E-Safety Policy

1. Introduction

At Loudwater Combined School, we recognize the importance of embracing new technologies to enhance learning opportunities. However, we are also committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students while using digital platforms and online resources. This E-Safety Policy outlines how we manage and promote safe, responsible, and effective use of technology within the school environment.

This policy is in line with statutory requirements and guidelines from the Department for Education (DfE), and covers the use of the internet, email, mobile devices, and social media, ensuring that students and staff are aware of potential online risks.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students of Loudwater Combined School.
- All staff, including teachers, teaching assistants, and other support staff.
- Governors and volunteers working within the school.
- Parents and carers, as they play a key role in supporting safe online behaviour at home.
- All devices and technologies used within the school setting, including school-issued laptops, tablets, and other personal devices brought into the school.

3. E-Safety Objectives

Our primary objectives in terms of e-safety are to:

- Promote the safe and responsible use of the internet and other technologies in school.
- Provide clear guidelines for students, staff, and parents on how to use digital resources appropriately.
- Prevent online dangers, including cyberbullying, inappropriate content, and the risk of online predators.
- Equip students with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves online, both in school and at home.
- Ensure that all staff receive adequate training in e-safety.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher

- Overall responsibility for ensuring that the E-Safety Policy is implemented effectively and that the school complies with relevant legislation.
- Regularly review and update the policy to ensure its continued relevance.

Designated E-Safety Lead

- The designated e-safety lead is Chris Spratt, who will coordinate e-safety training, oversee safeguarding issues related to technology, and ensure that e-safety procedures are followed.
- They will also ensure that the e-safety education program is implemented across all year groups.

Teachers and Staff

- Promote and model safe online behavior in class and while supervising students.
- Integrate e-safety education into lessons and provide guidance for students on using the internet responsibly.
- Report any online safety concerns to the designated e-safety lead.

Students

- Follow the school's guidelines and rules for internet and device usage.
- Report any e-safety concerns to a trusted adult at school.
- Participate actively in e-safety lessons and discussions.

Parents and Carers

- Support the school in promoting e-safety by reinforcing the safe use of technology at home.
- Engage with any e-safety initiatives or workshops offered by the school.
- Monitor their child's use of the internet and ensure age-appropriate content is accessed.

5. Acceptable Use of Technology

Students:

- Students must use the internet, devices, and school network only for educational purposes.

- Social media sites, gaming sites, and personal messaging apps should not be accessed during school hours unless permitted by the teacher for learning purposes.
- Students must respect the privacy and personal information of others and avoid sharing personal details online, including full names, addresses, and photos.
- Cyberbullying, online harassment, or any form of harmful behaviour is strictly prohibited.
- Students are not allowed to download, install, or use unauthorized software on school devices.
- Students must report any incidents of cyberbullying, inappropriate content, or online behaviour that makes them feel uncomfortable to a teacher or trusted adult.

Staff:

- Staff should only use school-provided technology for professional purposes, adhering to the school's acceptable use policy.
- Staff are encouraged to model safe and responsible online behaviour to students.
- Personal devices should not be used for teaching unless authorized, and personal social media accounts should be kept separate from professional duties.
- Staff should always be mindful of online communication with students and ensure it aligns with the school's safeguarding practices.
- Any e-safety concerns or breaches of the policy must be reported to the designated e-safety lead.

Parents and Carers:

- Parents are encouraged to check their child's online activity regularly and discuss any concerns with the school.
- Parents should be aware of the websites their children visit and the content they access.
- Parents should encourage their children to report anything they see online that upsets them.

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6. Internet Filtering and Monitoring

To protect students from inappropriate or harmful content, the following measures are in place:

- The school uses a robust filtering system that blocks access to harmful, inappropriate, or non-educational websites during school hours.
- All devices connected to the school network will be monitored for inappropriate content or behaviour.
- Regular audits of online activity will be conducted to ensure the system is working effectively and that students are accessing age-appropriate material.

7. Online Safety Education

Curriculum Integration

- E-safety education is integrated into the curriculum across all year groups, with age-appropriate lessons focused on topics such as:
    - Understanding the dangers of sharing personal information online.
    - Recognizing and reporting cyberbullying.
    - How to use technology responsibly and respectfully.
    - The impact of technology on mental health and well-being.
    - Online gaming safety and age restrictions.

Specific E-Safety Lessons

- E-safety lessons will be delivered as part of Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) education and will include discussions, activities, and interactive lessons to help students understand the risks and responsibilities of online behaviour.

Parental Involvement

- The school will offer workshops, newsletters, and online resources for parents to help them understand the importance of e-safety at home and provide guidance on keeping children safe online.

8. Cyberbullying

Definition of Cyberbullying:
Cyberbullying is defined as any form of bullying that takes place online or via electronic communication, including social media, text messages, or emails. It can include:

- Harassing, threatening, or embarrassing messages.
- Spreading false rumours online.
- Posting hurtful or humiliating images or videos.

Reporting Cyberbullying:

- All students are encouraged to report any form of cyberbullying to a teacher or trusted adult.
- Staff will take all reports of cyberbullying seriously and investigate thoroughly.
- The school will work with parents and relevant authorities to resolve incidents of cyberbullying.

9. Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

- Personal mobile phones and devices should not be used during school hours unless specified for educational purposes.
- Staff are expected to store mobile phones securely during the school day and use them only for professional purposes.

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10. Safeguarding and Online Safety

- All e-safety measures are implemented in alignment with the school's safeguarding policies. Any concerns relating to the safety of students online will be treated seriously and referred to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).
- The school will work closely with parents, the police, and other agencies if there are concerns about a child's safety or well-being online.

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11. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required. The review will include:

- Consultation with staff, students, and parents.
- Assessment of new online risks and challenges.
- Evaluation of current practices, technologies, and resources.

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12. Conclusion

At Loudwater Combined School, we believe that a strong focus on e-safety will ensure that our students can use technology in a safe and responsible way. By working together with staff, parents, and students, we aim to create a safe online environment that supports learning and protects children from harm.

Last review: November 2024
Next review: November 2025