



St Michael's
C.E. Primary School

Online Safety Policy

Date	September 2025
Date for next review	September 2026

Our Theologically Rooted Christian Vision

Courage to Flourish in the Love of God

‘I have come that [you] may have life, and have it to the full’ (John 10:10)



[Therefore],

‘Be strong and courageous... the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.’ (Joshua 1:9)

These biblical texts underpin our vision summary, ‘Courage to flourish in the love of God’. Jesus’ words from the New Testament describe his desire for everyone to be a full and flourishing version of their created selves, experiencing life in all its vibrant fullness, individually and in community. Our ambition is for everyone to encounter this fullness through the life and work of the school, whatever their background, beliefs or circumstances. God’s words to Joshua from the Old Testament illustrate how life, and learning, can be challenging, bringing setbacks and discouragement. These words inspire us to keep on going in those circumstances, confident that God watches over us and walks beside us.

The joining of these biblical texts is meaningful for the particular circumstances of our school community. It gives coherence to our aspirational vision that will grow courage and resilience as enablers of ‘life in all its fullness’ for everyone. To support our vision, we have seven overarching Christian values.

Our Core Christian Values

<u>Value</u>	<u>Biblical texts that underpin our values</u>
	Philippians 4:13 ‘I can do all things through him who strengthens me.’
	John 1:5 ‘The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.’

	<p>1 Corinthians 13:4-8</p> <p>‘Love is patient and kind... it does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.’</p> <p>1 John 1:9</p> <p>‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us’</p>
	<p>Proverbs 3:5-6</p> <p>‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.’</p>
	<p>Hebrews 10:24</p> <p>‘Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good.’</p>
	<p>1 Thessalonians 5:18</p> <p>‘Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you’</p>

1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors.
- Identify and support groups of pupils that are potentially at greater risk of harm online than others.
- Deliver an effective approach to online safety, which empowers us to protect and educate the whole school community in its use of technology, including mobile and smart technology (which we refer to as ‘mobile phones’).
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate.

The 4 key categories of risk

Our approach to online safety is based on addressing the following categories of risk:

- Content – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content, such as pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- Contact – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users, such as peer-to-peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- Conduct – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm, such as making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying; and
- Commerce – risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and/or financial scams.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, and its advice for schools on:

- Teaching online safety in schools.
- Preventing and tackling bullying and cyber-bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff.
- Relationships and sex education.
- Searching, screening and confiscation.

It also refers to the DfE's guidance on protecting children from radicalisation.

It reflects existing legislation, including but not limited to the Education Act 1996 (as amended), the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010. In addition, it reflects the Education Act 2011, which has given teachers stronger powers to tackle cyber-bullying by, if necessary, searching for and deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Local Academy Board

The governing board has overall responsibility for monitoring this policy and holding the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will make sure all staff undergo online safety training as part of child protection and safeguarding training, and ensure staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring.

The governing board will also make sure all staff receive regular online safety updates (via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required and at least annually, to ensure they are continually provided with the relevant skills and knowledge to effectively safeguard children.

The governing board will co-ordinate regular meetings with appropriate staff to discuss online safety, requirements for training, and monitor online safety logs as provided by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

The governing board should ensure children are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including keeping safe online.

The governing board must ensure the school has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place on school devices and school networks, and will regularly review their effectiveness. The board will review the DfE filtering and monitoring standards, and discuss with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support the school in meeting the standards, which include:

- Identifying and assigning roles and responsibilities to manage filtering and monitoring systems;
- Reviewing filtering and monitoring provisions at least annually;
- Blocking harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning;
- Having effective monitoring strategies in place that meet their safeguarding needs.

All governors will:

- Ensure they have read and understand this policy.
- Agree and adhere to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet (see BDMAT IT Policy).
- Ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme while devising and implementing their whole-school or college approach to safeguarding and related policies and/or procedures.
- Ensure that, where necessary, teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, is adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is because of the importance of recognising that a 'one size fits all' approach may not be appropriate for all children in all situations, and a more personalised or contextualised approach may often be more suitable.

3.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that staff understand this policy, and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.

3.3 The designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

Details of the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) deputies are set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy, as well as relevant job descriptions.

The DSL takes lead responsibility for online safety in school, in particular:

- Supporting the headteacher in ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the school.

- Working with the headteacher and governing board to review this policy annually and ensure the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly.
- Taking the lead on understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place on school devices and school networks.
- Working with the ICT manager to make sure the appropriate systems and processes are in place.
- Working with the headteacher, ICT manager and other staff, as necessary, to address any online safety issues or incidents.
- Managing all online safety issues and incidents in line with the school's child protection policy.
- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy.
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy.
- Updating and delivering staff training on online safety.
- Liaising with other agencies and/or external services if necessary.
- Providing regular reports on online safety in school to the headteacher and/or governing board.
- Undertaking annual risk assessments that consider and reflect the risks children face.
- Providing regular safeguarding and child protection updates, including online safety, to all staff, at least annually, in order to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard effectively.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.4 The IT Support Team

The ICT manager is responsible for:

- Putting in place an appropriate level of security protection procedures, such as filtering and monitoring systems on school devices and school networks, which are reviewed and updated at least annually to assess effectiveness and ensure pupils are kept safe from potentially harmful and inappropriate content and contact online while at school, including terrorist and extremist material.
- Ensuring that the school's ICT systems are secure and protected against viruses and malware, and that such safety mechanisms are updated regularly.
- Conducting a full security check and monitoring the school's ICT systems on a regular basis.
- Blocking access to potentially dangerous sites and, where possible, preventing the downloading of potentially dangerous files.
- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy.
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the school behaviour policy.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.5 All staff and volunteers

All staff, including contractors and agency staff, and volunteers are responsible for:

- Maintaining an understanding of this policy.
- Implementing this policy consistently.
- Agreeing and adhering to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet and ensuring that pupils follow the school's terms on acceptable use (see BDMAT IT Policy).
- Working with the DSL to ensure that any online safety incidents are logged on cpoms and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy.
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the school positive relationships and behaviour policy.
- Responding appropriately to all reports and concerns about sexual violence and/or harassment, both online and offline, and maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here.'

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Notify a member of staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding this policy.
- Ensure their child has read, understood and agreed to the terms on acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and internet (see BDMAT IT Policy).

Parents/carers can seek further guidance on keeping children safe online from the following organisations and websites:

- What are the issues? – UK Safer Internet Centre
- Hot topics – Childnet
- Parent resource sheet – Childnet

3.7 Visitors and members of the community

Visitors and members of the community who use the school's ICT systems or internet will be made aware of this policy, when relevant, and expected to read and follow it. If appropriate, they will be expected to agree to the terms on acceptable use (see BDMAT IT Policy).

4. Educating pupils about online safety

Pupils will be taught about online safety as part of the curriculum:

The text below is taken from the National Curriculum computing programmes of study.

It is also taken from the guidance on relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education.

All schools have to teach:

- Relationships education and health education in primary schools

In Key Stage (KS) 1, pupils will be taught to:

- Use technology safely and respectfully, keeping personal information private.
- Identify where to go for help and support when they have concerns about content or contact on the internet or other online technologies.

Pupils in Key Stage (KS) 2 will be taught to:

- Use technology safely, respectfully and responsibly.
- Recognise acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
- Identify a range of ways to report concerns about content and contact.

By the end of primary school, pupils will know:

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online, including when we are anonymous.
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- How information and data is shared and used online.
- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.

The safe use of social media and the internet will also be covered in other subjects where relevant.

Where necessary, teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, will be adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some pupils with SEND.

5. Educating parents/carers about online safety

- The school will raise parents/carers' awareness of internet safety in letters or other communications home, and in information via our website.

- This policy will also be shared with parents/carers.
- Online safety will also be covered during parents' evenings.
- If parents/carers have any queries or concerns in relation to online safety, these should be raised in the first instance with the headteacher and/or the DSL.
- Concerns or queries about this policy can be raised with any member of staff or the headteacher.

6. Cyber-bullying

6.1 Definition

Cyber-bullying takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites. Like other forms of bullying, it is the repetitive, intentional harming of 1 person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. (See also the school Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy.)

6.2 Preventing and addressing cyber-bullying

- To help prevent cyber-bullying, we will ensure that pupils understand what it is and what to do if they become aware of it happening to them or others. We will ensure that pupils know how they can report any incidents and are encouraged to do so, including where they are a witness rather than the victim.
- The school will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be.
- Teaching staff are also encouraged to find opportunities to use aspects of the curriculum to cover cyber-bullying. This includes personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, and other subjects where appropriate.
- All staff, governors and volunteers (where appropriate) receive training on cyber-bullying, its impact and ways to support pupils, as part of safeguarding training (see section 11 for more detail).
- The school also sends information/leaflets on cyber-bullying to parents/carers so they are aware of the signs, how to report it and how they can support children who may be affected.
- In relation to a specific incident of cyber-bullying, the school will follow the processes set out in the school behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the school will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure the incident is contained.
- The DSL will report the incident and provide the relevant material to the police as soon as is reasonably practicable, if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that possessing that material is illegal. They will also work with external services if it is deemed necessary to do so.

6.3 Examining electronic devices

Authorised staff members may examine, and in exceptional circumstances erase, any data or files on an electronic device that they have confiscated where they believe there is a 'good reason' to do so.

When deciding whether there is a 'good reason' to examine data or files on an electronic device, the staff member should reasonably suspect that the device has, or could be used to:

- Cause harm, and/or
- Undermine the safe environment of the school or disrupt teaching, and/or
- Commit an offence
- Break any of the school rules

If inappropriate material is found on the device, it is up to the staff member in conjunction with the DSL or other member of the senior leadership team to decide whether they should:

- Delete that material, or
- Retain it as evidence (of a criminal offence or a breach of school discipline), and/or
- Report it to the police

* Staff may also confiscate devices for evidence to hand to the police, if a pupil discloses that they are being abused and that this abuse includes an online element..

If a staff member suspects a device may contain an indecent image of a child (also known as a nude or semi-nude image), they will:

- Not view the image
- Confiscate the device and report the incident to the DSL (or equivalent) immediately, who will decide what to do next. The DSL will make the decision in line with the DfE's latest guidance on screening, searching and confiscation and the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS) guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people

Any searching of pupils will be carried out in line with:

- The DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation
- UKCIS guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people
- Our positive relationships and behaviour policy
- Any complaints about searching for or deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices will be dealt with through the school complaints procedure.

6.4 Artificial intelligence (AI)

- Staff and pupils will be encouraged to explore the ethical implications of AI, including bias, misinformation, and responsible use.
- Positive educational uses of AI, such as personalised learning, language support, and creative tools, will be promoted to enhance learning outcomes.
- Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.
- St Michael's CE Primary School recognises that AI has many uses to help pupils learn, but may also have the potential to be used to bully others. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real. This includes deepfake pornography: pornographic content created using AI to include someone's likeness.
- St Michael's CE Primary School will treat any use of AI to bully pupils in line with our anti-bullying and Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy.
- Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out a risk assessment where new AI tools are being used by the school or trust.

7. Acceptable use of the internet in school

- All pupils, parents/carers, staff, volunteers and governors are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the school's ICT systems and the internet (see BDMAT IT Policy). Visitors will be expected to read and agree to the school's terms on acceptable use if relevant.
- Use of the school's internet must be for educational purposes only, or for the purpose of fulfilling the duties of an individual's role.
- We will monitor the websites visited by pupils, staff, volunteers, governors and visitors (where relevant) to ensure they comply with the above and restrict access through filtering systems where appropriate.
- More information is set out in the acceptable use agreements in BDMAT IT Policy.

8. Pupils using mobile devices in school

- Children are not allowed to use mobile phones in school. Any child who brings a phone to school, will be asked to give it to their class teacher for safekeeping. However, if a child chooses to bring a mobile phone into school it is at their own risk. They will then collect it at the end of the day. This policy is in place to reduce distractions, protect privacy, and support safeguarding. Exceptions may be made for medical needs or travel arrangements, with prior agreement from the school.
- Any breach of the acceptable use agreement by a pupil may trigger disciplinary action in line with the school Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy, which may result in the confiscation of their device.

9. Staff using work devices outside school

All staff members will take appropriate steps to ensure their devices remain secure. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Keeping the device password-protected – strong passwords are at least 8 characters, with a combination of upper and lower-case letters, numbers and special characters (e.g. asterisk or currency symbol).
- Ensuring their hard drive is encrypted – this means if the device is lost or stolen, no one can access the files stored on the hard drive by attaching it to a new device.
- Making sure the device locks if left inactive for a period of time.
- Not sharing the device among family or friends.
- Installing anti-virus and anti-spyware software.
- Keeping operating systems up to date by always installing the latest updates.
- Staff members must not use the device in any way that would violate the school's terms of acceptable use, as set out in the BDMAT IT Policy.
- Work devices must be used solely for work activities.
- If staff have any concerns over the security of their device, they must seek advice from the Trust IT Team.

10. How the school will respond to issues of misuse

- Where a pupil misuses the school's ICT systems or internet, we will follow the procedures set out in our policies on positive relationship and behaviour. The Trusts IT Policy and anti-bullying and ICT. The action taken will depend on the individual circumstances, nature and seriousness of the specific incident, and will be proportionate.
- Where a staff member misuses the school's ICT systems or the internet, or misuses a personal device where the action constitutes misconduct, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the staff disciplinary procedures / staff code of conduct. The action taken will depend on the individual circumstances, nature and seriousness of the specific incident.
- The school will consider whether incidents that involve illegal activity or content, or otherwise serious incidents, should be reported to the police.

11. Training

All new staff members will receive training, as part of their induction, on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues, including cyber-bullying and the risks of online radicalisation.

All staff members will receive refresher training at least once each academic year as part of safeguarding training, as well as relevant updates as required (for example through emails, e-bulletins and staff meetings).

By way of this training, all staff will be made aware that:

- Technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues, and that children are at risk of online abuse;
- Children can abuse their peers online through:
 - Abusive, threatening, harassing and misogynistic messages.
 - Non-consensual sharing of indecent nude and semi-nude images and/or videos, especially around chat groups .
 - Sharing of abusive images and pornography, to those who don't want to receive such content.
- Physical abuse, sexual violence and initiation/hazing type violence can all contain an online element.

Training will also help staff:

- Develop better awareness to assist in spotting the signs and symptoms of online abuse.
- Develop the ability to ensure pupils can recognise dangers and risks in online activity and can weigh up the risks.
- Develop the ability to influence pupils to make the healthiest long-term choices and keep them safe from harm in the short term.

The DSL and deputies will undertake child protection and safeguarding training, which will include online safety, at least every 2 years. They will also update their knowledge and skills on the subject of online safety at regular intervals, and at least annually.

Governors will receive training on safe internet use and online safeguarding issues as part of their safeguarding training.

Volunteers will receive appropriate training and updates, if applicable.

More information about safeguarding training is set out in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

12. Digital Wellbeing

The school promotes digital wellbeing by educating pupils on healthy screen time habits, encouraging regular breaks, and fostering awareness of the impact of technology on mental health.

Online safety education will be differentiated to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and those who are more vulnerable, ensuring accessibility and relevance.

13. Monitoring arrangements

The DSL logs behaviour and safeguarding issues related to online safety on CPOMS.

This policy will be reviewed every year by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

14. Links with other policies

This online safety policy is linked to our:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Positive Relationships and Behaviour policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices
- Complaints procedure
- Trust IT Policy