



## Online Safety (September 2024)

### Introduction

It is the duty of Sancton Wood School to ensure that every pupil in its care is safe; and the same principles apply to the digital world as apply to the real world. IT and online communications provide unrivalled opportunities for enhanced learning in addition to traditional methods, but also pose greater and more subtle risks to young people. Our pupils are therefore taught how to stay safe in the online environment and how to mitigate risks, including but not limited to the risk of identity theft, bullying, harassment, grooming, stalking, abuse and radicalisation.

New technologies are continually enhancing communication, the sharing of information, learning, social interaction and leisure activities. Current and emerging technologies used in and outside of school include:

- Websites;
- Email and instant messaging;
- Blogs;
- Social networking sites;
- Chat rooms;
- Music / video downloads;
- Gaming sites;
- Text messaging and picture messaging;
- Video calls;
- Podcasting;
- Online communities via games consoles; and
- Mobile internet devices such as smart phones and tablets.

This policy, supported by the Acceptable Use policy for all staff, visitors and pupils, is implemented to protect the interests and safety of the whole school community. It aims to provide clear guidance on how to minimise risks and how to deal with any infringements. It is linked to the following school policies:

- Safeguarding
- Staff Behaviour;
- Health and Safety;
- Behaviour Management;
- Anti-Bullying;



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- Acceptable Use Policy;
- Social Media;
- Data Protection; and
- PSHE.

Whilst exciting and beneficial both in and out of the context of education, much IT, particularly online resources, are not consistently policed. All users need to be aware of the range of risks associated with the use of these internet technologies.

At Sancton Wood School, we understand the responsibility to educate our pupils on e-safety issues; teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking skills necessary to enable them to remain both safe and within the law when using the internet and related technologies in and beyond the classroom. We also understand the importance of involving pupils in discussions about e-safety and listening to their fears and anxieties as well as their thoughts and ideas.

## Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all members of the school community, including staff, pupils, parents and visitors, who have access to and are users of the school IT systems. In this policy 'staff' includes teaching and non-teaching staff, governors, and regular volunteers. 'Parents includes pupils' carers and guardians. 'Visitors' includes anyone else who comes to the school, including occasional volunteers.

Both this policy and the Acceptable Use Policy (for all staff, visitors and pupils) cover both fixed and mobile internet devices provided by the school (such as PCs, laptops, webcams, tablets, whiteboards, digital video equipment, etc.); as well as all devices owned by pupils, staff, or visitors and brought onto school premises (personal laptops, tablets, smart phones, etc.).

## Roles and responsibilities

**1. The Governing Body** The governing body of the school is responsible for the approval of this policy and for reviewing its effectiveness. The governing body will review this policy at least annually.

**2. Principal and the Senior Leadership Team** The Principal is responsible for the safety of the members of the school community and this includes responsibility for e-safety.

In particular, the role of the Principal and the Senior Leadership team is to ensure that:

- staff are adequately trained about e-safety; and
- staff are aware of the school procedures and policies that should be followed in the event of the abuse or suspected breach of e-safety in connection to the school.

**3. IT staff** The school's technical staff have a key role in maintaining a safe technical infrastructure at the school and in keeping abreast with the rapid succession of technical developments. They are responsible for the security of the school's hardware system, its data and for training the school's teaching and administrative staff in the use of IT. They monitor



the use of the internet and emails, maintain content filters, and will report inappropriate usage to the Director of Operations.

**4. Teaching and support staff** All staff are required to sign the Acceptable Use Policy before accessing the school's systems.

As with all issues of safety at this school, staff are encouraged to create a talking and listening culture in order to address any e-safety issues which may arise in classrooms on a daily basis.

**5. Pupils** Pupils are responsible for using the school IT systems in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy, and for letting staff know if they see IT systems being misused.

**6. Parents and carers** Sancton Wood School believes that it is essential for parents to be fully involved with promoting e-safety both in and outside of school. We regularly consult and discuss e-safety with parents and seek to promote a wide understanding of the benefits and risks related to internet usage. The school will always contact parents if it has any concerns about pupils' behaviour in this area and likewise it hopes that parents will feel able to share any concerns with the school.

Parents and carers are responsible for endorsing the school's Acceptable Use Policy.

## Education and training

### 1. Staff: awareness and training

New staff receive information on Sancton Wood School's e-Safety and Acceptable Use policies as part of their induction.

All staff receive regular information and training on e-safety issues in the form of INSET training and internal meeting time and are made aware of their individual responsibilities relating to the safeguarding of children within the context of e-safety. All supply staff receive information about e-Safety as part of their safeguarding briefing on arrival at school.

All staff working with children are responsible for demonstrating, promoting and supporting safe behaviours in their classrooms and following school e-Safety procedures. These behaviours are summarised in the Acceptable Use Policy which must be signed and returned before use of technologies in school. When children use school computers, staff should make sure children are fully aware of the agreement they are making to follow the school's IT guidelines.

Teaching staff are encouraged to incorporate e-safety activities and awareness within their subject areas and through a culture of talking about issues as they arise. They should know what to do in the event of misuse of technology by any member of the school community.

A record of concern must be completed by staff as soon as possible if any incident relating to e-safety occurs and be provided directly to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### 2. Pupils: e-Safety in the curriculum

IT and online resources are used increasingly across the curriculum. We believe it is essential for e-safety guidance to be given to pupils on a regular and meaningful basis. We continually



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look for new opportunities to promote e-safety and regularly monitor and assess our pupils' understanding of it.

The school provides opportunities to teach about e-safety within a range of curriculum areas and IT lessons. Educating pupils on the dangers of technologies that may be encountered outside school will also be carried out via PSHE, by presentations in assemblies, as well as informally when opportunities arise.

At age-appropriate levels, and usually via PSHE, pupils are taught about their e-safety responsibilities and to look after their own online safety. From year x, pupils are taught about recognising online sexual exploitation, stalking and grooming, the risks, and of their duty to report any such instances they or their peers come across. Pupils can report concerns to the Safeguarding Lead and any member of staff at the school.

From year 7, pupils are also taught about relevant laws applicable to using the internet; such as data protection and intellectual property. Pupils are taught about respecting other people's information and images (etc.) through discussion and classroom activities.

Pupils should be aware of the impact of cyber-bullying and know how to seek help if they are affected by these issues (see also the school's Anti-bullying Policy, which describes the preventative measures and the procedures that will be followed when the school discovers cases of bullying). Pupils should approach Safeguarding Lead as well as parents, peers and other school staff for advice or help if they experience problems when using the internet and related technologies.

### 3. Parents

The school seeks to work closely with parents and guardians in promoting a culture of e-safety. The school will always contact parents if it has any concerns about pupils' behaviour in this area and likewise it hopes that parents will feel able to share any concerns with the school.

The school recognises that not all parents and guardians may feel equipped to protect their son or daughter when they use electronic equipment at home. The school therefore arranges discussion evenings for parents when an outside specialist advises about e-safety and the practical steps that parents can take to minimise the potential dangers to their sons and daughters without curbing their natural enthusiasm and curiosity.

### 4. Use of internet and email

#### Staff

Staff must not access social networking sites, personal email, any website or personal email which is unconnected with school work or business from school devices or whilst teaching / in front of pupils. Such access may only be made from staff members' own devices whilst off premise.

When accessed from off school premises, staff must use social networking sites with extreme caution, being aware of the nature of what is published online and its potential impact on their professional position and the reputation of the school.



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The school has taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the school network is safe and secure. Staff should be aware that email communications through the school network and staff email addresses are monitored.

Staff must immediately report to IT support the receipt of any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and must not respond to any such communication. Staff must remain alert to the risk of fraudulent emails and should report emails they suspect to be fraudulent to the IT support team.

Any online communications must not either knowingly or recklessly:

- place a child or young person at risk of harm, or cause actual harm;
- bring Sancton Wood School into disrepute;
- breach confidentiality;
- breach copyright;
- breach data protection legislation; or do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:
  - making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
  - using social media to bully another individual; or
  - posting links to or endorsing material which is discriminatory or offensive.

Under no circumstances should school pupils or parents be added as social network 'friends' or contacted through social media.

Any digital communication between staff and pupils or parents / carers must be professional in tone and content. Under no circumstances may staff contact a pupil or parent / carer using any personal email address. The school ensures that staff have access to their work email address when offsite, for use as necessary on school business.

### Pupils

There is strong anti-virus and firewall protection on our network. Spam emails and certain attachments will be blocked automatically by the email system. If this causes problems for school work / research purposes, pupils should contact their class/form teacher for assistance.

Pupils must not respond to any communication that makes them feel uncomfortable, is offensive, discriminatory, threatening or bullying in nature and should immediately report such a communication, to a member of staff.

The school expects pupils to think carefully before they post any information online, or repost or endorse content created by other people. Content posted should not be able to be deemed inappropriate or offensive, or likely to cause embarrassment to the individual or others.

Pupils must report any accidental access to materials of a violent or sexual nature directly to a member of staff. Deliberate access to any inappropriate materials by a pupil will lead to the



incident being recorded on their file and will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy. Pupils should be aware that all internet usage via the school's systems and its wifi network is monitored.

Certain websites are automatically blocked by the school's filtering system. If this causes problems for school work / research purposes, pupils should contact their class teacher for assistance.

## 5. Data storage and processing

The school takes its compliance with the GDPR seriously. Please refer to the Acceptable Use Policy for further details.

## 6. Password security

Pupils and staff have individual school network logins, email addresses and storage folders in the cloud. Staff and pupils are regularly reminded of the need for password security.

All pupils and members of staff should:

- use a strong password (usually containing eight characters or more, and containing upper and lower case letters as well as numbers), which should be changed every 1 year;
- not write passwords down; and
- not share passwords with other pupils or staff.

## 7. Examining electronic devices

The Principal, and any member of staff authorised to do so by the Principal (as set out in the behaviour policy), can carry out a search and confiscate any electronic device that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting:

Poses a risk to staff or pupils, and/or

Is identified in the school rules as a banned item for which a search can be carried out, and/or

Is evidence in relation to an offence

Before a search, the authorised staff member will:

Make an assessment of how urgent the search is, and consider the risk to other pupils and staff

Explain to the pupil why they are being searched, how the search will happen, and give them the opportunity to ask questions about it

Seek the pupil's cooperation

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.



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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

If inappropriate material is found on the device, it is up to the Head of School in conjunction with the DSL / Principal to decide on a suitable response. If there are images, data or files on the device that staff reasonably suspect are likely to put a person at risk, they will first consider the appropriate safeguarding response.

When deciding if there is a good reason to erase data or files from a device, staff members will consider if the material may constitute evidence relating to a suspected offence. In these instances, they will not delete the material and the device will be handed to the police as soon as reasonably practicable. If the material is not suspected to be evidence in relation to an offence, staff members may delete it if:

They reasonably suspect that its continued existence is likely to cause harm to any person, and/or

The pupil and/or the parent refuses to delete the material themselves

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 behaviour policy / searches and confiscation 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.

### 8. Misuse

Sancton Wood School will not tolerate illegal activities or activities that are inappropriate in a school context and will report illegal activity to the police and/or the LSCB. If the school



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discovers that a child or young person is at risk as a consequence of online activity, it may seek assistance from the CEOP.

Incidents of misuse or suspected misuse must be dealt with by staff in accordance with the school's policies and procedures (in particular the Safeguarding Policy).

The school will impose a range of sanctions on any pupil who misuses technology to bully, harass or abuse another pupil in line with our Anti-Bullying Policy.

### Complaints

As with all issues of safety at Sancton Wood School, if a member of staff, a pupil or a parent / carer has a complaint or concern relating to e-safety prompt action will be taken to deal with it. Complaints should be addressed to the Head in the first instance, who will undertake an investigation where appropriate. Please see the Complaints Policy for further information.

Incidents of or concerns around e-safety will be recorded using a Concern form and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy.