Online Safety Policy

Birches First School

Approved by:	Local Governing Board	**Date:** 21.10.25	
Last reviewed on:	01.09.25		
Next review due by:	01.09.26		

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1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Identify and support groups of pupils that are potentially at greater risk of harm online than others
- Deliver an effective approach to online safety, which empowers us to protect and educate the whole school community in its use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as 'mobile phones')
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

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- **Content** – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, 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 them 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

2. 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 schoolshttps://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying
- Preventing and tackling bullying and cyber-bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff
- 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. In addition, it reflects the Education Act 2011, which has given teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by, if necessary, searching for and deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

The policy also takes into account the National Curriculum computing programmes of study.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

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

The governing board will 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.

The governing board will also 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.

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

The governing board should ensure children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including keeping safe online.

The governing board must ensure 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

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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:

- Identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems;
- 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 their safeguarding needs.

The governor who oversees online safety is Mr Kevin Goodridge.

All governors will:

- Ensure they have read and understand this policy
- Agree and adhere to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet (appendix 3)
- Ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme while devising and implementing their whole-school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and/or procedures
- Ensure 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). This is because of the importance of recognising that a 'one size fits all' approach may not be appropriate for all children in all situations, and a more personalised or contextualised approach may often be more suitable

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that staff understand this policy, and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.

3.3 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

Details of the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies are set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy, as well as relevant job descriptions.

The DSL takes lead responsibility for online safety in school, 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 and governing board to review this policy annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly
- Taking the lead on understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place on school devices and school networks
- Providing governors with assurance that filtering and monitoring systems are working effectively and reviewed regularly
- Working with the ICT manager to make sure the appropriate systems and processes are in place
- Working with the headteacher, ICT manager and other staff, as necessary, to address any online safety issues or incidents
- Managing all online safety issues and incidents in line with the school's child protection policy
- Responding to safeguarding concerns identified by filtering and monitoring
- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged (see appendix 5) and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy

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- 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 (appendix 4 contains a self-audit for staff on online safety training needs)
- 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
- Undertaking annual risk assessments that consider and reflect the risks children face
- Providing regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.4 The ICT manager

The ICT manager is responsible for:

- Putting in place an appropriate level of security protection procedures, such as filtering and monitoring systems on school devices and school networks, which are reviewed and updated at least annually to assess effectiveness and ensure pupils are kept safe from potentially harmful and inappropriate content and contact online while at school, 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
- Conducting a full security check and monitoring the school's ICT systems on a weekly basis
- Blocking access to potentially dangerous sites and, where possible, preventing the downloading of potentially dangerous files
- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged (see appendix 5) and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.5 All staff and volunteers

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

- Maintaining an understanding of this policy
- Implementing this policy consistently
- Agreeing and adhering to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet (appendix 3), and ensuring that pupils follow the school's terms on acceptable use (appendices 1 and 2)
- Knowing that the DSL is responsible for the filtering and monitoring systems and processes, and being aware of how to report any incidents of those systems or processes failing by informing the DSL or their deputies.
- Following the correct procedures by notifying the DSL, or their deputies, if they need to bypass the filtering and monitoring systems for educational purposes
- Working with the DSL to ensure that any online safety incidents are logged (see appendix 5) and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy

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- Responding appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or harassment, both online and offline, and maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Notify a member of staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding this policy
- Ensure their child has read, understood and agreed to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and internet (appendices 1 and 2)

Parents/carers can seek further guidance on keeping children safe online from the following organisations and websites:

- What are the issues? – UK Safer Internet Centre
- Online safety topics for parents/carers – Childnet
- Parent resource sheet – Childnet

3.7 Visitors and members of the community

Visitors and members of the community who use the school's ICT systems or internet will be made aware of this policy and expected to read and follow it. If appropriate, they will be expected to agree to the terms on acceptable use (appendix 3).

4. Educating pupils about online safety

Pupils will be taught about online safety as part of the curriculum.

All schools have to teach:

- Relationships education and health education in primary schools
- Relationships and sex education and health education in secondary schools

In **Key Stage (KS) 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 (KS) 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
- Be discerning in evaluating digital content

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

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- 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
- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know
- The benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online

The safe use of social media and the internet will also be covered in other subjects where relevant.

Where necessary, teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, will be adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some pupils with SEND.

5. Educating parents/carers about online safety

The school will raise parents/carers' awareness of internet safety in letters or other communications home (Marvellous me/ text messages), and in information via our website. This policy will also be shared with parents/carers.

Online safety will also be covered during parents' evenings.

The school will let parents/carers know:

- What systems the school uses to filter and monitor online use
- What their children are being asked to do online, including the sites they will be asked to access and who from the school (if anyone) their child will be interacting with online

If parents/carers 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. Cyber-bullying

6.1 Definition

Cyber-bullying takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites. Like other forms of bullying, it is the repetitive, intentional harming of 1 person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. (See also the school behaviour policy.)

6.2 Preventing and addressing cyber-bullying

To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. We will ensure that pupils know how they can report any incidents and are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than the victim.

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The school will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be. Class teachers will discuss cyber-bullying with their year groups, being specifically taught within our computing programme of study.

Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyber-bullying. This includes personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, assemblies and other subjects where appropriate.

All staff, governors and volunteers (where appropriate) receive training on cyber-bullying, its impact and ways to support pupils, as part of safeguarding training (see section 11 for more detail).

The school also sends information/leaflets on cyber-bullying to parents/carers so they are aware of the signs, how to report it and how they can support children who may be affected.

In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, the school will follow the processes set out in the school behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained.

The DSL will report the incident and provide the relevant material to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable, if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that possessing that material is illegal. They will also work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

6.3 Examining electronic devices

The headteacher, and any member of staff authorised to do so by the headteacher can carry out a search and confiscate any electronic device that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting:

- Poses a risk to staff or pupils, and/or
- Is identified in the school rules as a banned item for which a search can be carried out, and/or
- Is evidence in relation to an offence

Before a search, if the authorised staff member is satisfied that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting any of the above, they will also:

- Make an assessment of how urgent the search is, and consider the risk to other pupils and staff. If the search is not urgent, they will seek advice from the headteacher.
- Explain to the pupil why they are being searched, how the search will happen, and give them the opportunity to ask questions about it
- Seek the pupil's co-operation

Authorised staff members may examine, and in exceptional circumstances erase, any data or files on an electronic device that they have confiscated where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

When deciding whether there is a 'good reason' to examine data or files on an electronic device, the staff member should reasonably suspect that the device has, or could be used to:

- Cause harm, and/or
- Undermine the safe environment of the school or disrupt teaching, and/or
- Commit an offence

If inappropriate material is found on the device, it is up to the staff member in conjunction with the headteacher to decide on a suitable response. If there are images, data or files on the device that staff reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk, they will first consider the appropriate safeguarding response.

When deciding if there is a good reason to erase data or files from a device, staff members will consider if the material may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In these instances, they will not delete the

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material, and the device will be handed to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. If the material is not suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence, staff members may delete it if:

- They reasonably suspect that its continued existence is likely to cause harm to any person, and/or
- The pupil and/or the parent/carer refuses to delete the material themselves

If a staff member **suspects** a device **may** contain an indecent image of a child (also known as a nude or semi-nude image), they will:

- **Not** view the image
- Confiscate the device and report the incident to the DSL (or equivalent) immediately, who will decide what to do next. The DSL will make the decision in line with the DfE's latest guidance on screening, searching and confiscation and the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people

Any searching of pupils will be carried out in line with:

- The DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- UKCIS guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people

Any complaints about searching for or deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices will be dealt with through the school complaints procedure.

6.4 Artificial intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Gemini.

Birches First School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. This includes deepfake pornography: pornographic content created using AI to include someone's likeness.

Birches First School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils very seriously, in line with our behavior policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out a risk assessment where new AI tools are being used by the school, and where existing AI tools are used in cases which may pose a risk to all individuals that may be affected by it, including, but not limited to, pupils and staff.

7. Acceptable use of the internet in school

All pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet (appendices 1 to 3). 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 the duties of an individual's role.

We will monitor the websites visited by pupils, staff, volunteers, governors and visitors (where relevant) to ensure they comply with the above and restrict access through filtering systems where appropriate.

More information is set out in the acceptable use agreements in appendices 1 to 3.

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8. Pupils using mobile devices in school

Children are not permitted to bring in a mobile device of any description.

9. Staff using work devices outside school

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Keeping the device password-protected – strong passwords are at least 8 characters, with a combination of upper and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters (e.g. asterisk or currency symbol)
- Ensuring their hard drive is encrypted – this means if the device is lost or stolen, no one can access the files stored on the hard drive by attaching it to a new device
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time
- Not sharing the device among family or friends
- Installing anti-virus and anti-spyware software
- Keeping operating systems up to date by always installing the latest updates

Staff members must not use the device in any way that would violate the school's terms of acceptable use, as set out in appendix 3.

Work devices must be used solely for work activities.

If staff have any concerns over the security of their device, they must seek advice from the computing lead (Daniel Jones) or Concero.

Mobile Technologies (including BYOD/BYOT)

Mobile technology devices may be school owned/provided or personally owned and might include: smartphone, tablet, notebook/laptop or other technology that usually has the capability of utilising the school's wireless network. The device then has access to the wider internet which may include other cloud based services such as email and data storage.
All users should understand that the primary purpose of the use mobile/personal devices in a school context is educational. The mobile technologies policy should be consistent with and inter-related to other relevant school polices including but not limited to the Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Bullying Policy, Acceptable Use Policy, and policies around theft or malicious damage. Teaching about the safe and appropriate use of mobile technologies should be an integral part of the school's Online Safety education programme.

- The school Acceptable Use Agreements for staff, pupils/students and parents/carers will give consideration to the use of mobile technologies
- Birches First School allows:

	School Devices	Personal Devices

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	School owned for single user	School owned for multiple users	Authorised device[1]	Student owned	Staff owned	Visitor owned
Allowed in school	***Yes***	***Yes***	***Yes***	***No***	***Yes***	***Yes***
Full network access	***Yes***	***Yes***	***Yes***	***No***	***Yes***	***No****
No network access					***No***	***No***

*anyone who wishes to use the schools wifi must seek permission from SLT.

Aspects that the school may wish to consider and be included in their Online Safety Policy, Mobile Technologies Policy or Acceptable Use Agreements:

School owned/provided devices:

- Who they will be allocated to
- Where, when and how their use is allowed – times/places/in school/out of school
- If personal use is allowed
- Levels of access to networks/internet (as above)
- Management of devices/installation of apps/changing of settings/monitoring
- Network/broadband capacity
- Technical support
- Filtering of devices
- Access to cloud services
- Data Protection
- Taking/storage/use of images
- Exit processes – what happens to devices/software/apps/stored data if user leaves the school
- Liability for damage
- Staff training

Personal devices:

- Which users are allowed to use personal mobile devices in school (staff/visitors)
- Restrictions on where, when and how they may be used in school
- Storage
- Whether staff will be allowed to use personal devices for school business
- Levels of access to networks/internet (as above)
- Network/broadband capacity
- Technical support (this may be a clear statement that no technical support is available)
- Filtering of the internet connection to these devices
- Data Protection

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- The right to take, examine and search users devices in the case of misuse (England only)
- Taking/storage/use of images
- Liability for loss/damage or malfunction following access to the network (likely to be a disclaimer about school responsibility).
- Identification / labelling of personal devices
- How visitors will be informed about school requirements
- How education about the safe and responsible use of mobile devices is included in the school Online Safety education programmes.

Use of digital and video images

The development of digital imaging technologies has created significant benefits to learning, allowing staff and pupils instant use of images that they have recorded themselves or downloaded from the internet. However, staff, parents/carers and pupils need to be aware of the risks associated with publishing digital images on the internet. Such images may provide avenues for cyberbullying to take place, or could be used by AI software. Digital images may remain available on the internet forever and may cause harm or embarrassment to individuals in the short or longer term. It is common for employers to carry out internet searches for information about potential and existing employees. The school will inform and educate users about these risks and will implement policies to reduce the likelihood of the potential for harm:

- When using digital images, staff should inform and educate pupils about the risks associated with the taking, use, sharing, publication and distribution of images. In particular they should recognise the risks attached to publishing their own images on the internet e.g. on social networking sites.
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school website/social media/local press. This form will be completed at the beginning of each academic year.
- In accordance with guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office, parents/carers are welcome to take videos and digital images of their children at school/academy events for their own personal use (as such use in not covered by the Data Protection Act). To respect everyone's privacy and in some cases protection, these images should not be published/made publicly available on social networking sites, nor should parents/carers comment on any activities involving other pupils in the digital/video images.
- Staff and volunteers are allowed to take digital/video images to support educational aims, but must follow school/academy policies concerning the sharing, distribution and publication of those images. Those images should only be taken on school equipment, the personal equipment of staff should not be used for such purposes.
- Care should be taken when taking digital/video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the school into disrepute.
- Pupils must not take, use, share, publish or distribute images of others without their permission
- Photographs published on the website, or elsewhere that include pupils will be selected carefully and will comply with good practice guidance on the use of such images.
- Pupils' full names will not be used anywhere on a website or blog, particularly in association with photographs.
- Pupil's work can only be published with the permission of the pupil and parents or carers.

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Data Protection

Personal data will be recorded, processed, transferred and made available according to the current data protection legislation.

The school must ensure that:

- It has a Data Protection Policy.
- It has paid the appropriate fee to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
- It has appointed a Data Protection Officer (Alicia Burkitt). The school may also wish to appoint a Data Manager and systems controllers to support the DPO.
- It will hold the minimum personal data necessary to enable it to perform its function and it will not hold it for longer than necessary for the purposes it was collected for.
- Data held must be accurate and up to date. Inaccuracies are corrected without unnecessary delay.
- The lawful basis for processing personal data (including, where relevant, consent) has been identified and documented and details provided in a Privacy Notice.
- Where special category data is processed, a lawful basis and a separate condition for processing have been identified.
- It has clear and understood arrangements for access to and the security, storage and transfer of personal data, including, where necessary, adequate contractual clauses or safeguards where personal data is passed to third parties e.g. cloud service providers.
- Procedures must be in place to deal with the individual rights of the data subject i.e. a Subject Access Requests to see all or a part of their personal data held by the data controller.
- There are clear and understood data retention policies and routines for the deletion and disposal of data.
- There is a policy for reporting, logging, managing and recovering from an information risk incident which recognises the requirement to report relevant data breaches to the ICO within 72 hours of the breach, where feasible.
- Consideration has been given to the protection of personal data when accessed using any remote access solutions.
- All schools (n.b. including Academies, which were previously exempt) must have a Freedom of Information Policy which sets out how it will deal with FOI requests.
- All staff receive data handling awareness/data protection training and are made aware of their responsibilities.

Staff must ensure that they:

- At all times take care to ensure the safe keeping of personal data, minimising the risk of its loss or misuse.
- Use personal data only on secure password protected computers and other devices, ensuring that they are properly "logged-off" at the end of any session in which they are using personal data.
- Transfer data using encryption and secure password protected devices.

When personal data is stored on any portable computer system, memory stick or any other removable media:

- The data must be encrypted and password protected.
- The device must be password protected. (many memory sticks/cards and other mobile devices cannot be password protected)
- The device must offer approved virus and malware checking software.

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- The data must be securely deleted from the device, in line with school policy once it has been transferred or its use is complete.

Communications

A wide range of rapidly developing communications technologies has the potential to enhance learning. The following table shows how the school currently considers the benefit of using these technologies for education outweighs their risks/disadvantages:

	Staff & other adults				Students / Pupils			
Communication Technologies	Allowed	Allowed at certain times	Allowed for selected staff	Not allowed	Allowed	Allowed at certain times	Allowed with staff permission	Not allowed
Mobile phones may be brought to the school / academy	x							x
Use of mobile phones in lessons								x
Use of mobile phones in social time								x
Taking photos on mobile phones / cameras				x				x
Use of other mobile devices e.g. tablets, gaming devices		x					x	
Use of personal email addresses in school / academy , or on school / academy network								x
Use of school / academy email for personal emails								x
Use of messaging apps		x						x
Use of social media inc. Youtube		x						x
Use of blogs	x						x	

When using communication technologies Birches First School considers the following as good practice:

- The official school email service may be regarded as safe and secure and is monitored. Users should be aware that email communications are monitored. Staff and pupils should therefore use only the school email service to communicate with others when in school, or on school systems (e.g. by remote access).
- Users must immediately report, to the nominated person – in accordance with the school policy, the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory,

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threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication. (Online Safety BOOST includes an anonymous reporting app Whisper – https://boost.swgfl.org.uk/)

- Any digital communication between staff and pupils or parents/ carers (email, social media, chat, blogs, Marvellous Me etc) must be professional in tone and content. These communications may only take place on official (monitored) school systems. Personal email addresses, text messaging or social media must not be used for these communications.
- Children have personal accounts on Purple Mash that allow use of email between accounts. This can be reviewed and monitored by teaching staff within and after a lesson.
- Pupils should be taught about online safety issues, such as the risks attached to the sharing of personal details. They should also be taught strategies to deal with inappropriate communications and be reminded of the need to communicate appropriately when using digital technologies.
- Personal information should not be posted on the school website and only official email addresses should be used to identify members of staff.

Social Media - Protecting Professional Identity

All schools, academies, MATs and local authorities have a duty of care to provide a safe learning environment for pupils and staff. Schools/academies, MATs and local authorities could be held responsible, indirectly for acts of their employees in the course of their employment. Staff members who harass, engage in online bullying, discriminate on the grounds of sex, race or disability or who defame a third party may render the school/academy liable to the injured party. Reasonable steps to prevent predictable harm must be in place.

Birches First School provides the following measures to ensure reasonable steps are in place to minimise risk of harm to pupils, staff and the school through:

- Ensuring that personal information is not published
- Training is provided including: acceptable use; social media risks; checking of settings; data protection; reporting issues.
- Clear reporting guidance, including responsibilities, procedures and sanctions
- Risk assessment, including legal risk

School staff should ensure that:

- No reference should be made in social media to pupils, parents/carers or school staff
- They do not engage in online discussion on personal matters relating to members of the school community
- Personal opinions should not be attributed to the school/academy or MAT
- Security settings on personal social media profiles are regularly checked to minimise risk of loss of personal information

When official school social media accounts are established there should be:

- A process for approval by senior leaders
- Clear processes for the administration and monitoring of these accounts – involving at least two members of staff
- A code of behaviour for users of the accounts
- Systems for reporting and dealing with abuse and misuse
- Understanding of how incidents may be dealt with under school disciplinary procedures

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Personal Use:

- Personal communications are those made via a personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with the school or impacts on the school, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the school with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy
- Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the school are outside the scope of this policy
- Where excessive personal use of social media in school is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken
- The school permits reasonable and appropriate access to private social media sites

Monitoring of Public Social Media

- As part of active social media engagement, it is considered good practice to pro-actively monitor the Internet for public postings about the school
- The school should effectively respond to social media comments made by others according to a defined policy or process

The school's use of social media for professional purposes will be checked regularly by the senior risk officer and Online Safety Group to ensure compliance with the school policies.

10. How the school will respond to issues of misuse

Where a pupil misuses the school's ICT systems or internet, we will follow the procedures set out in our policies on behaviour and acceptable use policy. The action taken will depend on the individual circumstances, nature and seriousness of the specific incident, and will be proportionate.

Where a staff member misuses the school's ICT systems or the internet, or misuses a personal device where the action constitutes misconduct, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the staff code of conduct. The action taken will depend on the individual circumstances, nature and seriousness of the specific incident.

The school will consider whether incidents that involve illegal activity or content, or otherwise serious incidents, should be reported to the police.

Dealing with unsuitable/inappropriate activities

Some internet activity e.g. accessing child abuse images or distributing racist material is illegal and would obviously be banned from school and all other technical systems. Other activities e.g. cyber-bullying would be banned and could lead to criminal prosecution. There are however a range of activities which may, generally, be legal but would be inappropriate in a school context, either because of the age of the users or the nature of those activities.
Birches First School believes that the activities referred to in the following section would be inappropriate in a school context and that users, as defined below, should not engage in these activities in or outside the school when using school equipment or systems. The school policy restricts usage as follows:

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User Actions		Acceptable	Acceptable at certain times	Acceptable for nominated users	Unacceptable	Unacceptable and illegal
Users shall not visit Internet sites, make, post, download, upload, data transfer, communicate or pass on, material, remarks, proposals or comments that contain or relate to:	Child sexual abuse images –The making, production or distribution of indecent images of children. Contrary to The Protection of Children Act 1978					X
	Grooming, incitement, arrangement or facilitation of sexual acts against children Contrary to the Sexual Offences Act 2003.					X
	Possession of an extreme pornographic image (grossly offensive, disgusting or otherwise of an obscene character) Contrary to the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008					X
	Criminally racist material in UK – to stir up religious hatred (or hatred on the grounds of sexual orientation) - contrary to the Public Order Act 1986					X
	Pornography					X
	Promotion of any kind of discrimination					X
	threatening behaviour, including promotion of physical violence or mental harm					X
	Promotion of extremism or terrorism					X
	Any other information which may be offensive to colleagues or breaches the integrity of the ethos of the school or brings the school into disrepute				X	
Using school systems to run a private business					X	
Using systems, applications, websites or other mechanisms that bypass the filtering or other safeguards employed by the school / academy					X	
Infringing copyright					X	
Revealing or publicising confidential or proprietary information (eg financial / personal information, databases, computer / network access codes and passwords)					X	
Creating or propagating computer viruses or other harmful files					X	
Unfair usage (downloading / uploading large files that hinders others in their use of the internet)					X	

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On-line gaming (educational)			X		
On-line gaming (non-educational)				X	
On-line gambling				X	
On-line shopping / commerce				X	
File sharing			X		
Use of social media				X	
Use of messaging apps				X	
Use of video broadcasting e.g. Youtube			X		

Responding to incidents of misuse

This guidance is intended for use when staff need to manage incidents that involve the use of online services. It encourages a safe and secure approach to the management of the incident. Incidents might involve illegal or inappropriate activities.

Illegal Incidents

If there is any suspicion that the web site(s) concerned may contain child abuse images, or if there is any other suspected illegal activity, refer to the right hand side of the Flowchart (below and appendix) for responding to online safety incidents and report immediately to the police.

11. Training

All new staff members will receive training, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues, including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation.

All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year as part of safeguarding training, as well as relevant updates as required (for example through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

By way of this training, all staff will be made aware that:

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- Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, and that children are at risk of online abuse
- Children can abuse their peers online through:
    - Abusive, harassing and misogynistic messages
    - Non-consensual sharing of indecent nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, especially around chat groups
    - Sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content
- Physical abuse, sexual violence and initiation/hazing type violence can all contain an online element

Training will also help staff:

- Develop better awareness to assist in spotting the signs and symptoms of online abuse
- Develop the ability to ensure pupils can recognise dangers and risks in online activity and can weigh up the risks
- Develop the ability to influence pupils to make the healthiest long-term choices and keep them safe from harm in the short term

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training, which will include online safety, at least every 2 years. They will also update their knowledge and skills on the subject of online safety at regular intervals, and at least annually.

Governors will receive training on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues as part of their safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training and updates, if applicable.

More information about safeguarding training is set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

12. Monitoring arrangements

The DSL logs behaviour and safeguarding issues related to online safety. An incident report log can be found in appendix 5.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the computing lead. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board. The review (such as the one available here) will be supported by an annual risk assessment that considers and reflects the risks pupils face online. This is important because technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly.

13. Links with other policies

This online safety policy is linked to our:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- Complaints procedure
- ICT and internet acceptable use policy

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Appendix 1: Student acceptable use agreement

Student Acceptable Use Policy

My Safety

- I understand that the school can monitor (see) what I do when I am using a school device.

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- I will not share my username and password with anyone or try to use any other person's username and password.
- I will only use digital devices in school for my learning.
- I will not open any files or websites that look dangerous.
- I understand how to act and work responsibly online, and I will ask an adult if I am unsure about something.
- I will tell an adult in school if something upsets or worries me when I am using a device.
- I will respect others' work and property and will not access, copy, remove or change
- any other user's files.
- If I use a service that the school pays for, at or away from school, I will use it responsibly and not share any access details.
- When I am using the internet to find information, I will take care to check that the information that I find is accurate/reliable.

By writing my name below, I promise that I will take responsibility for using technology at my school safely and report anything that worries me to an adult.

My Name: _____

My Class: _____

Date: _____

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Appendix 2: Visitor acceptable use agreement

Visitor Acceptable Use Policy

Name:_____
Organisation:_____

Introduction

Technology is constantly evolving and is shaping the lives of not just the staff and children at Codsall Multi-Academy Trust, but also the wider world. Online digital services offer a whole host of powerful learning and communication services, which aim to enrich the lives of its users. As a result, these services provide and promote a range of opportunities, and all users should have a right to safe access at all times.

Personal and Professional Safety

- I understand that Codsall Multi-Academy Trust will monitor my use of technology systems, email services and other digital services.
- I understand that the rules set out in this agreement also apply to use of school technology devices off-site.
- I understand that the school digital systems are primarily intended for professional and educational use.
- I will not disclose my username or password to anyone else, nor will I try to use any other user's access details.
- I will immediately report any illegal, inappropriate or harmful material or incident, I become aware of, to the appropriate person.
- I will not (attempt to) access, copy, remove or modify any data stored on the school's network, unless permission from the owner has been granted.
- I will not open any attachments on any digital service or any files, such as those on a USB device, unless the source is known and trusted, due to the risk of the attachment containing viruses or other harmful programmes.

I declare that by signing below, I agree to all of the above and wider conditions to using any digital device on or associated with the Codsall Multi-Academy Trust network.

Signed: _____
Print Name: _____
Role: _____
Date: _____

Please note, this Acceptable Use Policy will be kept as a permanent record, therefore should you return to Codsall Multi-Academy Trust at a later date, you will still be expected to act in accordance with the above agreement. Should you change your mind, you must contact the Head Teacher immediately, as this could result in restricted or complete loss of access to any of the digital systems and devices at Codsall Multi-Academy Trust.

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Appendix 3: Staff acceptable use agreement

Staff Acceptable Use Policy

Introduction

Technology is constantly evolving and is shaping the lives of not just the staff and children at Codsall Multi-Academy Trust, but also the wider world. Online digital services offer a whole host of powerful learning and communication services, which aim to enrich the lives of its users. As a result, these services provide and promote a range of opportunities, and all users should have a right to safe access at all times.

Personal and Professional Safety

- I understand that Codsall Multi-Academy Trust will monitor my use of technology systems, email services and other digital services.
- I understand that the rules set out in this agreement also apply to use of school technology devices off-site.
- I understand that the school digital systems are primarily intended for professional and educational use.
- I will not disclose my username or password to anyone else, nor will I try to use any other user's access details.
- I will immediately report any illegal, inappropriate or harmful material or incident, I become aware of, to the appropriate person.
- I will not (attempt to) access, copy, remove or modify any data stored on the school's network, unless permission from the owner has been granted.
- I will not open any attachments on any digital service or any files, such as those on a USB device, unless the source is known and trusted, due to the risk of the attachment containing viruses or other harmful programmes.
- I will not take any technological device(s) off-site unless permission has been given by the Headteacher.
- I will immediately report any damage or faults involving equipment or software, however this may have happened.
- I understand that if I fail to comply with this Staff Acceptable Use Policy, I could be subject to disciplinary action. This could include a warning, a suspension, referral to Governors and / or the Multi-Academy Trust and in the event of illegal activities the involvement of the relevant enforcement authorities.

I declare that by signing below, I agree to all the above and wider conditions to using any digital device on or associated with the Codsall Multi-Academy Trust network.

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Role: _____

Date: _____

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Appendix 4: online safety training needs – self-audit for staff

ONLINE SAFETY TRAINING NEEDS AUDIT	
Name of staff member/volunteer:	**Date**:
Question	**Yes/No (add comments if necessary)**
Do you know the name of the person who has lead responsibility for online safety in school?	
Are you aware of the ways pupils can abuse their peers online?	
Do you know what you must do if a pupil approaches you with a concern or issue?	
Are you familiar with the school's acceptable use agreement for staff, volunteers, governors and visitors?	
Are you familiar with the school's acceptable use agreement for pupils and parents/carers?	
Are you familiar with the filtering and monitoring systems on the school's devices and networks?	
Do you understand your role and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring?	
Do you regularly change your password for accessing the school's ICT systems?	
Are you familiar with the school's approach to tackling cyber-bullying?	
Are there any areas of online safety in which you would like training/further training?	

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Appendix 5: online safety incident report log

ONLINE SAFETY INCIDENT LOG				
Date	**Where the incident took place**	**Description of the incident**	**Action taken**	**Name and signature of staff member recording the incident**

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