



ONLINE SAFETY POLICY

Date approved by Directors
28th March 2023

TENTERDEN SCHOOLS TRUST

Online Safety Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years

DATE OF POLICY: MARCH 2023

DATE OF REVIEW: MARCH 2026

Members of staff responsible for Policy:

Chief Executive Officer & Trust IT Lead

Signed



Chief Executive Officer

Signed



Chair of the Trust Board

TST Online Safety Policy

1.0 Purpose

To clearly identify the key principles expected of all Tenterden Schools Trust schools with regard to the safe and responsible use of technology in order to ensure the safety and protection of all members of our school community online.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all schools of Tenterden Schools Trust and any subsidiary companies.

3.0 Policy statement

Tenterden Schools Trust believes that online safety (e-Safety) is an essential element of safeguarding children and adults in the digital world, when using technology such as computers, mobile devices, or games consoles. Tenterden Schools Trust identifies that the internet and information communication technologies are an important part of everyday life so students must be supported to be able to learn how to develop strategies to manage information they encounter. Students will also be supported to understand and respond to risks so they can be empowered to build resilience online. Tenterden Schools Trust has a duty to provide the school communities with quality internet access to raise education standards, promote student achievement, support professional work of staff and enhance the schools' management functions.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Board of Directors has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to have regard to any statutory guidance on safeguarding issued by the Secretary of State. The Board will nominate a Safeguarding Link Director who will work with the Chief Executive Officer on the Annual Safeguarding Statement of Assurance which is presented to the Board 6 times a year. The Board will delegate to the CEO that appropriate internet filters and online safety monitoring are in place.

4.2 Each Local Governing Board (LGB) will appoint a senior member of staff as the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), ensuring that the DSL has the appropriate time, funding, training, resources and support needed to carry out their role effectively. All members of the LGB will have annual safeguarding training that includes online safety. The Safeguarding link Governor (or the Chair) will carry out the Safeguarding Monitoring Checklist in Term 3 and report back to the LGB at the next scheduled meeting, ensuring that online safety is clearly dealt with in the Safeguarding Policy.

4.3 The Trust ICT Lead will check individual school websites annually to check that they comply with online safety guidelines using the DfE publication 'What academies, free schools and colleges must or should publish online'. The Trust ICT Lead will ensure that all students, staff, Governors and Directors have access to a Trust or School email account; the use of personal email accounts is not permitted.

4.4 Headteachers/Principals will be responsible for the following:

- How online safety forms part of the curriculum
- How teaching about safeguarding, including online safety, is adapted for vulnerable children, victims of abuse and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), where necessary

- How the school will inform parents about the significance of online safety
- Cyber-bullying, including the school's approach to prevent and address it, and when staff can examine and confiscate pupils' electronic devices
- Acceptable use of the internet
- Pupils' use of mobile devices in school
- Staff use of work devices outside of school
- How the school will respond to issues of misuse
- The training staff will receive

5.0 Social Media

5.1 Expectations regarding safe and responsible use of social media will apply to all staff and students of Tenterden Schools Trust and exist in order to safeguard both the school and the wider community, on and offline.

5.2 All staff and students of Tenterden Schools Trust are advised not to publish specific and detailed private thoughts, concerns, pictures, video's or messages on any social media services, especially content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others.

5.3 Any concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of Tenterden Schools Trust on social media sites should be reported to the Headteacher of the school involved or to the CEO for Trust Central staff and will be managed in accordance with existing school policies such as anti-bullying, allegations against staff, staff conduct, behaviour and safeguarding/child protection.

5.4 Official use of social media sites as communication tools will be risk assessed and formally approved by the Chief Executive Officer and members of staff running official school social media channels will be aware of the required behaviours and expectations of use and to ensure that sites are used safely, responsibly and in accordance with local and national guidance and legislation.

5.5 Personal use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites will be discussed with all members of staff as part of staff safeguarding induction and training and will be revisited and communicated via regular staff training opportunities.

5.6 Parents' obligations will be outlined in each schools' Home School Agreement.

5.7 In the event of parents using online platforms to post derogatory, offensive, racist or threats of violence against either the Trust or its staff, Tenterden Schools Trust will contact parents in the first instance to ask that the material be removed. If the behaviour persists, Tenterden Schools Trust will consider contacting the Police if a crime has been committed or take legal action in vexatious cases.

To be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- *School Safeguarding policy*
- *School Behaviour policy*
- *TST ICT Acceptable Use*