St. Mary's CE Academy

'Excellence through faith & learning'

Online Safety Policy

"Rise up, take courage and do it."

Ezra 10:4

Online Safety Policy

St. Mary's CE Academy
'Excellence through faith & learning'

Introduction

In accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum in England and the latest guidance from the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), this Online Safety Policy outlines the strategies and measures our school will implement to ensure the safe use of technology among students. This policy is designed to foster a safe online learning environment, where pupils can engage, explore, and learn responsibly.

Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- Protect and educate pupils and staff in their use of technology.

- Establish clear guidelines regarding acceptable use of technology.

- Provide a framework for responding to online safety incidents.

- Develop an informed and proactive school community that recognises the risks involved in using technology.

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by the following legal and statutory frameworks:

- The Education Act 2002

- The Children Act 1989

- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

- Online Safety in Schools: September 2021 update

Responsibilities

Online Safety Subject Leader

- Oversee and implement online safety procedures.

- Lead training and awareness programmes for staff, students, and parents.

- Regularly review and update the Online Safety Policy and associated procedures.

- Liaise with external organisations and law enforcement as necessary.

Staff Responsibilities

- Model safe and responsible online behaviour.

- Embed online safety into lessons across the curriculum.

- Report any online safety incidents promptly to the Online Safety Subject Leader.

Pupil Responsibilities

- Understand and abide by the school's online safety rules.

- Report any inappropriate content, behaviour, or incidents to an adult.

- Engage in online safety learning opportunities to understand the risks.

Parent/Carer Responsibilities

- Support the school's online safety policy and practices at home.

- Educate children about safe online behaviour and the importance of privacy.

Education and Training

For Pupils

- **Curriculum Integration**: Online safety will be an integral part of the curriculum across all subjects, notably in computing.

- **Age-Appropriate Workshops**: Regular online safety workshops tailored to various age groups.

- **Digital Citizenship Programme**: A programme designed to promote positive online behaviour, including respect, responsibility, and resilience.

For Staff

- **Professional Development**: Mandatory training sessions on online safety and emerging technology threats.

- **Resources and Support**: Providing access to online safety materials to support curriculum delivery.

For Parents/Carers

- **Information Sessions**: Regular briefings and workshops on online safety for parents/carers.

- **Resource Sharing**: Distributing online resources and guides for parents to use at home.

Acceptable Use Policy

Guidelines for Acceptable Use

- All users (pupils and staff) must sign an Acceptable Use Agreement at the beginning of each academic year.

- Use of school technology should be for educational purposes only.

- Social media sites may only be accessed under staff supervision.

- Personal devices (e.g., smartphones) should be used in accordance with the guidelines provided by the school.

Reporting Mechanism

- A clear procedure for reporting online safety incidents must be established and communicated.

- All reported incidents will be documented and reviewed, with appropriate follow-up actions taken.

Incident Management

Responding to Incidents

- All reported incidents should be investigated promptly and seriously.

- Parents will be informed where appropriate, and external authorities will be involved if necessary.

- Support will be provided for both the victim and the perpetrator.

Monitoring and Review

- The Online Safety Policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if significant changes occur in technology or legislation.

- Feedback from staff, pupils, and parents will be gathered to inform ongoing development and improvement of the policy.

Summary of Expectations Based on Ofsted Framework

According to the most recent Ofsted framework, schools are expected to:

- Foster a culture of safeguarding throughout the school, which includes robust online safety measures.

- Provide a curriculum that develops pupils' understanding of safe online practices and prepares them for modern life.

- Ensure that all staff are well-trained and equipped to deal with online safety issues effectively.

- Promote partnerships with parents and the community to safeguard pupils in the digital environment.

By adhering to the guidelines set forth in this Online Safety Policy, our school strives to create a safe and enriching online environment for all members of our community, in alignment with the expectations of Ofsted and the National Curriculum.