

Online safety in schools and colleges: Questions from the Governing Board



1. Does the school/college have online safety and acceptable use policies in place? How does the school/college assess that they are clear, understood and respected by all children and staff?

Why this question?	The Department for Education's (DfE) 2016 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) statutory guidance states that "Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate procedures in place...to safeguard and promote children's welfare...which should amongst other things include... acceptable use of technologies...and communications including the use of social media." ¹ However, the 2015 Ofsted Inspection Data reported that 5% of schools didn't have an online safety policy.
What to look for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Systematic and regular review of online safety policies, at least on an annual basis. ■ Evidence that online safety policies are freely and readily available (e.g. posters, school/college website, staff handbooks, etc.). ■ Pupils, staff, parents and carers are aware of online safety rules and expectations.
What is good or outstanding practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collaborative production and review of policies, for example, evidence of the active use of pupils' and parents views. ■ Evidence of monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure understanding of, and adherence to, online safety policies. ■ Linked to and a part of other policies, such as safeguarding policies.
When should you be concerned?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No or minimal online safety policies ■ Policy is generic and not relevant to the school / college / pupil's needs ■ No / irregular review of online safety policy ■ Policies exist but are not publicised to the school/ college body and / or are not known by staff and pupils.

2. What mechanisms does the school / college have in place to support pupils, staff and parents facing online safety issues?

Why this question?	<p>South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL) concluded in their sexting surveys over time (2009-2014)² of 1,100 11–16 year olds that 74% would prefer to report issues to their friends rather than a 'trusted adult'.</p> <p>The 2015 Ofsted's Online Safety Inspection Data found that reporting is clearly the weakest area of school practice around online safety, with reporting being both poorly understood and inconsistent. Many pupils were unclear about how to report when things went wrong and when they needed support. Further, in September 2015, Ofsted stated that "Inspectors should investigate what the school or further education and skills provider does to educate pupils in online safety and how the provider or school deals with issues when they arise."³</p> <p>With regards to monitoring and filtering, the 2016 KCSIE statutory guidance states "As schools and</p>
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¹ P14.

² *Sharing personal images and videos among young people*, SWGfL & Plymouth University, 2009; <http://www.swgfl.org.uk/Staying-Safe/Sexting-Survey>.

³ p15, *Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings*, Ofsted, September 2015.

	colleges increasingly work online it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such governing bodies and proprietors should ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place.”
What to look for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Online safety clearly recognised as a safeguarding issue within the roles and responsibilities of the school/ college Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) ■ Robust reporting channels which could be defined as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Well-defined, clearly understood and consistent reporting channels. ➢ Whole-school/college approach, in which reporting channels include teachers, parents and pupils. ➢ Multiple reporting routes for pupils and parents which they have confidence in. ■ Clearly articulated procedures for responding to different online risks (Sexting; Online Bullying; Online grooming etc.) ■ Regular review of monitoring and filtering provisions as part of safeguarding responsibilities e.g. Evidence of communication between technical staff and DSLs ■ Links into other relevant policies and procedures e.g. complaints, allegations etc.
What is good or outstanding practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Online reporting mechanisms for students and parents. ■ All staff are aware of sources of support for online safety issues, such as the Professionals Online Safety Helpline. ■ Nominated members of staff with appropriate skills and responsibilities e.g. (DSL), trained and available to deal with the various risks related to online activity. ■ Planned and effective peer support strategies, e.g. reporting mechanisms / escalation processes supported by professionals and teachers. ■ Auditing of online behaviour and risks which provides base line information from the pupils about the levels and types of online issues prevalent in the school / college. ■ Regular evaluation of reporting channels and response procedures. ■ Online safety information / data highlighted within the Head Teacher’s report to the governing board.
When should you be concerned?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No / inconsistent reporting channels. ■ No recording processes to enable the school/ college to identify and monitor concerns. ■ Pupils and parents unaware of reporting channels. ■ Reporting routes pupils and parents lack confidence in.

3. How do you ensure that all staff receive appropriate online safety training that is relevant and regularly updated?

Why this question?	The SWGfL <i>Online Safety Policy and Practice (2015)</i> report found that over 50% of schools had carried out no online safety training for their staff. The 2015 Ofsted inspection data presented a stronger picture but training was still found to be inconsistent, and suggested that what senior leadership teams saw as training was not always seen as such by staff.
What to look for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Training content which improves staff knowledge of, and expertise in, safe behaviours and appropriate use of technologies.⁴ ■ Audit of the training needs of all staff. ■ At least annual training (in-service or online) for all staff. ■ Online safety training coordinated by recognised appropriate individual (e.g. DSL) or

⁴ This is a specific recommendation for schools from Ofsted’s 2010 landmark report, *The safe use of new technologies*, p6.

	group with online safety responsibility
What is good or outstanding practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ DSL has a higher level of training, knowledge and expertise on online safety issues, with clearly defined responsibilities related to online safety provision for the school / college community. ■ Expertise on online safety is developed across a pool of staff, to ensure transfer and sustainability of knowledge and training. ■ Online safety training clearly established within the school/ college's wider safeguarding training ■ Training content updated to reflect current research and advances in technology as well as local policy and procedures.
When should you be concerned?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No recognised individual / group for online safety or they lack appropriate training and authority ■ DSL lacking appropriate training and authority in online safety training. ■ No, little or out-of-date training for all staff ■ There are teaching and pastoral staff that have no online safety training. ■ Training on online safety which does not meet the needs of staff – with the aim of improving knowledge of, and expertise in, the safe and appropriate use of technologies. ■ Training based on outdated resources / materials. ■ Regular training (at least annual) is not undertaken. ■ Lack of clarity on who coordinates staff training.

4. Describe how your school/college educates children and young people to build knowledge, skills and confidence when it comes to online safety? How do you assess its effectiveness?

Why this question?	<p>A key recommendation in the Byron review (2008)⁵ was building the resilience of children to online issues through progressive and appropriate education. In response to the Byron Review, Ofsted stated in their 2010 report <i>The safe use of new technologies</i> that schools should "provide an age-related, comprehensive curriculum for e-safety which enables pupils to become safe and responsible users of new technologies".⁶ In September 2015, Ofsted stated that "Inspectors should investigate what the school or further education and skills provider does to educate pupils in online safety ..."⁷</p> <p>With specific reference to the governing board, the 2016 KCSIE statutory guidance states "Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), tutorials (in FE colleges) and / or – for maintained schools and colleges – through sex and relationship education (SRE)".⁸</p>
What to look for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Planned online safety education programme which is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Taught across all age groups, and progresses as pupils grow and develop.

⁵ *Safer children in a digital world: the report of the Byron Review* (PP/D16(7578)/03/08), DCSF and DCMS, 2008.

⁶ p6, *The Safe Use of New Technologies*, Ofsted, 2010

⁷ p15, *Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings*, Ofsted, September 2015.

⁸ P17/18.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regular as opposed to a one-off online safety sessions. ➤ Incorporates / make use of relevant national initiatives and opportunities such as Safer Internet Day and Anti-bullying week. ■ Use of appropriate and up-to-date resources. ■ Resources from external providers may be used appropriately to support and compliment internal programmes. ■ Accessible to pupils at different ages and abilities, such as pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), or those with English as an additional language. ■ Pupils are able to recall, explain and actively use online safety education. ■ Teachers have access to appropriate training, to ensure teaching on online safety is undertaken by trained staff.
What is good or outstanding practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Online safety is embedded throughout the school/college curriculum. This means that the knowledge, skills and confidence of pupils, on issues related to online safety, are planned into all relevant school lessons such as PSHE education, as well as Sex and Relationships Education and computing. ■ Regular review of online safety sessions to ensure their relevance.
When should you be concerned?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ad-hoc / one-off sessions on online safety, such as sessions only delivered through assemblies. ■ Content used is inaccurate, irrelevant, out of date and / or inappropriate for the age of the child. ■ Sole reliance on external providers to provide online safety education to learners. ■ No means to evaluate the effectiveness of education tools, and assess pupils' learning in this area.

5. How does the school/college educate parents and the whole school/college community with online safety?

Why this question?	A key finding from the Ofcom <i>Children's Media Lives reports</i> (2016) ⁹ is that many parents lack confidence in their ability to support their children in dealing with online risks, due to lack of confidence in using technology and digital media. Parent Zone's 2014 report ¹⁰ also found "Supporting and enabling parenting has more of a positive impact on resilience than parental strategies to restrict or monitor internet use". Accordingly, Ofsted's 2010 report states schools should "work closely with all families to help them ensure that their children use new technologies safely and responsibly both at home and school". ¹¹
What to look for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regular communication, awareness-raising and engagement on online safety issues, such as through the school/college's communications outlets, such as the school website and newsletters. ■ Regular opportunities for engagement with parents on online safety issues.
What is good or outstanding practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interactive engagement with parents, with the aim of building skills and confidence in dealing with online risks, as well as general awareness on online safety issues. ■ Regular and relevant online safety resources and sessions offered to parents. Relevant resources will tackle key online risks and behaviours displayed by pupils at different ages in the school/college. ■ Evidence of pupils educating parents.

⁹ P10.

¹⁰ P4, "A Shared Responsibility: Building Children's Online Resilience", Parentzone, 2014.

¹¹ P6.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Online safety information available in a variety of formats which considers the needs of different parents, such as those with English as an additional language.
When should you be concerned?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No / minimal awareness-raising on online safety issues. ■ No online safety engagement with parents. ■ Recurrent problem behaviours amongst pupils (such as younger pupils playing games aimed towards older adolescents and adults).

Appendix 1: Where to go for more support

1. Does the school/college have online safety and acceptable use policies in place? How does the school/college assess that they are clear, understood and respected by all children and staff?

- Policy Templates, Guidance documents, and Acceptable Use Policy Templates for Education Settings, Kent County Council: <http://www.kelsi.org.uk/support-for-children-and-young-people/child-protection-and-safeguarding/e-safety>
- School Online Safety Policy Templates by the South West grid for Learning (SWGfl). SWGfl is an educational charitable trust: <http://swgfl.org.uk/products-services/esafety/resources/online-safety-policy-templates>
- London Grid for Learning (LGfL): <http://onlinesafety.lgfl.net>
- 'SWGFL 360 degree safe' audit tool which enables schools to evaluate their own online safety provision: <https://360safe.org.uk/>

2. What mechanisms does the school/college have in place to support pupils, staff and parents facing online safety issues?

- The 2016 Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance depicts a flowchart on page 10, on what actions to take when there are concerns about a child. These processes should also be followed as appropriate, when staff have concerns about a child's online safety / concerns prompted by a child's behaviour online:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/526153/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_guidance_from_5_September_2016.pdf
- Advice for practitioners (including school staff) provides detailed information as to what to do if there are concerns a child is being abused, by the Department of Education, UK Government:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>
- Sexting Guidance document by the UK CEOP, the Child Exploitation Command of the National Crime Agency (NCA). This document includes a Sexting response flowchart in Annex 1:
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/Teachers/blog/Dates/2013/3/Sexting-in-schools-What-to-do-and-how-to-handle-it/>
- Appropriate filtering and monitoring guides for schools and education settings, by the UK Safer Internet Centre: <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/teachers-and-professionals/appropriate-filtering-and-monitoring>
- CEOP Safety Centre - for help, advice or to report an incident: <http://www.ceop.police.uk/>
- The Professionals Online Safety Helpline, by the UK Safer Internet Centre:
<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/about/helpline>
- Access your local policies and procedures - some regional broadband consortia, local authorities and/or local safeguarding children's boards may have specific policies and procedures for responding to some online safety risks

3. How do you ensure that all staff receive appropriate online safety training that is relevant and regularly updated?

There is plenty of training material and courses provided by:

- CEOP offers one day training for professionals (paid Ambassador training) on online safety. <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/teachers/training/paidtrainingDetails/>
- UK Safer Internet Centre advice and resources for teachers and professionals: <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/teachers-and-professionals> and Online Safety Briefings from young people: www.onlinesafetylive.com
- Childnet's Professional resources: <http://www.childnet.com/teachers-and-professionals>
- Keeping Children Safe Online by the children's charity NSPCC and CEOP, is an online introductory safeguarding course for anyone who works with children: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/keeping-children-safe-online-course/>
- Access any local support available- some regional broadband consortia, local authorities or local safeguarding children's boards offer online safety training for professionals

4. Describe how your school/college educates children and young people to build knowledge, skills and confidence when it comes to online safety? How do you assess its effectiveness?

There are a number of resources for children and young people developed by organisations who specialise in children's online safety:

- CEOP's online safety education programme called Thinkuknow: <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>
- Childnet (a non-for-profit organisation working in online safety): <http://www.childnet.com/resources>
- UK Safer Internet Centre, (a coordinated partnerships of SWGfL, the Internet Watch Foundation and Childnet): <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/young-people>
- SWGfL and Common Sense Media, which includes curriculum mapping: <http://swgfl.org.uk/products-services/esafety/resources/Digital-Literacy>

5. How does the school/college educate parents and the whole school/college community with online safety?

- Parent Zone, a not-for-profit organisation, offers Parents information to help understand the digital world and raise resilient children. They also offer training for teachers on how to engage parents: <http://parentzone.org.uk/>
- Parent and Carer support from the UK Safer Internet Centre: <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/parents-and-carers>
- Childnet, provides information and advice for parents and carer, including a printable sheet available in 12 languages: <http://www.childnet.com/resources/supporting-young-people-online>
- Vodafone's Digital Parenting resources: <http://www.vodafoneigitalparenting.co.uk>
- Netware by NSPCC and O2, offers a guide to social networks for parents. <https://www.net-aware.org.uk>
- Share Aware by NSPCC and O2, offers advice to parents about the internet: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware>
- Parentinfo by CEOP and Parent Zone provides high quality information to parents and carers: <http://parentinfo.org>
- Parents section of CEOP's Thinkuknow website. <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>
- Engaging parents with online safety by Kent Country Council: http://www.kelsi.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/29749/Engaging-Families-schools-and-professionals.pdf