

# **Maple Primary School Policy for eSafety**



**September 2016**

This policy is based on guidance from The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.  
(HSCB)

**Reviewed & updated July 2016.**

# Contents

Introduction	3
Roles and Responsibilities	4
eSafety in the Curriculum	4
Password Security	5
Data Security	5
Managing the Internet safely	6
Managing other Web 2 technologies	7
Social Media	7
Mobile Technologies	8
Managing email	8
Safe Use of Images	9
Misuse and Infringements	11
Equal Opportunities	11
Parental Involvement	11
Writing and Reviewing this Policy	12
Acceptable Use Agreement: Staff, Governors and Visitors	13
Acceptable Use Agreement: Pupils	13
Flowcharts for Managing an eSafety Incident	18
Incident Log	19
Smile and Stay Safe Poster	20
Current Legislation	21

# Introduction

ICT in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is seen as an essential resource to support learning and teaching, as well as playing an important role in the everyday lives of children, young people and adults. Consequently, schools need to build in the use of these technologies in order to arm our young people with the skills to access life-long learning and employment.

Information and Communications Technology covers a wide range of resources including; web-based and mobile learning. It is also important to recognise the constant and fast paced evolution of ICT within our society as a whole. Currently the internet technologies children and young people are using both inside and outside of the classroom include:

- Websites
- Learning Platforms and Virtual Learning Environments
- Email and Instant Messaging
- Chat Rooms and Social Networking
- Twitter, Blogs and Wikis
- Podcasting
- Video Broadcasting
- Music Downloading
- Gaming
- Mobile/Smart phones with text, video and/or web functionality
- Other mobile devices with web functionality

Whilst exciting and beneficial both in and out of the context of education, much ICT, particularly web-based resources, are not consistently policed. All users need to be aware of the range of risks associated with the use of these Internet technologies and that some have minimum age requirements, usually 13 years.

At Maple Primary School, we understand the responsibility to educate our pupils on eSafety issues; teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies, in and beyond the context of the classroom.

Both this policy and the Acceptable Use Agreement are inclusive of both fixed and mobile internet; technologies provided by the school (such as PCs, laptops, webcams, whiteboards, digital video equipment, etc); and technologies owned by pupils and staff, but brought onto school premises (such as laptops, mobile phones, and other mobile devices).

# Roles and Responsibilities

As eSafety is an important aspect of strategic leadership within the school, the Head and governors have ultimate responsibility to ensure that the policy and practices are embedded and monitored. The named eSafety co-ordinator in our school is **Harriet Woodhouse, ICT Subject Leader** who has been designated this role. All members of the school community have been made aware of who holds this post. It is the role of the eSafety co-ordinator to keep abreast of current issues and guidance through organisations such as Herts LA, CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) and Childnet.

Senior Management and Governors are updated by the Head/eSafety co-ordinator and all governors have an understanding of the issues and strategies at our school in relation to local and national guidelines and advice.

This policy, supported by the school's acceptable use agreements for staff, governors, visitors and pupils (appendices), is to protect the interests and safety of the whole school community. It is linked to the following school policies: child protection, health and safety, home-school agreements, and behaviour/pupil discipline (including the anti-bullying) policy and PHSE.

## **eSafety skills development for staff**

- Our staff receive regular information and training on eSafety issues in the form of staff meetings and online resources.
- Details of the ongoing staff training programme can be found in the Staff Room e Safety folder.
- New staff receive information on the school's acceptable use policy as part of their induction.
- All staff have been made aware of their individual responsibilities relating to the safeguarding of children within the context of eSafety and know what to do in the event of misuse of technology by any member of the school community (see attached flowcharts.)
- All staff are encouraged to incorporate eSafety activities and awareness within their curriculum areas (ICT and PSHE curriculum).

## **Managing the school eSafety messages**

- We endeavour to embed eSafety messages across the curriculum whenever the internet and/or related technologies are used.
- The e-safety policy and acceptable use policy will be introduced to the pupils at the start of each school year.
- eSafety posters will be prominently displayed.
- The key eSafety advice will be promoted widely through school displays, newsletters, class activities.

# eSafety in the Curriculum

ICT and online resources are increasingly used across the curriculum. We believe it is essential for eSafety guidance to be given to the pupils on a regular and meaningful basis. eSafety is embedded within our curriculum and we continually look for new opportunities to promote eSafety.

- The school has a framework for teaching internet skills in ICT/ PHSE lessons. (See Computing Scheme of Work, Think You Know website use, e safety folder for links and resources)
- The school provides opportunities within a range of curriculum areas to teach about eSafety.
- Educating pupils about the online risks that they may encounter outside school is done informally when opportunities arise and as part of the eSafety curriculum.
- Pupils are aware of the relevant legislation when using the internet such as data protection and intellectual property which may limit what they want to do but also serves to protect them.
- Pupils are taught about copyright, respecting other people's information, the safe use of images and other important areas through discussion, modelling and appropriate activities.
- Pupils are aware of the impact of online bullying and know how to seek help if they are affected by these issues. Pupils are also aware of where to seek advice or help if they experience problems when using the internet and related technologies.
- Pupils are taught to critically evaluate materials and learn good searching skills through cross curricular teacher models, discussions and via the ICT curriculum (i.e. Year 5 QCA unit 5c. Year 3 ICT and PSHE units)

## Password Security

Password security is essential for staff, particularly as they are able to access and use pupil data. Staff are expected to have secure passwords which are not shared. Staff and pupils are regularly reminded of the need for password security.

- All users read and sign an Acceptable Use Agreement to demonstrate that they have understood the school's e-safety Policy.
- All staff are provided with an individual network, email and Learning Platform log-in username. All pupils are provided with an individual network username and shared class password. From Year 6 they are also expected to use a personal password and keep it private for the Learning Platform.
- Pupils are not allowed to deliberately access on-line materials or files on the school network, of their peers, teachers or others.
- If you think your password may have been compromised or someone else has become aware of your password report this to Harriet Woodhouse (ICT Subject Leader) or Amanda Moloney (ICT Technician).
- Staff are aware of their individual responsibilities to protect the security and confidentiality of school networks, MIS systems and Learning Platform, including ensuring that passwords are not shared and are changed periodically. Individual staff users must also make sure that workstations are not left unattended and are locked.
- Due consideration should be given when logging into the Learning Platform to the browser/cache options (shared or private computer)

# Data Security

The accessing and appropriate use of school data is something that the school takes very seriously. The school follows Becta guidelines (published Autumn 2008) Although this organisation was closed in 2011, its information is still relevant.

Local Authority guidance documents can be found at

HGfL: School Admin: School Office: Data Protection and Freedom of Information

- Staff are aware of their responsibility when accessing school data. Level of access is determined by the Headteacher.
- At present, data can only be accessed and used on the school office computers.

## **Managing the Internet**

All use of the **Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (HGfL)** is logged and the logs are randomly but regularly monitored. Whenever any inappropriate use is detected it will be followed up.

- Students will have supervised access to Internet resources (where reasonable) through the school's fixed and mobile internet technology.
- Staff will preview any recommended sites before use.
- Raw image searches are discouraged when working with pupils.
- If Internet research is set for homework, specific sites will be suggested that have previously been checked by the teacher. Parents will be advised to recheck these sites and supervise this work. Parents will be advised to supervise any further research.
- All users must observe software copyright at all times. It is illegal to copy or distribute school software or illegal software from other sources.
- All users must observe copyright of materials from electronic resources.

### **Infrastructure**

- Hertfordshire Local Authority has a monitoring solution via the Hertfordshire Grid for Learning where web-based activity is monitored and recorded.
- School internet access is controlled through the LA's web filtering service.
- Maple Primary School is aware of its responsibility when monitoring staff communication under current legislation and takes into account; Data Protection Act 1998, The Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000, Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, Human Rights Act 1998.
- Staff and pupils are aware that school based email and internet activity can be monitored and explored further if required.
- The school does not allow pupils access to internet logs.
- The school uses management control (RM) tools for controlling and monitoring workstations.
- If staff or pupils discover an unsuitable site, the screen must be switched off/closed and the incident reported immediately to the e-safety co-ordinator.
- It is the responsibility of the school, by delegation to the network manager, to ensure that Anti-virus protection is installed and kept up-to-date on all school machines.

- Pupils and Staff using personal removable media are responsible for measures to protect against viruses. It is not the school's responsibility nor the network manager's to install or maintain virus protection on personal systems. If pupils wish to bring in work on removable media it must be given to the ICT technician, ICT Subject Leader or the Class Teacher for a safety check first.
- Pupils and staff are not permitted to download programs or files on school based technologies without seeking prior permission from the ICT technician or ICT subject leader.
- If there are any issues related to viruses or anti-virus software, the network manager should be informed via a report form, or through the Learning Platform (ICT issue tracking area).

## Managing other Web 2 technologies

Web 2 technologies - including social networking sites

- At present, the school endeavours to deny access to social networking sites to pupils within school through the HGFL.
- Pupils will be advised never to give out personal details of any kind which may identify them or their location.
- Pupils are advised to be cautious about the information given by others on sites, for example users not being who they say they are.
- Pupils and parents will be advised that the use of social network spaces outside school is inappropriate for primary aged pupils.
- Pupils are taught to avoid placing images of themselves (or details within images that could give background details) on such sites and to consider the appropriateness of any images they post.
- Our pupils are asked to report any incidents of bullying to the school.
- Staff may only create blogs, wikis or other web 2 spaces in order to communicate with pupils using the LA Learning Platform.

## Social Media

- Our school uses Facebook (PTA only) and Twitter (classes) to communicate with parents and carers. Harriet Woodhouse is responsible for all postings on Twitter and monitors responses from others
- Staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers are regularly provided with information on how to use social media responsibly and what to do if they are aware of inappropriate use by others
- Staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers are aware that the information, comments, images and video they post online can be viewed by others, copied and stay online forever
- Staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers are aware that their online behaviour should at all times be compatible with UK law

# Mobile technologies

Many emerging technologies offer new opportunities for teaching and learning. Emerging technologies will be examined for educational benefit and the risk assessed before use in school is allowed. Our school chooses to manage the use of these devices in the following ways so that users exploit them appropriately.

## **Personal Mobile devices (including phones)**

- The school allows staff to bring in personal mobile phones and devices for their own use. Under no circumstances does the school allow a member of staff to contact a pupil or parent/carer using their personal device.
- Year 5 and 6 pupils are allowed to bring personal mobile phones to school but they must be handed to the class teacher at the start of the school day. They must not use them for personal purposes within lesson time. At all times the device must be switched onto silent.
- The school is not responsible for the loss, damage or theft of any personal mobile device.
- The sending of inappropriate text messages between any member of the school community is not allowed.

## **School provided Mobile devices (including phones)**

- The sending of inappropriate text messages between any member of the school community is not allowed.
- Permission must be sought before any image or sound recordings are made on the devices of any member of the school community.
- Where the school provides a laptop for staff, only this device may be used to conduct school business outside of school.

# Managing email

The use of email is an essential means of communication for both staff and pupils. In the context of school, email should not be considered private. We recognise that pupils need to understand how to style an email in relation to their age and good 'netiquette'.

- The school gives all staff their own email account to use for all school business.
- It is the responsibility of each account holder to keep the password secure. For the safety and security of users and recipients, all mail is filtered and logged; if necessary email histories can be traced.
- Under no circumstances should staff contact pupils, parents or conduct any school business using personal email addresses.
- E-mail sent to an external organisation should be written carefully before sending, in the same way as a letter written on school headed paper.
- Staff sending emails to external organisations, parents or pupils are advised to cc. the Headteacher, line manager or designated account.
- Pupils may only use school approved accounts on the school system and only under direct teacher supervision for educational purposes.
- The following pupils have their own individual school issued accounts: Year 6, all other children use a class/ group email address.

- The forwarding of chain letters is not permitted in school.
- All e-mail users are expected to adhere to the generally accepted rules of network etiquette (netiquette) particularly in relation to the use of appropriate language and not revealing any personal details about themselves or others in e-mail communication, or arrange to meet anyone without specific permission, virus checking attachments.
- Pupils must immediately tell a teacher/ trusted adult if they receive an offensive e-mail.
- Staff must inform the eSafety coordinator/Headteacher if they receive an offensive e-mail.
- Pupils are introduced to email as part of the Computing Scheme of Work.

## Safe Use of Images

### Taking of Images and Film

- With the written consent of parents (on behalf of pupils) and staff, the school permits the appropriate taking of images by staff and pupils with school equipment.
- Staff are advised to use school devices but can use personal devices to take photos with the express permission of the Headteacher. Images can be taken provided they are transferred immediately and solely to the school's network and deleted from the staff device. Staff have been given information and training on complete deletion of images (e.g. storing on the 'cloud' on ipads/ iphones).
- Pupils are not permitted to use personal digital equipment, including mobile phones and cameras, to record images of the others, this includes when on field trips.

### Consent of adults who work at the school

- Permission to use images of all staff who work at the school is sought on induction.

### Publishing pupil's images and work

On a child's entry to the school, all parents/guardians will be asked to give permission to use their child's work/photos in the following ways:

- on the school web site
- on the school newspaper
- in the school prospectus and other printed publications that the school may produce for promotional purposes
- recorded/ transmitted on a video or webcam
- in display material that may be used in the school's communal areas
- in display material that may be used in external areas, ie exhibition promoting the school
- general media appearances, eg local/ national media/ press releases sent to the press highlighting an activity (sent using traditional methods or electronically)

This consent form is considered valid for the entire period that the child attends this school unless there is a change in the child's circumstances where consent could be an issue, eg divorce of parents, custody issues. Parents/carers may withdraw permission, in writing, at any time. Consent has to be given by both parents in order for it to be deemed valid.

- Pupils' names will not be published alongside their image and vice versa. E-mail and postal addresses of pupils will not be published. Pupils' full names will not be published.
- Before posting student work on the Internet, a check needs to be made to ensure that permission has been given for work to be displayed.
- Only the Web Managers, have authority to upload to the site.

### **Storage of Images**

- Images/films of children are stored on the school's network.
- Pupils and staff are not permitted to use personal portable media for storage of images (e.g., USB sticks) without the express permission of the Headteacher.
- Rights of access to this material are restricted to the teaching staff and pupils within the confines of the school network/ Learning Platform.
- All teachers have the responsibility of deleting the images when they are no longer required, or the pupil has left the school.

### **Webcams and Video Conferencing**

- We will not use publicly accessible webcams in school.
- If video conferencing were to take place, permission is sought from parents and carers if their children are to be involved.
- All pupils will be supervised by a member of staff when using webcams or video conferencing

# Misuse and Infringements - Complaints

Complaints relating to eSafety should be made to the eSafety co-ordinator or Headteacher. Incidents should be logged and the **Hertfordshire Flowcharts for Managing an eSafety Incident** should be followed (see appendix).

## Inappropriate material

- All users are aware of the procedures for reporting accidental access to inappropriate materials. The breach must be immediately reported to the eSafety co-ordinator.
- Deliberate access to inappropriate materials by any user will lead to the incident being logged by the eSafety co-ordinator, depending on the seriousness of the offence (see flowchart), with possible sanctions applied.
- Users are made aware of sanctions relating to the misuse or misconduct by discussing the Acceptable Use Policy at staff meetings, or with the pupils in the class.
- Complaints of a child protection nature must be dealt with in accordance with the school child protection procedures.

# Equal Opportunities

## Pupils with additional needs

The school endeavours to create a consistent message with parents for all pupils and this in turn should aid establishment and future development of the schools' eSafety rules. However, staff are aware that some pupils may require additional teaching including reminders, prompts and further explanation to reinforce their existing knowledge and understanding of eSafety issues. Where a pupil has poor social understanding, careful consideration is given to group interactions when raising awareness of eSafety. Internet activities are planned and well managed for these children and young people.

# Parental Involvement

We believe that it is essential for parents/carers to be fully involved with promoting eSafety both in and outside of school. We regularly consult and discuss eSafety with parents/ carers and seek to promote a wide understanding of the benefits related to ICT and associated risks.

- Parents/carers are asked to read through and sign acceptable use agreements on behalf of their child on admission to school (or when required).
- Parents/carers are required to make a decision as to whether they consent to images of their child being taken/used in the public domain (e.g. on school website)
- The school disseminates information to parents relating to eSafety where appropriate in the form of:
  - Information and celebration evenings
  - Posters
  - Website postings
  - Newsletter items
  - (Future events: Learning platform training)

# Writing and Reviewing this Policy

## Staff and pupil involvement in policy creation

- Staff and pupils have been involved in making/reviewing the eSafety policy through staff meetings and school council meetings.

## Review Procedure

There will be an on-going opportunity for staff to discuss with the eSafety coordinator any issue of eSafety that concerns them.

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months and consideration given to the implications for future whole school development planning.

The policy will be amended if new technologies are adopted or Central Government change the orders or guidance in any way.

This policy has been read, amended and approved by the staff, head teacher and governors in July 2016





# Maple School

## Acceptable Use Agreement: Staff, Governors and Visitors



ICT and the related technologies such as email, the internet and mobile devices are an expected part of our daily working life in school. This policy is designed to ensure that all staff are aware of their professional responsibilities when using any form of ICT. All staff are expected to sign this policy and adhere at all times to its contents. Any concerns or clarification should be discussed with Harriet Woodhouse, eSafety coordinator.

- I will only use the school's email / Internet / Intranet / Learning Platform and any related technologies for professional purposes or for uses deemed 'reasonable' by the Head or Governing Body.
- I will comply with the ICT system security and not disclose any passwords provided to me by the school or other related authorities.
- I will ensure that all electronic communications with pupils and staff are compatible with my professional role.
- I will not give out my own personal details, such as mobile phone number and personal email address, to pupils.
- I will only use the approved, secure email system(s) for any school business.
- I will ensure that personal data (such as data held on SIMS) is kept secure and is used appropriately, whether in school, taken off the school premises or accessed remotely. Personal data can only be taken out of school or accessed remotely when authorised by the Head or Governing Body.
- I will not install any hardware or software without permission of the Headteacher
- I will not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Images of pupils and/ or staff will only be taken, stored and used for professional purposes inline with school policy and with written consent of the parent, carer or staff member. Images will not be distributed outside the school network without the permission of the parent/ carer, member of staff or Headteacher.
- I understand that all my use of the Internet and other related technologies can be monitored and logged and can be made available, on request, to my Line Manager or Headteacher.
- I will respect copyright and intellectual property rights.
- I will ensure that my online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring my professional role into disrepute.
- I will support and promote the school's e-Safety policy and help pupils to be safe and responsible in their use of ICT and related technologies.

**User Signature**

I agree to follow this code of conduct and to support the safe use of ICT throughout the school

Signature ..... Date .....

Full Name .....(printed)

**Job title** . . . . .



# Maple School



## Acceptable Use Policy – Key Stage 2

### Rules for Responsible Internet Us - Think then Click

The school has computers and Internet access to help our learning. These rules will keep everyone safe and help us to be fair to others. These e-Safety Rules help to protect pupils and the school.

- I will only access the system with my own login and password, which I will keep secret.
- I will not access other people's files.
- I will only use the computers for school work and homework.
- I will not bring in flash drives (memory sticks) or CDROMs from outside school, unless I have been given permission.
- I will ask permission from a member of staff before using the internet.
- I will immediately tell an adult if we see anything we are uncomfortable with.
- The messages I send and receive from others will be polite and responsible.
- I will not give my details, like my home address or telephone number, or arrange to meet someone.
- I will report any unpleasant material or messages sent to me to my teacher. I understand my report would be confidential and would help protect other pupils and myself.
- I understand that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the Internet sites I visit.
- I understand that if I intentionally break these rules, then my access to the Internet will be denied.

# Maple School

## e-Safety Rules

*All pupils use computer facilities including Internet access as an essential part of learning, as required by the National Curriculum. Both pupils and their parents/carers are asked to sign to show that the e-Safety Rules have been understood and agreed.*

*Pupil:*

*Year group:*

### **Pupil's Agreement**

- I have read and I understand the school e-Safety Rules.
- I will use the computer network, Internet access and other new technologies in a responsible way at all times.
- I know that network and Internet access may be monitored.

*Signed:*

*Date:*

### **Parent's Consent for Internet Access**

I have read and understood the school e-safety rules and give permission for my son / daughter to access the Internet. I understand that the school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that pupils cannot access inappropriate materials but I appreciate that this is a difficult task.

I understand that the school cannot be held responsible for the content of materials accessed through the Internet. I agree that the school is not liable for any damages arising from use of the Internet facilities.

*Signed:*

*Date:*

*Please print name:*

Please complete, sign and return to your child's teacher no later than **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September**



# Maple School

## Acceptable Use Policy - Key Stage 1

### Rules for Responsible Internet Use

#### Think then Click

The school has computers and Internet access to help our learning. These rules will keep everyone safe and help us to be fair to others. These e-Safety Rules help to protect pupils and the school.

### Think before you click

- We only use the internet when an adult is with us.
- We can click on the buttons or links when we know what they do.
- We can search the Internet with an adult.
- We always ask if we get lost on the Internet.
- We only go on sites we have been told to go on.
- We can send and open emails together.
- We can write polite and friendly emails to people that we know.



# Maple School

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I understand that the school cannot be held responsible for the content of materials accessed through the Internet. I agree that the school is not liable for any damages arising from use of the Internet facilities.

*Signed:*

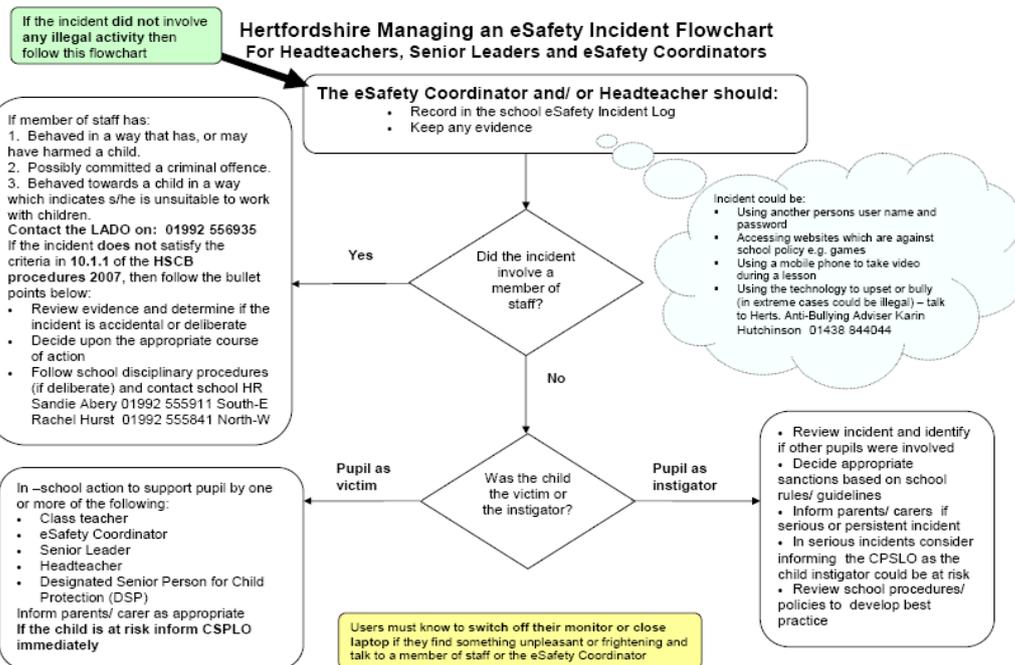
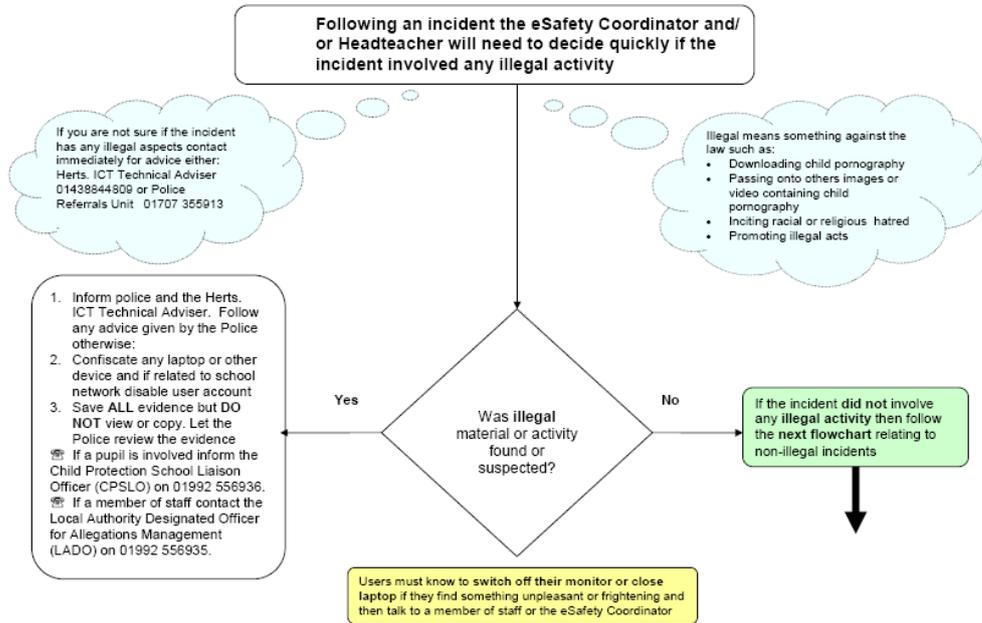
*Date:*

*Please print name:*

Please complete, sign and return to your child's teacher no later than **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October**

# Flowcharts for Managing an eSafety Incident

Hertfordshire Flowchart to support decisions related to an Illegal eSafety Incident  
For Headteachers, Senior Leaders and eSafety Coordinators





# Smile and Stay Safe Poster

E-Safety Rules to be displayed next to all PCs in school



## **SMILE and stay safe**

**S**taying safe means keeping your personal details private, such as full name, phone number, home address, photos or school. Never reply to ASL (age, sex, location)

**M**eeting up with someone you have met online can be dangerous. Only meet up if you have first told your parent or carer and they can be with you.

**I**nformation online can be untrue, biased or just inaccurate. Someone online may not be telling the truth about who they are - they may not be a 'friend'

**L**et a parent, carer, teacher or trusted adult know if you ever feel worried, uncomfortable or frightened about something online or someone you have met or who has contacted you online.

**E**mails, downloads, IM messages, photos and anything from someone you do not know or trust may contain a virus or unpleasant message. So do not open or reply.

# Current Legislation

## Acts relating to monitoring of staff email

### Data Protection Act 1998

The Act requires anyone who handles personal information to comply with important data protection principles when treating personal data relating to any living individual. The Act grants individuals rights of access to their personal data, compensation and prevention of processing.

<http://www.hms.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980029.htm>

### The Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000

<http://www.hms.gov.uk/si/si2000/20002699.htm>

### Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Regulating the interception of communications and making it an offence to intercept or monitor communications without the consent of the parties involved in the communication. The RIP was enacted to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998. The Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000, however, permit a degree of monitoring and record keeping, for example, to ensure communications are relevant to school activity or to investigate or detect unauthorised use of the network. Nevertheless, any monitoring is subject to informed consent, which means steps must have been taken to ensure that everyone who may use the system is informed that communications may be monitored. Covert monitoring without informing users that surveillance is taking place risks breaching data protection and privacy legislation.

<http://www.hms.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/20000023.htm>

### Human Rights Act 1998

<http://www.hms.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980042.htm>

## Other Acts relating to eSafety

### Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006

It is a criminal offence to threaten people because of their faith, or to stir up religious hatred by displaying, publishing or distributing written material which is threatening. Other laws already protect people from threats based on their race, nationality or ethnic background.

### Sexual Offences Act 2003

The new grooming offence is committed if you are over 18 and have communicated with a child under 16 at least twice (including by phone or using the Internet) it is an offence to meet them or travel to meet them anywhere in the world with the intention of committing a sexual offence. Causing a child under 16 to watch a sexual act is illegal, including looking at images such as videos, photos or webcams, for your own gratification. It is also an offence for a person in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with any person under 18, with whom they are in a position of trust. Schools should already have a copy of "*Children & Families: Safer from Sexual Crime*" document as part of their child protection packs.

For more information

[www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk)

### Communications Act 2003 (section 127)

Sending by means of the Internet a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; or sending a false message by means of or persistently making use of the Internet for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety is guilty of an offence liable, on conviction, to imprisonment. This wording is important because an offence is complete as soon as the message has been sent: there is no need to prove any intent or purpose.

### The Computer Misuse Act 1990 (sections 1 – 3)

Regardless of an individual's motivation, the Act makes it a criminal offence to gain:

- access to computer files or software without permission (for example using another person's password to access files)
- unauthorised access, as above, in order to commit a further criminal act (such as fraud)
- impair the operation of a computer or program

UK citizens or residents may be extradited to another country if they are suspected of committing any of the above offences.

**Malicious Communications Act 1988 (section 1)**

This legislation makes it a criminal offence to send an electronic message (e-mail) that conveys indecent, grossly offensive, threatening material or information that is false; or is of an indecent or grossly offensive nature if the purpose was to cause a recipient to suffer distress or anxiety.

**Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988**

Copyright is the right to prevent others from copying or using work without permission. Works such as text, music, sound, film and programs all qualify for copyright protection. The author of the work is usually the copyright owner, but if it was created during the course of employment it belongs to the employer. Copyright infringement is to copy all or a substantial part of anyone's work without obtaining their author's permission. Usually a licence associated with the work will allow a user to copy or use it for limited purposes. It is advisable always to read the terms of a licence before you copy or use someone else's material. It is also illegal to adapt or use software without a licence or in ways prohibited by the terms of the software licence.

**Public Order Act 1986 (sections 17 – 29)**

This Act makes it a criminal offence to stir up racial hatred by displaying, publishing or distributing written material which is threatening. Like the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 it also makes the possession of inflammatory material with a view of releasing it a criminal offence.

**Protection of Children Act 1978 (Section 1)**

It is an offence to take, permit to be taken, make, possess, show, distribute or advertise indecent images of children in the United Kingdom. A child for these purposes is anyone under the age of 18. Viewing an indecent image of a child on your computer means that you have made a digital image. An image of a child also covers pseudo-photographs (digitally collated or otherwise). A person convicted of such an offence may face up to 10 years in prison.

**Obscene Publications Act 1959 and 1964**

Publishing an "obscene" article is a criminal offence. Publishing includes electronic transmission.

**Protection from Harassment Act 1997**

A person must not pursue a course of conduct, which amounts to harassment of another, and which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other.

A person whose course of conduct causes another to fear, on at least two occasions, that violence will be used against him is guilty of an offence if he knows or ought to know that his course of conduct will cause the other so to fear on each of those occasions.