

Online safety

What is online safety?

It means protecting children from 4 main areas of risk:

- › **1. Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material online (e.g. pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, Islamophobia, radicalisation and extremism)
- › **2. Contact:** being the victim of harmful interactions online, whether between children or by adults (e.g. bullying, grooming, online radicalisation, aggressive advertising, pressure to spend money)
- › **3. Conduct:** behaving in a way online that causes harm or increases the likelihood of it (e.g. online bullying, making, sending or receiving explicit images, sexual harassment)
- › **4. Commerce:** risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing or financial scams

Filtering and monitoring systems are an important part of online safety

They help to provide a safe environment to learn and work by protecting pupils and staff from harmful and inappropriate content online. Make sure you understand your role and follow policies, monitor what pupils are looking at on their screens, and always report any issues with your filtering and monitoring systems.

Online safety is part of safeguarding:

- › We need to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate experiences online
- › Child-on-child abuse (including bullying), sexual harassment and abuse, and extremist radicalisation can all happen online

Signs to look out for

If a child is having issues or facing difficulty online, they might:

- › Spend more time online, or more time offline
- › Complain of being tired because they were online all night, or have their phone going off a lot
- › Have stronger emotional responses or outbursts to being online – for example, they may get unusually angry, upset or distant after checking their phone or using their computer/tablet
- › Be secretive about their use of the internet or a device – they may refuse to hand their phone in if it's part of school policy, or refuse to tell you what they get up to online

If a child tells you that they use their device unsupervised – for example, they play on their iPad when they go to bed – this could be a red flag.

As with other safeguarding issues, always look out for changes in behaviour or mood.

If you have an online safety concern

Report it to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy, make a written record, and follow our safeguarding policies and procedures. This includes if you spot any problems with our filtering and monitoring systems.

If you think a child is in immediate danger, don't wait for the DSL if they aren't available. Report it to children's social care and call the police if appropriate. Then tell the DSL as soon as possible afterwards.

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: dos and don'ts

Sharing nudes and semi-nudes is the sharing of **nude or semi-nude images, videos or live streams online** by children (anyone under 18). It doesn't include the sharing of sexual imagery of children with or by adults – this is child sexual abuse.

Do:

- ✓ Talk to our DSL (or deputy) as soon as possible
- ✓ Explain to the child that you need to report it to our DSL (or deputy)
- ✓ Reassure the child that they will receive support and help

Don't:

- ✗ View, copy, print, share, store or save any form of image, video or livestream yourself, or ask a child to share or download. If you view it by accident, report this to our DSL
- ✗ Promise confidentiality
- ✗ Say or do anything to blame or shame any of the children involved
- ✗ Delete the image or ask the child to delete it
- ✗ Ask the child(ren) who are involved in the incident to disclose information about the image. This is the responsibility of our DSL
- ✗ Share information about the incident with other members of staff, the child it involves or their, or other, parents and/or carers

Sources

This factsheet was produced by [The Key Safeguarding: thekeysupport.com/safeguarding](https://thekeysupport.com/safeguarding)

- > [Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people, GOV.UK – Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and UK Council for Internet Safety](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-children-and-young-people>
- > [Keeping Children Safe in Education, GOV.UK – Department for Education \(DfE\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>
- > [Searching, screening and confiscation at school, GOV.UK – DfE](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation)
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