



ASPIRATIONS

Online safety policy



Rivers Academy West London
an Aspirations Academy

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1. Aims

Our academy aims to:

- Have robust processes in place to ensure the online safety of pupils, staff, volunteers and governors
- Deliver an effective approach to online safety, which empowers us to protect and educate the whole academy community in its use of technology
- Establish clear mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate an incident, where appropriate

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE) 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 Department'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.

The policy also takes into account the National Curriculum computing programmes of study.

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

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Regional governing board

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

The regional CEO and the Trust's Director of Safeguarding (both members of the RGB) will ensure the academy holds regular meetings with appropriate staff to discuss online safety, and monitors online safety logs as provided by the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). Online safety will be a focus for monitoring at least twice per year.

All governors will:

- Ensure that they have read and understand this policy
- Agree and adhere to the terms on acceptable use of the academy's ICT systems and the internet
- Ensure that online safety is a running and interrelated theme while devising and implementing their whole school 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 principal

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

3.3 The designated safeguarding lead

Details of the academy's DSL [and deputy/deputies] are set out in our safeguarding and child protection policy as well as relevant job descriptions.

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

- Supporting the principal in ensuring that staff understand this policy and that it is being implemented consistently throughout the academy
- Working with the principal, ICT lead 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 child protection policy

- Ensuring that any online safety incidents are logged (see appendix 5) 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 academy behaviour policy
- Updating and delivering staff training on online safety (appendix 1 contains a self-audit for staff on online safety training needs)
- Liaising with other agencies and/or external services if necessary
- Providing regular reports on online safety in school to the principal

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.4 The ICT lead

The ICT lead is responsible for:

- Putting in place appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, which are updated on a regular basis and keep pupils safe from potentially harmful and inappropriate content and contact online while at school, including terrorist and extremist material
- Ensuring that the academy'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 academy's ICT systems on a weekly 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 (see appendix 5) and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the academy 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 academy's ICT systems and the internet (appendix 3), and ensuring that pupils follow the academy's terms on acceptable use (appendices 1 and 2)
- Working with the DSL to ensure that any online safety incidents are logged (see appendix 5) and dealt with appropriately in line with this policy
- Ensuring that any incidents of cyber-bullying are dealt with appropriately in line with the academy behaviour policy

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

3.6 Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Notify a member of staff or the principal of any concerns or queries regarding this policy
- Ensure their child has read, understood and agreed to the terms on acceptable use of the academy's ICT systems and internet (appendices 1 and 2)

Parents 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 International](#)
- Parent factsheet - [Childnet International](#)

3.7 Visitors and members of the community

Visitors and members of the community who use the academy'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 (appendix 3).

4. Educating pupils about online safety

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

In **Key Stage 3**, pupils will be taught to:

- Understand a range of ways to use technology safely, respectfully, responsibly and securely, including protecting their online identity and privacy
- Recognise inappropriate content, contact and conduct, and know how to report concerns

Pupils in **Key Stage 4** will be taught:

- To understand how changes in technology affect safety, including new ways to protect their online privacy and identity
- How to report a range of concerns

By the **end of secondary school**, they will know:

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online
- Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- The impact of viewing harmful content

- That specifically sexually explicit material (e.g. pornography) presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners
- That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail
- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
- How to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours

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

The academy will use assemblies to raise pupils' awareness of the dangers that can be encountered online and may also invite speakers to talk to pupils about this.

5. Educating parents about online safety

The academy will raise parents' awareness of internet safety in letters or other communications home, and in information via our website or virtual learning environment (VLE)

This policy will also be shared with parents.

Online safety will also be covered during parents' evenings.

If parents have any queries or concerns in relation to online safety, these should be raised in the first instance with the principal and/or the DSL.

Concerns or queries about this policy can be raised with any member of staff or the principal.

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 one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. (See also the academy 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 academy will actively discuss cyber-bullying with pupils, explaining the reasons why it occurs, the forms it may take and what the consequences can be. Form teachers will discuss cyber-bullying with their tutor groups, and the issue will be addressed in assemblies.

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 academy also sends information/leaflets on cyber-bullying to parents so that 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 academy will follow the processes set out in the academy behaviour policy. Where illegal, inappropriate or harmful material has been spread among pupils, the academy 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

The Principal, and any member of staff authorised to do so by the Principal, 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, if the authorised staff member is satisfied that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting any of the above, they will also:

- Make an assessment of how urgent the search is, and consider the risk to other pupils and staff. If the search is not urgent, they will seek advice from the Principal or DSL.
- 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.

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 staff member in conjunction with the DSL, Principal or other member of the senior leadership team 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

Any complaints about searching for or deleting inappropriate images or files on pupils' electronic devices will be dealt with through the academy complaints procedure.

7. Acceptable use of the internet in school

All pupils, parents, staff, volunteers and governors are expected to sign an agreement regarding the acceptable use of the academy's ICT systems and the internet. Visitors will be expected to read and agree to the academy's terms on acceptable use if relevant.

Use of the academy'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).

8. Pupils using mobile devices in school

Pupils may bring mobile devices into the academy, but are not permitted to use them during:

- Lessons
- Break time
- Tutor group time
- Clubs before or after school, or any other activities organised by the academy

Any use of mobile devices in the academy by pupils must be in line with the acceptable use agreement.

Any breach of the acceptable use agreement by a pupil may trigger disciplinary action in line with the academy 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 which would violate the school's terms of acceptable use

If staff have any concerns over the security of their device, they must seek advice from the ICT lead.

Work devices must be used solely for work activities.

10. How the academy will respond to issues of misuse

Where a pupil misuses the academy's ICT systems or internet, we will follow the procedures set out in our policies on Behavior

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 academy'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. The action taken will depend on the individual circumstances, nature and seriousness of the specific incident.

The academy will consider whether incidents which 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, 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 safeguarding and child protection policy.

12. Monitoring arrangements

The DSL logs behaviour and safeguarding issues related to online safety. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the DSL. At every review, the policy will be shared with the regional governing board.

13. Links with other policies

This online safety policy is linked to our:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Behaviour policy
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Data protection policy and privacy notices
- Complaints procedure
- ICT and internet acceptable use policies

Appendix 1: online safety training needs – self audit for staff

ONLINE SAFETY TRAINING NEEDS AUDIT	
Name of staff member/volunteer:	Date:
Question	Yes/No (add comments if necessary)
Do you know the name of the person who has lead responsibility for online safety in school?	
Do you know what you must do if a pupil approaches you with a concern or issue?	
Are you familiar with the academy's acceptable use agreement for staff, volunteers, governors and visitors?	
Are you familiar with the academy's acceptable use agreement for pupils and parents?	
Do you regularly change your password for accessing the academy's ICT systems?	
Are you familiar with the academy's approach to tackling cyber-bullying?	
Are there any areas of online safety in which you would like training/further training?	

Appendix 2: online safety incident report log

ONLINE SAFETY INCIDENT LOG				
Date	Where the incident took place	Description of the incident	Action taken	Name and signature of staff member recording the incident