

Online Safety Policy

Review Date	Reviewer	Approved by	Date Approved	Implemented
	J Barker	Executive Board	12 July 2021	1 September 2021
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Revision History

Issue No	Date	Description
1	July 2021	New Policy

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1. Introduction

The North East Learning Trust (NELT) is aware that today's pupils/students are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. The Trust and its Academies want to equip pupils/students with the knowledge needed to make the best use of the internet and technology in a safe, considered, and respected way, so they are able to reap the benefits of the online world.

2. Aims

The aim of the policy is to ensure that the Trust and its Academies:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils/students, staff, volunteers, Trustees, and Governors.
- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils/students is paramount when staff, students/pupils are using the internet, social media and/or mobile devices.
- Deliver an effective approach to online safety, which empowers us to protect and educate the whole school community in its use of technology.
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate.

3. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory safeguarding guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

- Teaching online safety in schools
- 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.

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This policy also complies with the Trust's funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Links to other policies

This policy should be read alongside the following Trust and Academy policies:

- Acceptable Use
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour
- Code of Conduct – Staff
- Code of Conduct – Members, Trustees and Governors
- Safeguarding
- SEND

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The Local Academy Council

The Local Academy Council has overall responsibility for monitoring this policy and holding the Head of School/Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Governor with responsibility for safeguarding will co-ordinate regular meetings with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to discuss online safety and monitor online safety logs.

5.2 The Headteacher/Head of School

The Headteacher/Head of School is responsible for ensuring that staff understand this policy, and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.

5.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Details of the school's DSL and Deputy DSL are set out in the Trust's Safeguarding Policy.

The DSL takes lead responsibility for online safety in the Academy, in particular:

- Supporting the Headteacher/Head of School in ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.
- Working with the Headteacher/Head of School, Network Manager, and other staff, as necessary, to address any online safety issues or incidents.
- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged (see appendix 1) 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 Academy behaviour policy.
- Updating and delivering staff training on online safety.
- Liaising with other agencies and/or external services if necessary.

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- Providing regular reports on online safety in school to the Headteacher/Head of School and/or Local Academy Council.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

5.4 The Director of IT

The Director of IT 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 and contact online while at school, including terrorist and extremist material.
- Ensuring that the Academy'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 monthly 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 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.

5.5 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 of the Trust's Acceptable Use Policy and ensuring that students/pupils follow the terms of the Trust's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Working with the DSL to ensure that any online safety incidents are logged 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.

5.6 Parents/carers

Parents are expected to:

- Notify a member of staff or the Head of School/Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding this policy

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- Ensure their child has read, understood, and agreed to the terms of the Trust's Acceptable Use Policy.

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

What are the issues? - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

Hot topics - [Childnet International](#)

Parent factsheet - [Childnet International](#)

Healthy relationships – [Disrespect Nobody](#)

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com>

5.7 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, when relevant, and expected to read and follow it. If appropriate, they will be expected to agree to the terms in the Trust's Acceptable Use Policy.

6. Educating pupils/students about online safety

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

7. Educating parents/carers about online safety

Academies will raise parents/carers awareness of internet safety in letters or other communications, and in information via our website or virtual learning environment (VLE).

If parents/carers have any queries or concerns in relation to online safety, these should be raised with staff in school.

8. Cyber-bullying

8.1 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 one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

8.2 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.

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

The school also sends information on cyber-bullying to parents/carers so that 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 Academy will follow the processes set out in the behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the Academy will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained.

The DSL will consider whether the incident should be reported to the police if it involves illegal material and will work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

8.3 Examining electronic devices

School staff have the specific power to search for and, if necessary, delete inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices, including mobile phones, iPads and other tablet devices, where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

Any searching of pupils will be carried out in line with the Trust's Safeguarding Policy and the DfE's latest guidance on [screening, searching and confiscation](#) and, where relevant the Academy's COVID-19 risk assessment.

9. Acceptable use of the internet in school

All pupils/students, 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 in accordance with the Trust's Acceptable Use Policy. Visitors will be expected to read and agree to the Academy's terms on acceptable use if relevant.

Use of the Trust and/or Academy's internet must be for educational purposes only, or for the purpose of fulfilling the duties of an individual's role.

The Trust will monitor the websites visited by pupils/students, staff, volunteers, governors, and visitors (where relevant) to ensure they comply with the above.

More information is set out in the Trust's Acceptable Use Policy.

10. 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.

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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).

The DSL and Deputy DSL 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 the Trust's Safeguarding policy.

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