



Online Safety Policy

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Review: October 2026

Chair of Governors:

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Headteacher:

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1. Ethos of The Orchard School

At The Orchard School, Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares. Our ethos is rooted in the belief that every child has the potential to grow, thrive, and succeed when provided with the right environment, relationships, and support. The Orchard Way guides everything we do, ensuring that our approach is therapeutic, inclusive, and centred on understanding behaviour as communication. Online safety is inseparable from this ethos. We are committed to nurturing the social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs of our pupils, recognising their unique challenges while celebrating their individuality. Through strong relationships and a culture of care, we create a school where every pupil feels safe — including in their use of technology.

2. Purpose

This policy sets out how The Orchard School will:

- Safeguard pupils, staff, and families from online risks.
- Promote safe, responsible, and respectful use of digital technologies.
- Embed online safety in our safeguarding practice, curriculum, and culture.
- Comply with statutory requirements and DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standards (2024).

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All pupils, staff, governors, volunteers, contractors, and families.
- All Orchard-owned devices, networks, platforms, and online services.
- Personal devices when connected to the school network or used for school purposes.
- On-site, off-site, and remote learning contexts.

4. Principles

- Child-Centred – Online safety is safeguarding; the welfare of the child is paramount.
- Prevention – Education, training, filtering/monitoring, and parental engagement reduce risk.
- Protection – Clear systems exist to respond to online safety incidents and misuse.

- Collaboration – Pupils, families, staff, governors, and external agencies work together.
- Therapeutic Approach – Misuse is addressed restoratively, in line with our Relational and Therapeutic Behaviour Policy.
- Future-Readiness – Pupils are equipped with digital literacy skills for adulthood.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- Governors – Strategic oversight; ensure compliance with DfE standards.
- Headteacher & SLT – Embed a whole-school approach; provide resources and accountability.
- DSL & Deputies – Lead online safety within safeguarding; oversee monitoring and incidents.
- IT Lead / Providers – Maintain systems, filtering, and monitoring.
- Staff – Model safe practice, embed online safety in teaching, report concerns.
- Pupils – Follow Ready, Respectful, Safe rules; report concerns; use devices responsibly.
- Parents/Carers – Support safe use at home; reinforce school expectations.

6. 6. Implementation

6.1 Filtering and Monitoring

- Internet access filtered through WatchGuard (Primary Technologies), blocking illegal/harmful content.
- Logs monitored by DSL and IT team; reviewed termly.
- Annual review ensures compliance with DfE Filtering & Monitoring Standards (2024).

6.2 Education and Curriculum

- Online safety taught through RSHE, computing, assemblies, therapeutic interventions.
- Pupils taught about risks: content, contact, conduct, commerce.
- Digital literacy includes fact-checking, managing AI, online reputation, safe communication.

6.3 Staff Training

- Induction includes online safety.
- Annual safeguarding training covers filtering/monitoring and online risks.
- DSLs and governors receive enhanced training.

6.4 Safe Use of Devices

- Pupils issued iPads under Assistive Technology Policy.
- Boundaries set out in Device Use Agreement.
- Misuse addressed via Relational and Therapeutic Behaviour Policy.
- Staff follow AUP and Code of Conduct.

6.5 Artificial Intelligence (AI)

- AI use follows the AI Policy: only safeguarded tools used.
- Pupil data never uploaded externally.
- AI supports learning but never replaces staff judgement.

7. Parent/Carer Engagement

- Parents informed of filtering/monitoring systems.
- Guidance provided on home use.
- Engagement through newsletters, workshops, website.

8. Safeguarding and Reporting

- Online safety concerns are safeguarding concerns.
- Incidents recorded on Safeguard My School.
- DSL escalates to Front Door Service, Kent Police, or agencies if required.
- Pupils taught safe ways to report concerns.

9. Statutory and Legal Framework

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2023)
- Education Act 2002 (Section 175)
- DfE Filtering & Monitoring Standards (2024)
- Data Protection Act 2018 & UK GDPR
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2025)

10. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Assistive Technology Policy
- Device Use Agreement
- AI Policy
- Relational and Therapeutic Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct / Acceptable Use Policy

- Data Protection & GDPR Policy

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, DSL, and Governing Body, or sooner if statutory guidance changes, new online risks emerge, or significant safeguarding incidents occur.