FLASH LEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Filtering & Monitoring Policy

Approved by: Chair of Governors Date: October 2026

To be reviewed: October 2027

Introduction:

Schools and colleges have a statutory responsibility to keep children and young people safe online as well as offline. Governing bodies and proprietors should make sure their school or college has appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place, as detailed in the statutory guidance - Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) and The Department for Education Filtering and Monitoring Standards for Schools.

The use of technology has become a significant component within the safeguarding of children and adults with technology potentially utilised as a platform to facilitate harm. Schools and colleges should provide a safe environment to learn and work, including when online. Filtering and monitoring are both important parts of safeguarding pupils and staff from illegal, inappropriate and potentially harmful online material.

Aim:

Flash Ley Primary School aims to provide a safe environment to learn and work, including when online. Filtering and monitoring are both important parts of safeguarding pupils and staff from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. It is our aim to protect and educate the whole school community in the safe use of technology.

This policy outlines the clear roles, responsibilities and strategies vital for delivering and maintaining effective filtering and monitoring systems within school. At Flash Ley the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Digital Lead, IT Support, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governors will work collaboratively using their professional expertise to make informed decisions and adapt filtering and monitoring practises. Our aim is to protect and educate the whole school community in our use of technology and to establish mechanisms to identify, intervene in and escalate any incident where appropriate.

It is important to recognise that no filtering systems can be 100% effective and need to be supported with good teaching and learning practice and effective supervision.

Implementation:

The main safety issues, highlighted in KCSIE, are broadly categorised into the following areas of risk:

- Content (exposure to inappropriate content, e.g., porn)
- Contact (harmful online interaction)
- Conduct (online behaviour)
- Commerce (gambling, etc)

At Flash Ley we will ensure decisions surrounding filtering and monitoring practices and Online Safety are informed considering:

- The context of the school is described in the digital risk profile, taking into account specific groups such as SEND and EAL (Annex A).
- The digital resilience of pupils in the school and the understanding that pupils are likely to have additional devices which do not use the school network. Therefore, there is a need for education and the development of digital competency skills in PSHE, Computing and beyond.
- The balance between restriction and freedom of enquiry. Systems should block harmful and inappropriate content but not unreasonably impact teaching and learning.

For the purpose of this policy the definitions of filtering and monitoring are taken from The Department for Education Filtering and Monitoring standards and are as follows:

Filtering is preventative. It refers to solutions that protect users from accessing illegal, inappropriate and potentially harmful content online. It does this by identifying and blocking specific web links and web content in the form of text, images, audio and video.

Monitoring is reactive. It refers to solutions that monitor what users are doing on devices and, in some cases, records this activity. Monitoring can be manual, for example, teachers viewing screens as they walk around a classroom. Technical monitoring solutions rely on software applied to a device that views a user's activity. Reports or alerts are generated based on illegal, inappropriate, or potentially harmful activities, including bullying. Monitoring solutions do not block users from seeing or doing anything.

Flash Ley will demonstrate how its systems manage effective filtering and monitoring by but not restricted to:

- Ensuring a dedicated Digital Lead is available within school alongside the support of Senior Leadership and Governors to oversee filtering and monitoring practise.
- Completing an annual review of filtering and monitoring practices (Annex B).
- Creating an annual risk assessment informed by the annual review and the digital risk profile of the school. This is amended when required.
- Ensuring records of monitoring and adaptations are kept and accessible to ensure practise can be adapted as required.
- Providing a dedicated Online Safety email for all staff to address any concerns or limitations of our filtering and monitoring systems and request changes.
- Ensuring the DSL, Digital Lead and IT Support services work collaboratively to review and update filtering and monitoring systems.
- Ensuring filtering systems block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning. This includes providing varied access for key stages to ensure the balance between teaching and restriction is effective. This ensures all children are robustly educated on age appropriate content.
- Ensuring all devices are up to date with filtering and monitoring software, particularly new devices before distribution to staff and pupils.
- Supporting the digital lead with CPD where required to be shared with all staff.

Roles and Responsibilities

Clear roles, responsibilities and strategies are vital for delivering and maintaining effective filtering and monitoring systems.

The governing body has overall strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring and ensuring the standards are being met. The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding within the school and making checks on the appropriateness of online filtering and monitoring systems. The Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. They should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit students' exposure to online risks through the school's IT system.

To do this, governing bodies should identify and assign:

- a member of the SLT and a governor, to be responsible for ensuring these standards are met
- the roles and responsibilities of staff and third parties, for example, in-house or third-party IT support

Our digital lead is Mrs Hughes and our governor responsible for Online safety is Gavin Tuach.

The headteacher, digital lead and senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

• The school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place. Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students, and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn.
• They consider the age range of students, the number of students, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs vs risks.
• Leaders conduct a risk assessment as required by the Prevent Duty.
• The school keeps a breast of statutory changes of government policy, and that the school meets all legal requirements for online monitoring and filtering.
• The school implements the relevant statutory arrangements for online monitoring and filtering.

Other staff will ensure that they follow school policy with regard to appropriate use of the internet and that they use the school reporting mechanisms to alert leaders to any breaches in filtering and monitoring systems.

Impact

Implementation of this policy and the attached annex documents ensures filtering and monitoring practices within school prevent and safeguard pupils from illegal, inappropriate and potentially harmful online material. Children are educated effectively on the dangers and risk associated with technology and are able to navigate the digital world safely.

Linked policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Online Safety policy
- Staff code of Conduct
- Acceptable use policy

Annex A

Flash Ley Primary School – Digital Risk Profile 2026

Flash Ley Primary School is located in the Stafford area of Rising Brook. The community has a population of around 5,605 residents. Flash Ley Primary School has approximately 200 children on roll at any given time aging from 3 months to 11 years across nursery, early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2 provisions. The demographic for the Rising Brook area around ST17 9DR is predominantly white, with 91.1% identifying as white in the 2021 census, which is significantly higher than the UK average. The gender split is nearly equal, with 50.1% male and 49.9% female. In terms of education, the area shows a low percentage of people with higher education qualifications, with 30.4% having no qualifications, a rate higher than the UK average. The average age is 39 years old.

The crime index for Rising Brook is 1.64, which is higher than the average for Stafford. This figure is composed of indices for different crime categories:

- Property Crimes: Index is 2.12, higher than the average.
- Drugs and Guns: Index is 2.24, higher than the average.
- Violent Crimes: Index is 1.26, higher than the average.
- Public Order Crimes: Index is 1.52, higher than the average.

Flash Ley Primary has 41% of pupils attending classified as pupil premium. This may mean our pupils are from disadvantaged backgrounds and exposed to poorer physical and mental health, lower academic achievement, limited positive role models and increased vulnerability to abuse or neglect. These risks are often linked to socioeconomic factors like poverty, which can lead to poor nutrition, housing instability, limited access to resources, and a lack of opportunities for healthy development. Our pupils are more likely to be exposed to the online safety issues documented in KCSIE – content, conduct, contact and commerce.

Flash Ley Primary School has 17% of pupils on the SEND register. 15% of pupils are English as an Additional Language (EAL).

Taking into account the demographic of Flash Ley Primary School we can assume pupils may be exposed to online risks, limited supervision and education in online safety. We are aware pupils maybe exposed to content that is not age appropriate, lack understanding of how to safely navigate the digital world and find themselves in risky online situations. This risk profile indicates as a school we must deliver robust filtering and monitoring systems to safeguard pupils but also ensure all pupils are educated on risks and strategies to keep them safe. Staff must be aware of the risk profile and needs of all pupils within our school community and ensure online safety is paramount in all practise. This risk profile is used to inform our daily practise in relation to safeguarding, filtering and monitoring and the teaching of Online Safety within our PSHE and computing curriculums.