



# Online Safety Policy: Swallow Grange Alternative Provision

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**Organisation:** Swallow Grange Alternative Provision: The Grange, Caistor Road, Swallow, Market Rasen. Lincolnshire LN7 6DP **Age Group Supported:** 4-11 year olds **Specific Needs Supported:** Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) / Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) **Policy Version:** 1.0 **Effective Date:** 8th July 2025 **Review Date:** 8th July 2026 (Annually, or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, technology, or identified risks)

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## 1. Introduction

At Swallow Grange Alternative Provision, we recognise the immense opportunities and challenges presented by the internet and digital technologies. While these tools offer valuable educational and communication benefits, we are acutely aware of the potential online risks, especially for children aged 4-11, and particularly those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. These children may be more vulnerable to online harms due to communication difficulties, social naivety, or heightened emotional responses.

This policy outlines our commitment to ensuring the **online safety** and **digital well-being** of all our pupils, staff, and the wider school community. It should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policy, GDPR/Data Protection Policy, Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs), and Behaviour Policy.

## 2. Aims of this Policy

- To provide a safe online environment for all pupils, staff, and visitors.
- To equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, and understanding to use technology safely and responsibly.
- To educate staff on their roles and responsibilities in promoting online safety and identifying/responding to online safety concerns.
- To implement robust technical and organisational measures to minimise online risks.
- To promote a culture of responsible digital citizenship and critical thinking.
- To ensure compliance with relevant legislation and guidance, including the Education Act 2002, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), and the UK GDPR.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all online activities involving pupils, staff, and volunteers, both within the provision and, where relevant, extending to home use that impacts the safety or wellbeing of individuals within the Swallow Grange community. It covers:

- All devices and networks owned or managed by Swallow Grange.
- Personally owned devices used on Swallow Grange premises or for school-related activities.
- All forms of online communication and content.

### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 Head of Provision (Overall Responsibility)**

The Head of Provision is ultimately responsible for ensuring that this Online Safety Policy is implemented effectively and that all statutory guidance regarding online safety is met. This includes:

- Championing a whole-provision approach to online safety.
- Ensuring the provision has robust online safety procedures and technologies in place.
- Allocating appropriate resources for online safety training and infrastructure.
- Reviewing and approving this policy annually.

#### **4.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs**

The DSL and Deputy DSLs play a crucial role in online safety, including:

- Being the first point of contact for all online safety concerns and disclosures.
- Leading investigations into online safety incidents involving pupils.
- Liaising with external agencies (e.g., police, social care, CEOP) as appropriate.
- Ensuring staff are aware of their reporting procedures for online safety concerns.
- Keeping up-to-date with emerging online safety risks and trends.

#### **4.3 Online Safety Lead / IT Coordinator**

A designated Online Safety Lead (who may also be the IT Coordinator) will be responsible for the day-to-day management and implementation of online safety measures, including:

- Managing and maintaining the provision's online safety infrastructure (e.g., filtering, monitoring systems).
- Providing technical advice and support on online safety matters.
- Keeping abreast of new technologies and potential risks.
- Supporting staff training on the safe use of technology.

#### 4.4 All Staff Members

Every staff member plays a vital role in promoting online safety:

- Adhere strictly to the Staff Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).
- Model safe and responsible online behaviour.
- Integrate online safety education into their teaching and interactions with pupils.
- Supervise pupils effectively when they are using technology.
- Immediately report any online safety concerns, incidents, or suspected breaches to the DSL or Online Safety Lead.
- Be vigilant for signs of online harm (e.g., cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, grooming attempts).
- Understand the specific vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND/SEMH and adapt online safety guidance accordingly.

#### 4.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Adhere to the Pupil Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).
- Use technology safely and responsibly.
- Report any uncomfortable, upsetting, or worrying online experiences to a trusted adult (staff member, parent/carer).
- Understand the importance of not sharing personal information online.

#### 4.6 Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are encouraged to:

- Support the provision's online safety policy and reinforce safe online practices at home.
- Monitor their child's online activity at home.
- Engage with online safety resources and information provided by the provision.
- Report any online safety concerns involving their child or other pupils/staff to the provision.

### 5. Online Safety Education and Curriculum

Online safety education will be an integral part of the curriculum and daily life at Swallow Grange:

- **Age-Appropriate:** Online safety will be taught in an age-appropriate manner, tailored to the developmental stages of 4-11 year olds.
- **SEND/SEMH Adaptations:** Teaching strategies will be adapted to meet the diverse needs of pupils with SEND/SEMH, using visual aids, social stories, simplified language, and repetition to ensure understanding. Focus will be placed on concepts like 'private information', 'safe adults', and the permanence of online actions.

- **Integrated Learning:** Online safety will be integrated across subjects (e.g., PSHE, computing) and through assemblies, dedicated lessons, and awareness campaigns.
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- **Key Topics:** Education will cover topics such as:
  - Keeping personal information private.
  - Recognising and reporting inappropriate content.
  - Understanding online friendships and potential dangers (e.g., grooming).
  - Cyberbullying (what it is, how to respond, where to get help).
  - Responsible use of social media (even if not directly used by young pupils, understanding future risks).
  - Gaming safety.
  - Critical thinking about online information.
  - The importance of digital footprints.

## 6. Technical and Organisational Measures

### 6.1 Internet Access and Filtering

- **Filtering System:** Robust internet filtering will be in place to block access to inappropriate and harmful content, in line with DfE requirements.
- **Regular Review:** Filtering systems will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Online Safety Lead to ensure their effectiveness.
- **Monitoring:** Internet usage will be monitored to identify any potential risks, misuse, or attempts to bypass filtering. This monitoring will be proportionate and transparent.

### 6.2 Network and Device Security

- **Firewalls and Antivirus:** Strong firewalls and up-to-date antivirus software will be used to protect the network and devices from malware and cyber threats.
- **Password Security:** Staff will use strong, unique passwords and adhere to password best practices.
- **Software Updates:** All software and operating systems will be kept up-to-date to patch vulnerabilities.
- **Device Management:** All devices used for educational purposes will be managed and secured by the provision's IT systems.

### 6.3 Safe Use of Email and Communication Tools

- **Official Channels:** Official school email accounts and approved communication platforms will be used for all professional communication.
- **Professional Conduct:** Staff will maintain professional conduct in all online communications.
- **Pupil Communication:** Direct email communication between staff and pupils will be discouraged unless specifically required for educational purposes and supervised. Approved secure platforms (e.g., learning platforms) will be used where appropriate.

## 6.4 Social Media and Professional Conduct

- **Staff Conduct:** Staff will adhere to the Staff AUP regarding the use of personal social media, ensuring that their online behaviour does not bring the provision into disrepute or compromise their professional role.
- **Pupil Interaction:** Staff must not engage in personal online communication with pupils, or accept friend requests from pupils or former pupils on personal social media accounts.
- **Reporting Concerns:** Any concerns about staff conduct on social media that relates to online safety or safeguarding must be reported to the Head of Provision or Chair of Governors immediately.

## 7. Responding to Online Safety Concerns and Incidents

### 7.1 Reporting Procedure

- Any individual who becomes aware of an online safety concern (e.g., cyberbullying, inappropriate content, grooming attempt) must immediately report it to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or a Deputy DSL.
- If the concern involves the DSL, it should be reported to the Head of Provision or Chair of Governors.

### 7.2 Investigation and Action

- All reported concerns will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and thoroughly by the DSL or a designated investigator.
- The investigation will involve gathering all relevant information and evidence.
- Appropriate action will be taken based on the findings, which may include:
  - Safeguarding referrals to social care or the police (e.g., via CEOP).
  - Disciplinary action for staff or pupils.
  - Support for affected individuals.
  - Adjustments to policies or procedures.
  - Contacting parents/carers.
- Records of all incidents, investigations, and actions taken will be maintained confidentially.

### 7.3 Supporting Victims

- Swallow Grange will provide appropriate support to any pupil or staff member affected by an online safety incident. This may include emotional support, referral to external agencies, or therapeutic interventions.
- We will work with parents/carers to support their child at home following an incident.

## 8. Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs)

Separate, age-appropriate **Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs)** will be in place for:

- **Staff:** Outlining expected professional conduct, responsible use of technology, data handling, and social media guidelines.
- **Pupils:** Setting clear expectations for safe and responsible online behaviour, including rules for internet use, device usage, and online communication. These AUPs will be explained in accessible language, with visual supports where necessary for SEND/SEMH pupils.
- **Visitors/Contractors:** Brief guidelines for temporary access to the provision's network.

All staff, and where appropriate, pupils and parents/carers, will be required to sign an AUP to acknowledge their understanding and agreement.

## 9. Data Protection and Online Safety

This Online Safety Policy operates in conjunction with our **GDPR Policy**. We will ensure that:

- Personal data collected through online activities is handled in accordance with GDPR principles.
- Data privacy is taught as part of online safety education.
- Any online safety monitoring is proportionate and respects individuals' privacy rights.

## 10. Monitoring and Review

- The effectiveness of this policy and our online safety practices will be monitored regularly by the Head of Provision, DSL, and Online Safety Lead.
- This policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner if there are:
  - Changes in relevant legislation or national guidance (e.g., KCSIE updates).
  - New technologies or online platforms emerging.
  - Identified new risks or incidents.
  - Feedback from staff, pupils, parents/carers, or external agencies.

## 11. Communication and Awareness

- This policy will be made available to all staff, parents/carers, and pupils (in appropriate formats).
- Regular communication will be made to the whole school community regarding online safety tips, resources, and emerging risks.

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Signed: Jayne Chudley – Managing Director – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Reviewed: Jayne Chudley - Managing Director – 25<sup>th</sup> June 2026