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E-Safety Policy

June '24

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Rationale

In today's digital age, children and young people are continually engaging with technology both within and beyond school. These tools offer valuable educational opportunities, fostering creativity, communication, and critical thinking. Ensuring students can use the internet safely and responsibly is integral to their development and well-being. As educators, it is our duty to protect our students while helping them become skilled and mindful digital citizens.

E-Safety Education for Students

At Harworth Church of England Academy, e-safety education is a core part of our curriculum and is reinforced through a structured program of lessons and activities:

Kapow Online Safety Lessons: Every half term, each child participates in an online safety lesson delivered through the Kapow scheme. This program ensures that all students engage with e-safety education at least once per term. The lessons are carefully sequenced to cover progressively advanced topics as students move through different year levels.

Alignment with Education for a Connected World Framework: The Kapow scheme is used in conjunction with the school's Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum, providing a comprehensive approach that addresses digital literacy, online relationships, and self-protection skills. This ensures our coverage aligns fully with the national Education for a Connected World framework, which outlines key areas of digital competency for young people. Topics include managing online relationships, online reputation, and understanding the risks and rewards of digital engagement.

Technical Safeguards

The school is committed to maintaining a secure digital environment through:

Infrastructure and Access Control: The school's ICT systems are protected by filtering and monitoring tools to prevent access to harmful content. All users are assigned unique logins, and regular audits are conducted to ensure the security and integrity of the network. Any firewall breaches are directed to a member of SLT who investigates them further.

Digital Literacy Across the Curriculum

Online safety is woven into all subject areas, emphasizing responsible use of digital tools:

Guided Internet Use: For planned internet activities, teachers guide students to approved, age-appropriate resources. During open-ended research, staff actively monitor students' internet use to ensure their safety.

Respect for Intellectual Property: Students are taught to properly cite sources and understand copyright laws when using digital media.

Responsible Use of Digital Images and Communication

To protect students' privacy and digital well-being:

Digital Images: Staff may use digital media for educational purposes but must follow strict guidelines regarding the sharing and publication of images. Consent from parents is obtained before any photos or videos are shared publicly.

Communication: School-provided email accounts are used for all official communications. Staff and students are reminded that all electronic communications may be monitored to uphold standards of professional conduct and safeguard students.

Data Protection

All school staff are required to handle personal data securely and minimize risks related to data loss or misuse. This includes secure storage of devices and ensuring systems are password-protected.

Addressing Inappropriate Online Activities

The school takes a strong stance against illegal or harmful online behaviors, such as cyberbullying or access to unsuitable content. When these incidents occur, they are managed in line with the school's behavior and anti-bullying policies, and parents are informed as needed.

Supporting Positive Online Relationships

Students are taught the principles of positive online relationships, such as respecting privacy, recognizing and responding to unhealthy behavior, and understanding the importance of consent in digital interactions. This also includes awareness of online influences, including social media, and the potential impacts on self-image.

Through this policy, the Harworth Church of England Academy aims to create a safe digital learning environment where students can explore, learn, and grow as responsible and informed digital citizens.