

DAFFODIL GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Online Safety Policy

School Address: 163 Commercial Road, London, E1 2DA

Proprietor: ASM Anisuzzaman

Headteacher: Mr Stephen Montford

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Eman Ahamed

Deputy DSL: Mr Stephen Montford

1. Status, purpose and scope of this policy

This Online Safety Policy is adopted as a formal safeguarding policy of Daffodil Grammar School for Girls. It sets out how the school understands, manages and responds to risks associated with the use of digital technology, including the internet, mobile devices, online communication platforms and emerging technologies.

The policy applies to all pupils, staff, volunteers, contractors and any other individuals who use the school's systems or interact with pupils through digital means. It also extends beyond the physical boundaries of the school where pupils' use of technology outside school gives rise to safeguarding concerns, behavioural issues, reputational risk or disruption to the orderly running of the school.

The school does not treat online safety as a narrow technical matter concerned only with filtering or device management. It is understood as a safeguarding issue that requires a whole-school approach involving leadership, staff conduct, curriculum provision, supervision, culture and clear response systems. The school recognises that pupils' lives are increasingly shaped by digital environments and that risks may arise at any time, including outside school hours and beyond school systems. The policy is therefore designed to ensure that the school can identify risk early, respond effectively and support pupils in developing safe and responsible behaviours.

This policy must be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use arrangements. It is not a standalone document but part of the school's integrated safeguarding framework.

2. Legal and regulatory framework

This policy is written in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, which requires schools to ensure that children are safeguarded from risks arising online and that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place. The guidance makes clear that online safety is a safeguarding responsibility and must be embedded within the school's wider safeguarding systems.

The school also operates within the Independent School Standards Regulations 2014, which require that the welfare of pupils is actively promoted and that safeguarding arrangements are effective in practice. The current Department for Education guidance emphasises that proprietors must ensure not only that policies exist but that they are implemented effectively and understood by staff.

The school recognises that online safety is closely linked to other legal duties, including those arising under the Equality Act 2010, data protection law, and the school's duty of care to pupils. Online risks may disproportionately affect vulnerable pupils, including those with SEND or communication needs, and may therefore engage equality and safeguarding considerations simultaneously.

3. The school's understanding of online risk

Daffodil Grammar School for Girls recognises that online risk is complex, evolving and often hidden. It does not arise solely from exposure to inappropriate content. It may arise through communication, relationships, behaviour, manipulation, coercion or exploitation.

The school understands that pupils may encounter risks including cyberbullying, harassment, peer abuse, online grooming, exposure to harmful or extreme content, misinformation, pressure to share images or information, and contact with unknown individuals. These risks may occur through social media, messaging applications, gaming platforms, video-sharing sites or any other form of digital communication.

The school also recognises that risk is not limited to interactions with strangers. Harmful behaviour may arise between pupils, including the sharing of images, coercion, exclusion, or abusive communication. Online behaviour may therefore form part of wider safeguarding concerns, including child-on-child abuse.

The school acknowledges that emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, present new and evolving risks. These may include the generation or sharing of inappropriate content, impersonation, misuse of information or the blurring of boundaries between authentic and artificial material.

The school therefore adopts a dynamic approach to online safety. It does not rely on fixed assumptions about risk but expects staff to remain alert to changes in technology and behaviour.

4. Leadership, accountability and safeguarding oversight

The proprietor holds ultimate responsibility for ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, including those relating to online safety. This includes ensuring that appropriate policies, systems and oversight mechanisms exist and that these are implemented in practice.

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented on a day-to-day basis. This includes ensuring that staff are trained, that systems are functioning effectively, and that concerns are addressed promptly and appropriately.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has operational responsibility for online safety as part of safeguarding. This includes overseeing the management of concerns, advising staff, liaising with external agencies where necessary, and ensuring that patterns of concern are identified and addressed.

The school recognises that online safety cannot be delegated entirely to technical systems or a single individual. It requires shared responsibility across leadership, staff and safeguarding roles.

5. Filtering, monitoring and technical controls

The school has in place filtering and monitoring systems designed to protect pupils from harmful content and to identify potential safeguarding concerns. Filtering systems are used to restrict access to material that is inappropriate, unlawful or unsuitable for pupils. Monitoring systems are used to identify patterns of use or specific incidents that may indicate risk.

However, the school is clear that technical systems are not sufficient on their own. Filtering systems cannot prevent all exposure to risk, and monitoring systems cannot replace professional judgement. The school therefore treats these systems as one component of a wider safeguarding approach.

Staff must not assume that filtering systems will prevent all risks. They must remain vigilant and must supervise pupils appropriately when technology is in use. Where a member of staff becomes aware of a potential issue, they must act on that information rather than relying on technical controls.

The school also ensures that filtering and monitoring arrangements are reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain effective and appropriate.

6. Use of school systems and expectations of conduct

The school provides access to technology as part of its educational provision. This access is granted on the basis that pupils and staff will use systems responsibly and in accordance with school expectations.

Pupils are expected to use technology for legitimate educational purposes and in a manner that does not harm others, disrupt learning or expose themselves or others to risk. They must not attempt to bypass filtering systems, access inappropriate content, or engage in behaviour that is harmful or unlawful.

Staff are expected to model appropriate use of technology and to reinforce expectations consistently. They must not ignore misuse or treat it as trivial where it may indicate risk.

The school recognises that expectations must be clear, consistent and enforced in practice. Inconsistency in enforcement undermines both safeguarding and behaviour management.

7. Mobile phones and personal devices

Daffodil Grammar School for Girls operates a strict ban on mobile phones for pupils. This decision is based on safeguarding, behavioural and educational considerations. The school recognises that unrestricted access to personal devices can increase exposure to risk, including cyberbullying, inappropriate content, distraction from learning and safeguarding concerns that are difficult to monitor.

The ban is applied consistently and is enforced by staff. Pupils are not permitted to use mobile phones during the school day or on school premises.

Staff must ensure that this rule is implemented in practice. Failure to enforce the rule undermines the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding approach.

8. Online behaviour and its relationship to school discipline

The school treats behaviour online as an extension of behaviour within the school. The same standards of respect, conduct and responsibility apply.

Where online behaviour affects pupils, staff or the school community, the school will take action in accordance with its Behaviour Policy and safeguarding procedures. This includes behaviour that occurs outside school where there is a clear link to the school or to the welfare of pupils.

The school recognises that online incidents may be complex. A single incident may involve elements of bullying, safeguarding risk, peer abuse and emotional harm. The school will therefore assess each case carefully and respond in a proportionate and informed manner.

9. Cyberbullying and peer-on-peer abuse

The school recognises cyberbullying as a serious issue that can have significant impact on pupils' wellbeing. Cyberbullying may involve repeated messages, exclusion, spreading of rumours, sharing of images or other forms of online harassment.

The school also recognises that online behaviour may form part of peer-on-peer abuse. This may include coercion, manipulation, sharing of images without consent or pressure to engage in harmful behaviour.

Such incidents will be treated as safeguarding matters where appropriate. The school will not dismiss online incidents as minor or as outside its responsibility simply because they occur off-site.

Staff must report concerns promptly and must not attempt to manage serious incidents informally.

Understood — you're right to push for this. The final sections must carry the same depth as the earlier parts, otherwise inspectors will see inconsistency and lack of implementation thinking.

Below is a **fully expanded and completed version of the latter sections** of your Online Safety Policy, rewritten to the same **detailed, inspection-grade standard** as the earlier sections. This is not a summary — it explains **how the school actually operates, makes decisions, and evidences compliance**.

10. Response to online safety concerns

When a concern relating to online safety arises, the school's response is governed by safeguarding principles rather than convenience or perceived severity. Staff must understand that online concerns often escalate quickly and that early action is critical in preventing harm. For this reason, no member of staff is permitted to dismiss, minimise or delay action in response to an online safety concern on the basis that it appears minor, outside school, or typical of adolescent behaviour.

The first responsibility of any member of staff is to ensure that the pupil is safe. This includes assessing whether the pupil is at immediate risk of harm, whether the concern involves coercion, exploitation, sharing of images, or contact with unknown individuals, and whether urgent safeguarding intervention is required. If there is any indication of immediate danger, the matter must be escalated without delay in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

All concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead on the same day. Staff must not attempt to investigate the matter themselves beyond what is necessary to establish that a concern exists. This is particularly important in cases involving images or digital content, where inappropriate handling may itself create legal or safeguarding issues.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the concern in context. This includes considering the age and vulnerability of the pupil, the nature of the online activity, whether there is evidence of coercion or manipulation, whether the incident forms part of a pattern, and whether other pupils may be affected. The DSL will determine whether the matter should be managed as a safeguarding concern, a behaviour issue, or both.

Where the concern involves peer-on-peer abuse, including the sharing of images or harmful communication, the school will follow safeguarding procedures rather than treating the matter solely as a disciplinary issue. The school recognises that such incidents may involve complex dynamics, including pressure, fear, or lack of understanding, and must therefore be handled carefully and lawfully.

The school will involve parents where appropriate, taking into account the best interests of the pupil and any safeguarding considerations. In some cases, particularly where there is risk of harm or external involvement, the school may need to involve external agencies, including children's social care or the police.

All concerns will be recorded accurately and in detail. Records will include the nature of the concern, the actions taken, the rationale for decisions, and any follow-up measures. The school recognises that accurate record-keeping is essential both for safeguarding and for demonstrating compliance with statutory expectations.

The school's response will not end with immediate action. Where necessary, the school will provide ongoing support to the pupil, monitor the situation, and review whether further intervention is required.

11. Education and prevention

The school recognises that effective online safety cannot be achieved solely through restriction or reaction. Education is central to prevention. Pupils must be equipped not only with rules but with understanding, judgement and the ability to recognise and respond to risk.

Online safety education is delivered through the curriculum, including personal development and pastoral provision. It is integrated into the wider educational experience rather than treated as an isolated topic. The school ensures that pupils are taught about the nature of online risks, including cyberbullying, exploitation, misinformation, privacy, digital footprints and the consequences of online behaviour.

The school takes care to ensure that education is appropriate to the age, maturity and understanding of pupils. It does not rely on abstract warnings or general statements. Instead, it seeks to develop practical understanding, enabling pupils to recognise situations that may place them at risk and to understand how to respond.

Education also includes the development of values and attitudes. Pupils are expected to understand that their behaviour online has real consequences for others. The school promotes respect, responsibility and accountability in digital environments, consistent with its wider ethos.

The school recognises that pupils may not always disclose concerns readily. Education therefore includes encouraging pupils to seek help, to speak to trusted adults and to understand that they will be supported rather than blamed.

Staff play a crucial role in education. They are expected to reinforce messages consistently and to address issues as they arise. The school ensures that staff are supported through training so that they are able to deliver this aspect of the curriculum effectively.

12. Staff conduct in relation to online safety

Staff conduct is central to the effectiveness of online safety arrangements. Pupils observe and are influenced by the behaviour of adults, and inconsistent or inappropriate conduct by staff undermines both safeguarding and education.

Staff must maintain clear professional boundaries in all online interactions. They must not communicate with pupils through personal social media accounts, personal messaging

applications or any platform that is not authorised by the school. Communication must be transparent, professional and capable of scrutiny.

Staff must also ensure that their online conduct does not bring the school into disrepute or undermine their professional role. This includes content shared on personal accounts, interactions with others and participation in online discussions. Staff must be mindful that their conduct may be observed by pupils, parents and the wider community.

The school recognises that online environments can blur boundaries. Staff must therefore exercise judgement and restraint, avoiding informal or overly familiar interactions that could be misinterpreted. Where there is any uncertainty, staff are expected to seek guidance.

Staff must also remain vigilant in identifying concerns. Online safety is not the responsibility of a single individual. It requires awareness and responsiveness from all staff. Where a staff member becomes aware of a potential issue, they must act in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Failure to adhere to these expectations may result in disciplinary action and, where appropriate, safeguarding procedures.

13. Engagement with parents

The school recognises that parents play a significant role in supporting online safety. Pupils' use of technology extends beyond the school environment, and effective safeguarding requires cooperation between school and home.

The school seeks to maintain open and constructive communication with parents. Where concerns arise, the school will communicate clearly, explaining the nature of the concern, the actions taken and any expectations placed on parents or pupils.

The school also provides guidance to parents where appropriate. This may include information about online risks, advice on supporting safe use of technology, and clarification of school expectations.

However, the school also recognises the limits of its control. It cannot regulate all aspects of pupils' use of technology outside school. It therefore focuses on partnership rather than control, supporting parents while maintaining clear expectations within the school environment.

Where a concern involves significant risk, the school will act in the best interests of the pupil, which may include involving external agencies. The school will not delay action where safeguarding considerations require immediate intervention.

14. Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement

The school recognises that online safety is not static. Risks evolve as technology changes, and the effectiveness of systems must be reviewed regularly.

The headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead are responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy. This includes reviewing incidents, analysing patterns, evaluating the effectiveness of responses and identifying areas for improvement.

Monitoring is not limited to individual incidents. The school will consider whether there are recurring issues, whether particular groups of pupils may be at increased risk, and whether systems are functioning as intended.

The school will also review the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring systems, ensuring that they remain appropriate and effective. This includes considering whether systems are identifying relevant concerns and whether staff are responding appropriately.

Training will be reviewed to ensure that staff remain informed and confident in addressing online safety issues. The school recognises that staff understanding is critical to effective implementation.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if required by changes in legislation, guidance or identified need. The proprietor retains oversight and is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively in practice.

15. Adoption and implementation

This policy is formally adopted by the proprietor of Daffodil Grammar School for Girls and takes effect immediately.

The school recognises that adoption alone is insufficient. Implementation requires that staff understand the policy, that systems are in place, and that expectations are applied consistently. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is embedded in practice and that staff are supported in fulfilling their responsibilities.

The school will ensure that this policy is made available to staff, parents and relevant stakeholders. It will also ensure that pupils are informed of expectations in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding.