St. Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Our Mission in St Patrick's is to develop each child's talents and potential in a caring Catholic community inspired by the teachings of Jesus.

Safeguarding Children in Education

Filtering and Monitoring Policy

At Saint Patrick's Catholic Primary School, we seek to create a unique and enabling community whereby children and staff are encouraged to journey beyond their expectations – academically, socially and spiritually – within a culture based on Gospel Values.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place to safeguard learners and staff from harmful or illegal online content, while enabling safe and effective teaching, learning and professional practice. Filtering and monitoring form part of the school's wider safeguarding responsibilities and are implemented in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and the DfE Filtering and Monitoring and Technical Standards.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All users of the school's IT systems
- All school-owned devices
- Any device accessing the school's network or internet connection
- Filtering and monitoring provided through third-party or managed services

Roles and Responsibilities

- Governors provide strategic oversight and assurance that filtering and monitoring standards are met.
- Senior leaders ensure appropriate systems are in place, reviewed and resourced.
- The DSL leads safeguarding responses arising from filtering or monitoring alerts.
- The IT service provider maintains systems and provides reports as agreed.
- All staff report concerns relating to access, alerts or system effectiveness.

Policy Statement

The school will ensure that:

- Internet access is filtered to block illegal, harmful and inappropriate content
- Monitoring systems are in place to identify safeguarding concerns and enable timely intervention
- Filtering and monitoring are proportionate, transparent and risk-based
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood
- Provision is reviewed regularly and improved in response to risk, practice and guidance
- that staff understand the filtering and monitoring arrangements, their purpose, the responsibilities relevant to their role and the procedures for reporting concerns.
- Filtering and monitoring provision will be reviewed at least annually, with the review considering safeguarding risks, emerging technologies, generative AI,changes in learner behaviour and the effectiveness of technical and procedural controls.
- Governors will receive sufficient information to assure themselves that the DfE Filtering and Monitoring Standard is being met and that identified actions are followed through.

Filtering and monitoring are recognised as supporting safeguarding, not replacing education, supervision or professional judgement.

Filtering

The school will ensure that filtering systems:

- Block access to illegal content, including child sexual abuse material, terrorist material and other unlawful content
- Manage inappropriate and/or harmful content (including search terms and results). These may include:
    - Gambling
    - Hate speech/discrimination
    - Harmful content
    - Mis/Disinformation
    - Piracy and copyright theft
    - Pornography
    - Self-harm and eating disorders
    - Violence against women and girls
    - AI-generated or AI-enabled harmful content, where technically feasible and proportionate
- Are age-appropriate and suitable for an educational environment

- Are applied consistently to all users, devices and internet connections, including backup connections
- Allow the identification of individual users and devices in the event of breaches of the filtering policy
- No user should be able to deactivate or bypass systems that filter illegal content.
- Detect and, where technically possible, prevent unauthorised circumvention through VPNs, proxy services or other methods designed to bypass filtering.
- Support differentiated access for different user groups (e.g. staff and learners)
- Are reviewed regularly to avoid inappropriate over-blocking that may restrict teaching and learning

The school understands the capabilities and limitations of the system and potential impact on implementation and policy is understood.

The school will use recognised tools and guidance to assure the effectiveness of filtering provision.

Monitoring

The school will ensure that monitoring:

- Enables the identification of safeguarding concerns in a timely manner
- Uses a combination of physical supervision, manual checks and technical systems as appropriate
- Generates alerts that can be prioritised and acted upon by trained staff
- Is subject to human review and professional judgement
- Is clearly communicated to users through policy and acceptable use agreements

Monitoring should be proportionate to the school's risk profile and should not create a culture of surveillance.

Review and Training

Filtering and monitoring provision should be reviewed at least annually and whenever risks or technologies change. Staff, governors and those with specific responsibilities will receive appropriate training.

POLICY REVIEW

The Governing Body will undertake an annual review of the school's Filtering and Monitoring Policy and remedy any deficiencies or weaknesses found without delay. The names Governing Body member to contact with any concerns regarding the Filtering and Monitoring Policy is Mrs. Charlotte Gilbert

Policy dated: October 2026

Date of next review: October 2027