

# London Steiner School

## Online Safety Policy

### 1. Legislation and Guidance

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

### 2. Context

At London Steiner School (LSS), we recognise the fast-changing world of digital media and its increased use in both adults and children's lives. We also recognise the additional use as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Children are growing up with the internet, they know how to use it, but are not aware of the possible dangers and how to protect themselves. Adults (mainly) have not grown up with the internet, however, they have learnt how to protect themselves. A continual and open dialogue between adults and children surrounding internet use is vital to keeping children safe.

This policy sets out how we aim to work in partnership with parents, students and staff members to create a proactive culture of learning and teaching to impress upon the members of our community the importance of awareness and self-protection in the online world.

### 3. Concerns regarding digital media

While the internet has brought many undisputed benefits to our lives, there are clearly many issues to contend with.

- Studies show that too much two-dimensional screen viewing is detrimental to children's physical and emotional development. It can also affect their sleep.
- We recognise that the World Health Organisation has classed the over-use of social media as an addiction. This has consequences for children and adults. Adults themselves can struggle to use digital media with consciousness and, as a consequence, children are exposed to more digital technology than we would hope for.
- Not so long ago, predators (at the very least) were a visible presence. Today the ways in which predators have access to a child is more diverse than ever before; they harness social media platform's as vital tools when grooming children online.
- The adults responsible for a child's online life may feel uncertain when faced with the ongoing, everchanging information.

The increasing extent of digital media and internet use in our society also has the following concerns:

- Cyber Bullying linked with social media and SMS
- Grooming and Sexual Exploitation
- Excessive Gaming
- Online Gambling

- Unregulated Advertising
- The Dark Web and Drug Purchase
- Radicalisation
- Sexting
- Up-skirting

#### **4. Online Learning and The Covid-19 Pandemic**

- Keeping children safe online is of paramount importance. Staff adhere to the School's Child Protection Policy if having to teach online.
- A safe platform is used for online learning

#### **5. Teacher and Staff Education**

- Online presence, for teachers, staff and children, has increased since the Covid-19 Pandemic
- It is essential for staff to educate themselves and keep as up to date as possible with current trends. The School is a member of the PSHE Association and teachers also receive CPD from the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship.
- All staff are expected to have completed the online Educare E–Safety course and review it at least every 2 years.
- The teachers meeting has regular updates and reviews with regard developments in digital media.
- Staff are also encouraged to monitor and be conscious of their own use.
- Teachers keep a record of all e-safety discussions in day-to-day planning and assessment documents.

#### **6. Children's Education - Kindergarten**

LSS endeavours to create a community of knowledge and support based on continuous self-development and CPD, coupled with parental feedback, whilst keeping in practice with our Steiner philosophy of respect, kindness and consideration to the children in our care.

The Kindergarten teachers and Safeguarding team play a vital role in helping to educate parents, via parents' evenings, literature, articles and talks. Explicit information and guidance are reserved for adults in caring roles surrounding the children. Safeguarding is directly part of online safety education.

Kindergarten teachers listen carefully to children and also carefully observe their play. These moments are used to gently educate the children in a child led practice that matches our philosophy. We use their experience to link information and advice in an age-appropriate way. In this manner the approach to online safety is individualised in the Kindergarten setting. Any indication that a child has been playing games or watching programs online that are inappropriate or affecting them negatively is addressed with the parents.

- Parents and teachers are continually updated on the changing nature of predatory behaviour in the online world.
- There is an awareness of the possible psychological repercussions of being around a world rooted in social media.
- There is an awareness of the long-term impact on self-worth that can result from the influence of people taking pictures and videos.
- Steiner/Waldorf pedagogy recognises that young children learn through imitation. Despite limited use of screen and online activity themselves, it is recognised that children observe adults around them constantly online, on both phones or computers.
- Posed photographs (people or food) blur the lines between reality and fantasy. Adults can have difficulty, themselves, understanding and managing this concept. LSS strives to help children become aware of the differences. This is aided by bringing a deep sense of appreciation of the real world around them and social interactions without screens.

## **7. Children’s Education - Lower and Middle School**

The Following is adapted from LSS Curriculum Policy Part 3 – Schemes of Work Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE)

The foundation of the Steiner/ Waldorf curriculum is based on fostering health, and developing resilience and character in preparation for modern life. This outlook is commensurate with the three core themes of the PSHE curriculum: Health and Wellbeing; Relationships; and Living in the Wider World.

PSHE can be seen to have a three-tiered approach:

1. Specific information relating to the topic being taught.
2. Bedrock PSHE content which focuses on the social and emotional education of pupils
3. A whole School approach, whereby the school models the behaviour in all its interactions.

PSHE is taught in an imaginative, sensitive and age-appropriate way. The class teacher knows the children well and can build on what is brought from home by approaching topics inclusively and with sensitivity. Specific information relating to the online world, however, changes rapidly and our dedicated PSHE teacher informs teachers of developments, and will also teach specific content lessons when asked to do so by class teachers.

The Young Foundation identified a core set of social and emotional capabilities / skills that are of value to young people.<sup>1</sup> These are transferable skills and are determined to be critical in enabling young people to fulfil their potential and make a positive transition to adulthood and independence. The Skills mentioned are:

- Managing Feelings – reviewing, self-awareness, reflecting, self-regulating, self-accepting

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> McNeil, B., Reeder, N. & Rich, J. (2012). A framework of outcomes for young people. London: The Young Foundation. As mentioned in [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/411492/What\\_works\\_in\\_enhancing\\_social\\_and\\_emotional\\_skills\\_development\\_during\\_childhood\\_and\\_adolescence.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/411492/What_works_in_enhancing_social_and_emotional_skills_development_during_childhood_and_adolescence.pdf)

- Communication – explaining, expressing, presenting, listening, questioning, using different ways of communicating
- Confidence and Agency – self-reliance, self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-belief, ability to shape your own life and the world around you
- Planning and Problem Solving – navigating resources, organising, setting and achieving goals, decision making, researching, analysing, critical thinking, questioning and challenging, evaluating risks, reliability
- Relationships and Leadership – motivating others, valuing and contributing to team working, negotiating, establishing positive relationships, interpreting others, managing conflicts, empathising
- Creativity – imagining alternative ways of doing things, applying learning in new contexts, enterprising, innovating, remaining open to new ideas
- Resilience and Determination – self-disciplines, self-management, self-motivated, concentrating, having a sense of purpose, persistent, self-controlled.

Our curriculum over the course of the eight years is particularly designed to foster these skills in an age-appropriate way in the main lessons, subject lessons and throughout the whole of school life. Please see also our policy on SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural)

The protected characteristics as listed in section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. An age-appropriate understanding and appreciation of these characteristics are woven sensitively into the curriculum.

It is our commitment to do our best to promote discussion and listen carefully to what children are interacting with, to invite a questioning mind and inform pupils of how to stay safe online. Teachers CPD in this area is crucial, as is parent education.

The content described below is general in nature. Teachers will respond to the indications of their particular class which will include learning about the online world, either earlier or later, in an age appropriate way.

Class	Topics
One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories from the class 1 curriculum that strengthen the bedrock PSHE curriculum</li> <li>• What we can do online?</li> <li>• How to stay safe/data sharing</li> <li>• The importance of talking with your parents/carers about the games you play and the things that you learn or happen on-line.</li> <li>• Games, winning and losing – does it really matter?</li> </ul>
Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories from the class 2 curriculum that strengthen the bedrock PSHE curriculum</li> <li>• What we can do online - update</li> <li>• How to stay safe/data sharing</li> <li>• The importance of sharing with your parents/carers, the fun things and the difficult things that might happen online.</li> <li>• Games, winning and losing – does it matter?</li> <li>• What is gambling? Relate to fables.</li> </ul>
Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories from the class 3 curriculum that strengthen the bedrock PSHE curriculum</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What we can do online - further update including social media platforms and YouTube.</li> <li>• How to stay safe/data sharing – further information</li> <li>• Gaming etiquette</li> <li>• The importance of talking with your parents/carers about things that happen online - reiterate.</li> <li>• Games, what does it feel like to win or lose.</li> <li>• What is gambling? What are loop boxes?</li> </ul>
Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories from the class 4 curriculum that strengthen the bedrock PSHE curriculum</li> <li>• How to stay safe/data sharing – further information</li> <li>• Gaming etiquette/social media etiquette – reiterate and expand from class 3 use examples.</li> <li>• The importance of talking with your parents/carers about things that happen online – examples.</li> <li>• Games, what does it feel like to win or lose? - explore in further depth</li> <li>• What is gambling? What are loop boxes? What is E-sport?</li> </ul>
Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories from the class 5 curriculum that strengthen the bedrock PSHE curriculum</li> <li>• Discussions about life and death. What is life? What is death? How does digital technology help us live/die</li> <li>• Continue to explore gaming etiquette/social media etiquette – ask for good and bad examples from the class.</li> <li>• The continued importance of talking with parents/carers about things that happen online</li> <li>• Games, revisit what it feels like to win or lose - explore in further depth. (The Greek Olympic event provides a strong counter balance to winning and losing)</li> <li>• What is gambling? What are loot boxes? What is E-sport betting?</li> <li>• Unrealistic body/consent expectations, unsafe areas within the comments and the content.</li> <li>• Predator awareness brought in an age-appropriate way, where and how to get support.</li> </ul>
Six	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stories from the class 6 curriculum that strengthen the bedrock PSHE curriculum</li> <li>• Romans and communication, global parallels</li> <li>• Continue to explore gaming and social media etiquette - examples of good practice.</li> <li>• Trolling - explore why is it sometimes hard not to retaliate to comments.</li> <li>• YouTube and advertising</li> <li>• Gaming and gambling. Concerns, where to find support.</li> <li>• Pornography – discussion around unrealistic body/consent expectations, unsafe areas within the comments and the content.</li> <li>• Predator awareness – reiterated. Where and how to get support.</li> <li>• The continued importance of talking with trusted adult about on-line life and discussion about how best to do this with regard inappropriate content.</li> </ul>
Seven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Story and biography from the class 7 curriculum that strengthen the bedrock PSHE curriculum</li> <li>• Explorers, global parallels.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discussion of methods of online 'protection' to ensure knowledge is up-to-date.</li> <li>● Gaming/ Gambling - Gambling and addiction</li> <li>● More explicit communication regarding the dangers of speaking to unknown people online.</li> <li>● 'Online friends'- the possible dangers and information sharing</li> <li>● Support offered for dangerous online situations by the police, the local authorities, charities, their parents/guardians and their teachers.</li> <li>● A no-shame mentality in relation to actions involving online presence and interactions.</li> <li>● Types of abuse that occur online - peer-on-peer, psychological/ emotional (including blackmail), (potentially) physical, sexual and bullying. Awareness that methods by which these types of abuse are employed will vary based on the platform used.</li> </ul>
Eight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Story and biography from the class 8 curriculum that strengthen the bedrock PSHE curriculum</li> <li>● Industrial revolutions, including Technological Revolution</li> <li>● Inspiring biographies of people who have bravely lived through difficult situations e.g. racial prejudice, disability, gender reassignment, religious persecution.</li> <li>● Discussion of methods of online 'protection' to ensure knowledge is up-to-date.</li> <li>● Revisit and update awareness of gaming/gambling, social media platforms.</li> <li>● Discuss the effect of social media on self-worth. E.g. the need for validation through 'likes' etc. Encourage body neutrality and compassion for themselves and others.</li> <li>● Encourage independent thought and an ability to protect themselves by using what they have learnt.</li> </ul>

## 8. Inclusivity

There is an awareness amongst staff that children with SEND may be more vulnerable to online dangers and/or less able to communicate difficulties. It is therefore particularly important that parents and teachers take care to communicate with each other and the children to ensure SEND children are informed and kept safe.

## 9. Parent Education

As part of the Waldorf/Steiner pedagogy, traditionally, we have strongly discouraged the use of all digital media and screen use, sought to educate parents about the developmental effects of screen use, and supported parents in limiting screen use in children. Our pedagogy has not changed; however, the world has and we are aware that digital media is now a feature of children's lives at all ages. Our approach therefore has to be to educate and support parents on limiting its use in children.

Parents' evenings will include updates, conversation and information sharing on digital media and its use including:

- Information on child development and screen use
- Discussion between parents about how they monitor and regulate children’s use.
- Updates on predator awareness
- Updates on gaming and gambling awareness
- Conversations regarding Relationship and Sex Education and social media.
- Other relevant updates

The School also informs parents by talks from outside speakers and - via email, the school newsletter and the website - disseminates literature and links to articles regarding use of digital media.

Please see also: LSS Online Safety Statement

## Related Policies

LSS Online Safety Statement

LSS Curriculum Policies: Parts 1,2,3

LSS Inclusion and Equality Policy

LSS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

LSS Relationship and Sex Education Policy

LSS Anti-bullying policy

LSS Anti-radicalisation policy

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