

Internet Safety and Social Media Policy

Prepared using

- DfE publication, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Sept 2019
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools, June 2019
- Education for a connected world framework
- NSPCC website

Aims

The Iona School aims to keep all children within its care safe. This extends to providing our parents with appropriate information on how to keep their children safe at home.

Information

It's increasingly difficult to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to technology, especially when you are a parent trying to keep your children safe as they grow up immersed in this digital world. Issues such as cybercrime, grooming, sexting and bullying via social media including others are of growing concern.

Research released for 2017's Safer Internet Day in the UK revealed that one in five children surveyed had been bullied with online images or videos. Additionally, roughly 70% of children had seen images and videos "not suitable for their age" whilst surfing the web.

Previously, the law prevented groomers from being arrested unless they had met or sexually abused a child. Thankfully, in April 2017, a new law was put into place allowing police to arrest online groomers who send sexual messages to a child, intervening before any abuse can take place.

Online Safety – What We Do in School

Whilst our pupils do not have access to digital technology in school, nor do we allow any hand held devices or mobile phones to be used in school, we are aware that children do have access to the internet outside of school and therefore we teach online safety.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

1. Content
2. Contact
3. Conduct

Under 5s

For the under-fives, this is done thoughtfully and carefully in an age appropriate way. We are aware that children are imitative and will copy their parents using tablets and phones. We also spend time in Kindergarten parent meetings discussing internet safety. For all the children in the school and Kindergarten we encourage children to speak and tell of any worries.

Over 5s

We speak to our pupils from 5 years of age upwards about online safety, ensuring that they know what personal information is and being 'share aware' in order to keep themselves safe and feel confident in using mobile phones and technology when they are away from the school. We teach children internet safety using the following principles:

- How to evaluate what they see online;
- What it means to be responsible online;
- How to protect yourself online and respect others, recognising techniques used for persuasion;
- How to disengage as well as engage with the online world;
- How to understand sharing of information and pictures;
- How to identify online risks;
- How and when to seek support.

Class Teachers follow the NSPCC 'Share Aware' plan, basing teaching around the NSPCC lesson plans. Parents are given Share Aware leaflets and are advised about the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile technology, social networking sites and online gaming sites.

Social Media

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many youngsters. We recognise that sites bring risks but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. This document gives clarity to the way in which social media is to be used by pupils and staff at The Iona School.

There are six key areas:

1. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school;
2. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity;
3. Creation of network accounts by staff for use in business capacities;
4. Comments posted by parents/carers;
5. Dealing with incidents of online bullying;
6. The use of the internet outside of school.

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

All staff must abide by the following:

- Staff are advised to ask their partners and their children to not add pupils, parents of pupils or service users as friends into their personal accounts. This is deemed as best practice.
- Staff may 'follow' and 'like' the school's social media pages and posts however should not post comments.
- Staff must not post photos of school events or advertise school events on their personal accounts.
- Staff must not use their personal social networking sites within working hours.
- Staff should review and adjust their social media privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff must not post any comments about the school, pupils, service users, parents or colleagues including trustees.
- Staff must not add The Iona School to their profiles, there must be complete professional distance.

- Whilst cameras are not allowed in Kindergarten, staff must under no circumstances share pupil photos on their personal profiles/pages.
- Staff must not be in online social media groups with parents or pupils, such as Facebook messenger, WhatsApp etc.
- Staff with admin rights to post photos on the school website and social media must consider if any children do not have parental permission to be included.
- Staff to use professional integrity online at all times.

Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the School Business Manager in the first instance or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if linked to safeguarding.

All social media services must be approved by the School Business Manager in advance of any educational work being undertaken. No staff member will link The Iona School to any account unless they have permission from the School Business Manager.

Parents and Carers

- Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include the prospectus, handbook, website, social media sites, newsletters, letters and verbal communication
- Parents must not post photos of pupils other than their own children on social networking sites unless they have parental permission.
- Parents should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites or via messaging groups.
- Any comments on social media sites that could be interpreted as bringing the school into disrepute will be handed to our legal team who will decide on an appropriate course of action.

Dealing with Incidents of Online Bullying

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy makes sanctions regarding bullying using digital technologies very clear. The school can take action against incidents that happen outside of school if it:

- could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public
- could adversely affect the reputation of the school

Use of social networking sites to harass, bully or intimidate would be covered by this irrespective of when/where the post was made.

Information and Support

There is a wealth of information available to support keeping children safe online. The following is not exhaustive but should provide a useful starting point:

<https://safety.google/families/>

<https://beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com/en>

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.disrespectnobody.co.uk

www.saferinternet.org.uk

www.internetmatters.org

www.childnet.com/cyberbullying-guidance

www.pshe-association.org.uk

www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation

www.net-aware.org.uk/

www.teensafe.com/blog/predators-groom-children-gaming-online/

www.childnet.com

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Parental Ideas of how to keep children safe when online:

- Use free filtering technology/safe modes. Most online services these days come with privacy or safe modes built-in, it's important to switch them on for your child.
- Filtering tech can block harmful websites, age-restricted games, forums, chatrooms and anything else you choose. Some applications can do everything from create weekly reports for you about browsing to log the keystrokes on a device.
- Monitor your child's internet history for every device they use. Perhaps make a point of checking the internet search history at the end of the day to make sure everything viewed is satisfactory. This is easiest if you create your child a dedicated account on a home computer or device. However, do be aware that it is very likely that they will learn to delete their own records, so this is not always fool proof. Only let your child on computers or devices where you can see them. This will largely depend on the age of your child, but for the young ones it is advised to only let them use a computer, smartphone or tablet in a place where it can be monitored by an adult. When used alongside web filtering this can be an effective method of keeping an eye on what is being searched for, viewed or watched on the internet.
- Ensure that your child does not have a social media page until they are of the recommended age by that social media provider; a lot of these are set at 13 years plus.
- Facebook have a parent's help site <https://www.facebook.com/help/parents> and also a very good online safety site that tackles bullying - <https://www.facebook.com/safety>.
- Instagram have released a parent's guide www.connectsafely.org/wp-content/uploads/instagram_guide.pdf
- If you have a social media page, do consider what photos you post of your children. If you do have a photo of your child on your profile picture, these can be easily downloaded by anyone. Never post photos of other people's children unless you have their express permission.
- If your child does have social media, ensure that you can view their friends list. Remember, like us, most schools and children's organisations have a very strict social media policy for staff, so you should not see any staff on their friends lists. If you have concerns speak to the person responsible for safeguarding at that organisation.

The internet is a useful informative and fun tool, but teach your children about the negative side:

- Talk about the internet and be open about what's out there. On the internet a 50-year-old person can pose as a 15-year-old, chatrooms can be used for grooming and personal information is given away at the click of a mouse.
- People can easily access shared photos and videos. Once you share an image on the internet, it is there, forever and can become public property.
- Parents and children need to communicate and talk about what the internet is, what it isn't, and how to recognise the more lurid aspects of it. We have many of the NSPCC Share Aware booklets available should you wish to use these. They can also be found here <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware/>

- Know your child is probably smarter than you when it comes to the internet. Your children have Snapchat, Facebook, virtual reality, streaming services and online gaming. They have grown up in a world of touchscreens and data plans, a world where content is free and personal information means little.

Online Gaming

This is one major safety concern that is overlooked as they seem innocent enough. Games and gaming platforms such as Steam, Xbox live, Minecraft, PlayStation network, Nintendo network, Twitch, Roblox, Empires and World of Warcraft (amongst many others) all offer the users to connect with other users.

However, there are concerns around these such as:

- Children may play with adults they don't know. People of all ages play games. Some adults may exploit this and try to build an emotional connection with a child for the purpose of grooming.
- Children may view inappropriate or upsetting content if they play games that aren't suitable for their age. This could include sexual or violent material. It might be in-game content or produced by other players.
- Some players can be abusive towards others or try to exclude them from the game. Some players may also hack another user's account or try to steal and destroy their virtual possessions. This can be as upsetting for a young person as if it happened in real life.

Ask your children who they are talking to on these sites/platforms. Try to find out if they are talking to their friends or if they are chatting with strangers. Bear in mind, these sites have millions of users, it is impossible to police all of these people and a lot of the time messaging cannot be turned off.

If your child uses online games;

1. Check the game's content

Always check age ratings but remember they don't cover everything. It's important to check the game out yourself before letting a young child play it. If you want extra information about the content of a boxed console or computer game, take a look at the Video Standard's Council's Additional Consumer Information (ACI).

2. Know how to mute, block and report

Help children understand that people they meet online may not always be who they claim to be. Some games let you mute, block and report other users. Make sure your child knows how to do this if someone in the game upsets them or makes them feel uncomfortable. Childline has online gaming advice to help them do this. Remind your child they can come to you if they're ever worried.

3. Be Share Aware

Remind your child not to give out any personal information, photos or videos to anyone online, even if they know them. If your child plays games with people they don't know, remind them not to take the conversation off the game, onto other social networks or into a private chat.

4. Activate safety settings

Turn on parental controls on gaming consoles to help prevent children from downloading age inappropriate games or seeing harmful material. The Apple App Store lets you turn off in-app purchases on iPads and iPhones. The Apple App Store and Google Play let you create a pin code that must be entered before you buy. You can also turn on privacy settings on some games to control what other users can see about you and stop strangers from contacting you. Contact the O2 & NSPCC Online Safety Helpline for free on 0808 800 5002 for advice on how to do this.

5. Keep the conversation going

Have regular conversations with your child about staying safe online. Agree what games are suitable for them to play and help them understand why others are inappropriate. Talk to them about the types of games they may be watching on game streaming sites. Remind them they should tell a trusted adult, like a teacher or parent, if they see or hear something that upsets them when gaming. They can talk to Childline for free 24 hours a day if they're ever worried.

Ways in which you can help your children stay safe:

- Explore sites and apps together.
- Talk about what might be okay for children of different ages. Ask your child what sites or apps they like. Write a list and look at them together.
- Be positive about what you see, but also be open about concerns you have: "I think this site's really good" or "I'm a little worried about things I've seen here".
- Talk to your child about what you think is appropriate – but also involve them in the conversation. Ask what they think is okay for children of different ages – they'll feel involved in the decision-making.
- Be aware that your child might talk about friends who use apps or visit sites that you've decided aren't suitable. Be ready to discuss your reasons, but recognise that they may not agree with you. Listen carefully for the reasons why.
- Go through a final list of sites you both agree are okay and work out when you'll next discuss it.
- Ask about things they might see online which make them feel uncomfortable.
- Talk about things they, or their friends, have seen that made them feel uncomfortable.
- Be specific. What exactly made them feel uncomfortable and why? Is it people or animals being hurt? Nasty comments about others?
- Link these to things in the real world, and explain that you're always here to protect and help them online and off.
- Reassure your child that they can always talk to you about anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Show them how to report or block on the sites and apps they use. Use Net Aware to find out how.
- Tell them you'll help them to report anything upsetting they've seen, or to deal with online bullying.
- Talk about how they can stay safe on social networking sites.
- Keep a look out for abnormal behaviour or changes in your child's behaviour. If they start to be more secretive about what they do online, it could be a sign of grooming.
- Keep an eye out for potential gifts that your children may have received. Normally groomers will buy electronic devices such as phones, enabling them to chat without your knowledge.
- Ensure your children know that they should never meet up with strangers they meet online. We always teach children not to talk to strangers on the street but they need to understand that talking to someone online doesn't mean they aren't a stranger.

Ask your child if they know:

- Where reporting functions are?
- How to block someone?
- How to keep information private?

Look at Net aware <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/> this gives you a wealth of information on many online sites, allowing you to judge if it is a suitable site for your child to be on. It also keeps up to date with new privacies in games.

Being Share Aware regarding pictures and videos

It's easy to send a photo or message but the sender has no control about how it's passed on.

When images are stored or shared online they become public. Some people may think that images and videos only last a few seconds on social media and then they're deleted but they can still be saved or copied by others. This means that photos or videos which a young person may have shared privately could still be end up being shared between adults they don't know.

Every child is different, so your approach should be based on their character and your relationship with them. You could:

- Outline your expectations and explain the rules of having a mobile, tablet or smartphone.
- Ask them what they feel is acceptable to send to people, if they'd be happy for you or a stranger or other children to see certain photos. If the answer is 'no', explain that the image, video or message is probably not appropriate to send.
- Make sure they're comfortable saying no, that they know their body is private and being asked to share explicit images is inappropriate.
- For older children, talk to them about the importance of trust and consent in a healthy relationship. Tell them that it's not okay for someone to make them feel uncomfortable, to pressure them into doing things that they don't want to do, or to show them things that they're unhappy about. Let them know that they can speak to you if this ever happens.

For further advice see <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/>

Issue Date

This policy takes effect from February 2013.

Review Date

This policy will be reviewed and revised by the School Business Manager on a three yearly basis.

Endorsement

Full endorsement to this policy is given by:

Name:	Mr Martin Taylor
Position:	Trustee
Signed:	
Date:	19 th November 2019

Related Policies

- SEND Policy
- AG&T Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Inclusion Policy