Parents

Parents are given information about the school's digital safeguarding procedures in their Welcome Packs and we ask that they support these rules with their children at home. There is also a wealth of information around the safe use of the internet available on our school website.

Portable storage devices

Staff are allowed to use their own portable storage device (USB Key etc.) but it must not contain any personal data which would enable a child to be identified unless it is encrypted with a security code.

Security and virus protection

The school subscribes to Sophos antivirus software. The software is purchased from 'turn IT on' and monitored/updated regularly by Revolve IT, the school's technical support.

Use of the Internet by pupils

Internet access is carefully controlled by teachers according to the learning objectives being addressed. Pupils are always actively supervised by an adult when using the Internet and screens can be seen at all times.

Access for all pupils

In-line with our Equal Opportunities policy, we want to ensure that all our pupils have access to the Internet in school, particularly where this will directly support their learning.

Wraparound Care Provision

There is an after school care club on site that runs from 3.20pm-6pm where laptops are available for use by the children. This policy also applies to all staff and children attending the KidsTime after school club.

Using the Internet for learning

The Internet is now an invaluable resource for learning for all our pupils and we use it across the curriculum both for researching information and a source of digital learning materials. Using the Internet for learning is part of the key stage 1 Computing Curriculum. We teach how to find appropriate information on the Internet as part of the pupils' learning, using search engines and evaluating Internet-based information.

The main messages we aim to get across to pupils are:

1. People that you don't know are strangers and people that you meet online are not always who they say they are. Meeting someone in cyberspace can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents'/carers' permission and when they are present.
2. Things we write online can be seen by lots of people. We only write kind words and are nice to each other, just like we should any other time.
3. Some information needs to be kept private. We need to be careful when sharing personal information about ourselves and we need to understand why it is important to have log-ins, passwords and privacy settings.
4. If you ever get that 'uh oh' feeling and it makes you worried or uncomfortable, tell a grown up you can trust.

Suitable materials

We encourage pupils to see the Internet as a rich and challenging resource but we also recognise that it can be difficult to navigate and find useful and appropriate material. Where possible, we provide suggestions for suitable sites across the curriculum and staff always check the suitability of websites before suggesting them to pupils.

Unsuitable material

Pupils do not have access to social networking sites in school and we ask that parents who choose to use them at home do so responsibly.

More and more children have access to sophisticated Internet-enabled devices but they are not allowed to have personal mobile phones or other similar devices in school.

Use of the Internet and ICT resources by school staff

We understand that the Internet is a valuable resource for school staff. It provides a wealth of resources, teaching materials and information that teachers can use across the curriculum. It allows staff to share resources with each other and to engage in debate and discussion. We are committed to encouraging and supporting our school staff to make the best use of the Internet and all the opportunities it offers to enhance our teaching and to support learning.

To enable staff to make full use of these important resources, the Internet is available in school to all staff for professional use.

The school also offers staff access to appropriate ICT equipment and resources including laptops, iPads, interactive whiteboards and sound recorders.

Staff are expected to model appropriate ICT and Internet use at all times. This supports our commitment to encouraging safe and appropriate use by our pupils both in school and at home. Staff are also careful to consider inclusion and equality issues when using ICT and the Internet and to provide pupils with appropriate models to support the school's Equal Opportunities policy.

Staff who need support in using ICT as part of their professional practice can ask for support from the Computing subject leader and/or IT Technician. Some equipment (including laptops) is available for loan to staff with permission from the Head Teacher. However, all staff must be aware of the school policy on using school Internet and ICT resources for personal use.

We recognise that e-mail is an efficient, professional communication tool. To facilitate this, staff members are given a school e-mail address to use for professional communication with colleagues, organisations, companies and other groups and a separate one for communication with parents. Staff are reminded that, through sending work related emails, they are representing the school and their communications must reflect a high standard of professionalism. Personal email addresses must not be used for work related correspondence.

Social Networking

The school appreciates that many staff will use social networking sites and tools. The use of social networking and how it relates to the professional life of school staff is covered in the Staff Code of Conduct.

Data Protection and Copyright

The school has a Data Protection policy in place. Staff are aware of this policy and how it relates to Internet and ICT use, in particular with regard to pupil data and photographs and are expected to follow the guidelines as necessary.

Staff should understand that there are complex copyright issues around many online resources and materials and should give appropriate credit when using online materials or resources in teaching and learning materials.

Staff Laptop and ICT Equipment Loans

Any member of staff who borrows or uses a school laptop or any other ICT equipment must adhere to all aspects of this digital safeguarding policy. This must be the case wherever the laptop or other such device is being used as it remains the property of Boyne Hill CE Infant & Nursery School at all times.

Staff must take proper care of the equipment whilst in their possession and will abide by the requirements of the school's insurance policy with regard to protecting the equipment from loss or damage.

Our Digital Safeguarding Policy has been approved by the Governing Board and shared with staff. It also forms part of the induction process for all new staff, students and volunteers.

Electronic Recording Devices

Each class has an iPad available for the purpose of taking photographs of pupils' learning activities.

All parents/carers are asked to sign a document giving levels of permission for the use of their child's photographic image and their wishes will be respected at all times.

This policy will be reviewed biennially - Last reviewed: November 2025