



Online Safety Policy

September 2026

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1. Policy Statement

The ABC International School (The ABCIS) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and recognises that online safety is an essential element of this responsibility.

Technology plays a significant role in children's lives and offers valuable opportunities for learning, communication, creativity, and collaboration. The ABCIS is committed to ensuring that students can access these opportunities in a safe, responsible, and supportive environment.

The School recognises that online safety is a safeguarding issue and that effective online safety practice requires a whole-school approach involving students, staff, parents and advisory governors. Through education, supervision, appropriate technical safeguards and strong partnerships with families, The ABCIS seeks to empower students to become safe, responsible and respectful digital citizens.

As a British international school, The ABCIS follows the English National Curriculum and is informed by UK safeguarding best practice, including the principles set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), alongside recognised international safeguarding standards and the legal framework of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- safeguard children and members of the school community from risks associated with the use of digital technologies and online communication;
- promote a culture in which technology is used safely, responsibly, respectfully and ethically;
- ensure that online safety is embedded within the School's safeguarding framework and daily practice;
- educate students to become informed, resilient and responsible digital citizens who can recognise, manage and report online risks;
- provide staff with the knowledge, training and guidance required to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities in relation to online safety;
- support parents in understanding current online risks and promoting safe online behaviour at home;
- establish clear expectations regarding the acceptable use of technology by students, staff and visitors;
- ensure appropriate filtering and monitoring measures are in place to support student safety;
- respond effectively, proportionately and consistently to online safety concerns and incidents; and
- promote students' wellbeing by encouraging healthy, balanced and age-appropriate use of technology.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all members of The ABCIS community, including students, staff, advisory governors, visitors and any other individuals who have access to the School's digital systems or who represent the School in an online environment.

The policy applies to the use of School-owned devices and equipment, School networks and internet services, School-managed software, applications and cloud-based platforms, personal devices when used on the School site or for School-related purposes, and online communication relating to the School or members of the School community.

The School recognises that the boundaries between online and offline activity are increasingly blurred. Consequently, online behaviour that takes place outside school hours or away from school premises may still be addressed by the School where it places a child at risk of harm, constitutes bullying, harassment or abuse, impacts the wellbeing of members of the school community, breaches school expectations regarding conduct, or adversely affects the reputation of the School.

The ABCIS recognises that students live and learn within an international environment where access to digital technologies, social media platforms, online gaming environments and artificial intelligence tools is widespread.

As a school operating in Vietnam, the ABCIS complies with applicable Vietnamese law and local regulatory requirements. As a British international school, we are also informed by recognised British safeguarding guidance and international best practice, which support and strengthen our safeguarding arrangements. Online safety education and safeguarding practice are therefore designed to help students navigate both local and international digital environments safely, responsibly and respectfully.

4. Online Safety and Safeguarding

4.1 Online Safety as a Safeguarding Responsibility

The ABCIS recognises that online safety is integral to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Digital technologies are now embedded in almost every aspect of children's lives, influencing how they learn, communicate, socialise and access information. As technology continues to evolve, so too do the opportunities and risks associated with its use.

The School recognises that the online world can present risks to children in the same way as the physical world. Online activity can be used to facilitate bullying, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, exploitation, radicalisation, discrimination and other forms of harm. Online concerns can significantly affect a child's emotional well-being, mental health, relationships, and educational experience.

The ABCIS therefore views online safety as a safeguarding issue, not solely a technical or behavioural matter. Effective online safety practice requires a whole-school approach in which safeguarding, curriculum, pastoral care, technology systems and partnerships with parents work together to promote safe and responsible use of technology.

The School recognises that no filtering or monitoring system can eliminate all online risks. The most effective protection for children is a combination of education, supervision, open communication and the development of critical thinking skills that enable students to recognise risks and respond appropriately when concerns arise.

4.2 The Benefits of Technology

Technology plays a central role in modern education and provides significant benefits for learning and personal development. At The ABCIS, technology enhances teaching and learning, supports creativity, encourages collaboration, and prepares students to participate in a global society.

Digital technologies enable students to access information, communicate with others, create and share content, develop problem-solving skills and engage with learning in innovative ways. Technology also supports inclusion by providing additional opportunities for accessibility, differentiation and personalised learning.

The School believes that students should be encouraged to develop confidence and competence in using technology. Restricting access alone does not prepare children for life beyond school. Instead,

students should be equipped with the knowledge, understanding and judgement required to use technology safely, responsibly and effectively.

4. 3 Understanding Online Risk

The ABCIS recognises that online risks are continually evolving. To support a shared understanding of online safety, the School adopts the widely recognised framework of Content, Contact, Conduct, and Commerce.

Content

Content risks arise when children are exposed to material that may be inappropriate, harmful or unsuitable for their age and stage of development. Examples may include:

- violent or distressing material;
- sexually explicit content;
- extremist or discriminatory material;
- self-harm or suicide-related content;
- misinformation and disinformation;
- manipulated media, including deepfakes and AI-generated content.

Students are taught to think critically about online information, recognise unreliable sources and seek support when they encounter material that concerns them.

Contact

Contact risks arise through interactions with other individuals online.

Whilst many online interactions are positive and beneficial, some may place children at risk of harm. Individuals may conceal their identity online, manipulate others or seek to exploit vulnerable children. Examples may include:

- grooming;
- coercion;
- exploitation;
- inappropriate adult contact;
- online harassment;
- pressure to share personal information or images.

Students are taught how to establish healthy online boundaries, protect personal information, and seek help whenever an interaction causes concern.

Conduct

Conduct risks relate to a child's own behaviour online or others' behaviour towards them.

Online behaviour can have significant consequences and may affect both individuals and the wider school community. Examples may include:

- cyberbullying;
- online sexual harassment;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- sharing images without consent;
- misuse of social media;
- misuse of artificial intelligence tools;
- creating, sharing or accessing harmful content.

The ABCIS promotes positive digital citizenship and expects the same standards of behaviour online as in face-to-face interactions.

Commerce

Commerce risks arise through commercial activities and financial interactions online.

Children may be vulnerable to scams, phishing attempts, identity theft, misleading advertising and inappropriate commercial pressures. They may also encounter online environments designed to encourage excessive spending or the disclosure of personal information.

Students are taught to recognise these risks and develop the skills needed to make safe, informed decisions online.

4.4 Digital Wellbeing

The ABCIS recognises that technology can have both positive and negative effects on wellbeing. While digital technologies provide opportunities for learning, creativity and connection, excessive or inappropriate use may impact physical health, emotional well-being, sleep, concentration and relationships.

Students are encouraged to develop healthy and balanced habits regarding technology use. Through the curriculum and pastoral programme, including Komodo, students are supported in understanding the importance of balance, self-regulation and respectful online engagement.

The School promotes open discussion about digital wellbeing and encourages students to seek support if online experiences negatively affect their wellbeing or sense of safety.

4.5 Emerging Technologies

The digital landscape continues to evolve rapidly. New technologies create opportunities for learning and innovation, but may also introduce new safeguarding challenges.

The ABCIS recognises the growing influence of artificial intelligence, algorithm-driven content, immersive digital environments and emerging forms of online communication. The School is committed to regularly reviewing its online safety provision to ensure that students, staff and parents remain informed about new developments and associated risks.

Where new technologies are introduced within the School, appropriate consideration will be given to safeguarding, privacy, security and educational value before implementation.

5. Related Policies and Guidance

Online safety is embedded throughout the safeguarding, pastoral and educational work of The ABCIS. This policy should therefore be read alongside other school policies, procedures, and guidance documents that contribute to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (which includes remote learning procedures)
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Imagery policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Filtering and
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidance;

- Use of AI policy (short, student use)
- Manipulation of images checklist

Online safety considerations should be reflected in the development, implementation and review of all relevant school policies and procedures. The School recognises that technology increasingly influences all aspects of school life and that safeguarding responsibilities extend across both online and offline environments.

All staff are expected to understand how online safety relates to their wider safeguarding responsibilities and to act in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined above.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Effective online safety requires a whole-school approach. Safeguarding children in the digital environment is a shared responsibility that involves governance, leadership, safeguarding teams, teaching staff, technical staff, parents and students working together to create a safe and supportive culture.

Online safety is not viewed solely as a technical matter. It is an integral component of safeguarding, pastoral care and education. Responsibility for online safety, therefore, extends across all levels of the School and is embedded within the wider safeguarding framework of The ABCIS.

6.1 Directors

The Directors have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children across The ABCIS, including within online environments.

The Directors will ensure that sufficient resources, systems, and personnel are available to support effective safeguarding and online safety provision, and will seek assurance that appropriate policies, procedures, and technical safeguards are in place and operating effectively.

6.2 Advisory Governing Body

The Advisory Governing Body provides oversight and challenge on safeguarding and online safety. Governors will ensure online safety remains embedded within the School's safeguarding framework and that leaders effectively identify and manage risks associated with technology and online activity.

The Advisory Governing Body will receive appropriate information regarding significant developments, emerging risks and trends in online safety as part of its safeguarding oversight responsibilities.

6.3 Principal

The Principal has overall responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring that online safety remains a priority across all phases of the School.

6.4 Heads of School

The Heads of School are responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy within their respective phases of the School.

They will work closely with safeguarding leaders and SMT to ensure online safety expectations are consistently applied, concerns are addressed appropriately, and students receive effective education on safe and responsible technology use.

6.5 Safeguarding Leadership

The School's safeguarding leaders, including the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and Safeguarding Officer, have a key role in leading and promoting effective online safety practice across The ABCIS.

The safeguarding team ensures online safety remains embedded in safeguarding practice, pastoral systems, and educational provision. This includes supporting the development and review of policy, responding to safeguarding concerns arising from online activity, identifying emerging risks and promoting awareness across the school community.

The safeguarding team will work closely with school leaders, staff, students and parents to ensure that online safety is approached proactively and that appropriate support is provided when concerns arise.

Recognising the close relationship between safeguarding, wellbeing and education, safeguarding leaders will also contribute to the development of online safety education through the PSHE curriculum and wider pastoral programme.

6.6 Information Technology Department

The Information Technology Department plays an important role in maintaining a safe and secure digital environment.

Working with safeguarding leaders and school leadership, technical staff will maintain appropriate filtering and monitoring systems, support network security, manage access controls, and assist with investigating online safety concerns where necessary.

The School recognises that technical measures alone cannot ensure online safety. Consequently, technical staff will work alongside safeguarding and educational colleagues to support a balanced and effective approach.

6.7 Staff

All staff have a responsibility to safeguard children and promote safe online behaviour.

Staff are expected to model safe, responsible and professional use of technology, maintain appropriate professional boundaries, supervise students appropriately when technology is being used and remain alert to signs that a child may be at risk online.

All staff must report concerns promptly in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures and should recognise that online safety concerns may form part of wider safeguarding concerns.

6.8 Parents

Parents play a vital role in supporting children's online safety.

The ABCIS recognises that many online experiences take place outside school and that effective safeguarding requires a strong partnership between home and school. The School will seek to support parents through guidance, communication and educational opportunities that help them understand emerging risks and promote safe technology use at home.

Parents are encouraged to communicate concerns to the School and to work collaboratively with staff where online safety issues arise.

6.9 Students

Students play an important role in creating a safe and respectful online environment.

Students are expected to use technology responsibly, follow the School's Acceptable Use Agreements and demonstrate respect for others both online and offline. Students should understand that they have a responsibility to report concerns, seek support when needed and contribute positively to the digital communities in which they participate.

The School will encourage students to develop the confidence, resilience, and critical-thinking skills needed to make safe decisions online and act responsibly when faced with challenges or concerns.

7. Prevention and Education

The ABCIS believes that the most effective approach to online safety is prevention through education, awareness and the development of positive digital behaviours. While technical safeguards play an important role in reducing risk, they cannot replace the knowledge, judgement, and resilience children need to navigate the online world safely.

The School therefore adopts a proactive approach to online safety that combines education, pastoral support, staff training, parental engagement and appropriate technical measures. Online safety is viewed as a shared responsibility and is embedded throughout the curriculum and wider life of the School.

7.1 Curriculum and Student Education

Online safety education is embedded in the curriculum and forms an important part of the School's commitment to safeguarding and promoting children's well-being.

Students will receive age-appropriate education that enables them to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to use technology safely, responsibly and effectively. Online safety themes are delivered through Computing, PSHE, assemblies, pastoral programmes and other relevant areas of the curriculum.

Students will be supported to develop an understanding of:

- how to stay safe online;
- how to protect personal information;
- healthy and respectful online relationships;
- recognising and responding to online risks;
- cyberbullying and online harassment;
- media literacy and critical evaluation of online content;
- misinformation and disinformation;
- responsible use of social media and online communication platforms;
- reporting concerns and seeking support;
- the safe and ethical use of artificial intelligence technologies.

Online safety education will be progressive and responsive to the changing digital landscape, emerging technologies and the needs of students at different stages of development.

7.2 Digital Citizenship and Wellbeing

The ABCIS seeks to develop students who are not only safe online but also responsible, respectful and ethical digital citizens.

Students will be encouraged to understand that the values and expectations that apply within face-to-face relationships also apply within digital environments. They will be supported in developing empathy, respect, integrity, and accountability in their online interactions.

The School also recognises the importance of digital wellbeing. Through the curriculum and pastoral programme, students will be encouraged to develop healthy technology-use habits and understand the impact online experiences may have on emotional wellbeing, relationships, sleep, concentration, and overall health.

Students will be encouraged to seek support whenever online experiences cause concern or negatively affect their well-being.

7.3 Staff Training and Professional Development

All staff have a responsibility to safeguard children and therefore require an appropriate understanding of online safety issues. Online safety training will form part of the School's safeguarding training programme and will be provided during induction and as part of ongoing professional development.

Training will be designed to ensure that staff remain informed about:

- emerging online risks;
- safeguarding concerns that may arise through technology;
- current trends affecting children and young people;
- reporting procedures;
- professional conduct and boundaries;
- the safe and appropriate use of technology in educational settings.

Staff will be encouraged to remain professionally curious and recognise that online safety concerns may be part of wider safeguarding concerns.

7.4 Partnership with Parents

The ABCIS recognises that parents play a vital role in supporting children's online safety and wellbeing.

Many online experiences occur outside school and effective safeguarding therefore depends upon a strong partnership between home and school. The School will seek to engage parents through communication, guidance, workshops and awareness initiatives designed to promote understanding of online safety issues and emerging risks.

The School encourages parents to take an active interest in their children's digital lives, maintain open communication regarding online experiences and seek support from the School whenever concerns arise.

Where appropriate, the School will provide information and resources to help parents support safe and responsible technology use at home.

7.5 Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies

The ABCIS recognises that artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies are becoming increasingly accessible to children and are likely to play a significant role in their future education and lives.

The School believes that students should be taught not only how to use such technologies safely but also how to evaluate them critically and ethically. Students will be supported to understand:

- the benefits and limitations of AI technologies;
- how AI-generated content may be inaccurate or misleading;
- the existence and risks of manipulated media and deepfakes;
- the importance of verifying information;
- ethical considerations relating to the use of AI tools.

The School will keep developments in emerging technologies under review and will consider safeguarding, privacy, security and educational value before introducing new technologies into the educational environment.

7.6 Filtering and Monitoring

The ABCIS recognises that filtering and monitoring systems form an important part of a wider safeguarding strategy.

Appropriate filtering systems will be used to reduce the likelihood of students accessing harmful or inappropriate content through School-managed networks and devices. Monitoring systems may also identify potential safeguarding concerns and support the protection of children.

The School recognises, however, that no technical solution can provide complete protection. Filtering and monitoring systems must therefore be complemented by effective supervision, education and safeguarding practice.

Filtering and monitoring arrangements will be reviewed periodically by safeguarding leaders, school leaders and technical staff to ensure that they remain appropriate to the age of students, the educational needs of the School and emerging online risks. Detailed responsibilities, systems, review arrangements and procedures are set out in the ABCIS Filtering and Monitoring Policy.

8. Safe Use of Technology

The ABCIS recognises that technology plays an important role in teaching, learning, communication and school administration. The School seeks to provide students and staff with access to technology in ways that enhance learning whilst maintaining appropriate safeguards for safety, wellbeing and security.

All members of the school community are expected to use technology responsibly, ethically and in accordance with school expectations. The use of technology should support learning, promote positive relationships and reflect the values of The ABCIS.

8.1 Acceptable Use

The School expects all users of its digital systems to act responsibly and respectfully at all times.

Students, staff and other authorised users must use school technology and online services in ways that are lawful, safe and consistent with the School's values. Users should respect others, protect personal information, and avoid behaviour that may place themselves or others at risk.

Detailed expectations for using technology are outlined in the School's Internet, mobile and digital technology usage agreement

8.2 School Devices, Systems and Networks

The School provides access to devices, networks, software and online services to support teaching, learning and school operations.

Users are expected to take reasonable care of school equipment and to use school systems for their intended educational and professional purposes. Attempts to bypass security measures, gain unauthorised access to systems, interfere with network operations or misuse school technology are prohibited.

The School reserves the right to monitor and manage its systems to protect users, maintain security, and fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities.

8.3 User Accounts and Password Security

All users are responsible for keeping their accounts and passwords secure.

Passwords should be kept confidential and should not be shared with others except where authorised by the School. Users should take reasonable precautions to prevent unauthorised access to school systems and should report any suspected security breaches immediately.

The School may implement additional security measures, including multi-factor authentication, where appropriate.

8.4 Personal Devices

The School recognises that personal digital devices form part of everyday life for many members of the school community.

Children in Early Years and Primary do not bring or use personal devices in school.

Personal devices are not permitted in the Early Years. This applies to all adults, including staff, visitors, volunteers and contractors. Use school-approved devices for any photographs, recordings, or other school purposes.

Elsewhere in the School, the use of personal devices is subject to school expectations and procedures.

The School reserves the right to restrict or prohibit the use of personal devices where necessary to safeguard children, maintain a positive learning environment or protect the security of school systems.

8.5 Online Communication

Digital communication provides valuable opportunities for collaboration and learning. However, all communication conducted through school systems should remain professional, respectful and appropriate.

Staff must maintain clear professional boundaries in all online interactions with students. Staff should communicate with students only through approved school platforms and channels.

Students are expected to communicate respectfully with peers and staff and should not engage in behaviour that may cause distress, intimidation or harm to others.

8.6 Photography, Video and Digital Media

The School recognises that photographs, videos and other digital media can play an important role in celebrating achievement, supporting learning and promoting school activities.

The creation, storage and sharing of images involving students will be managed in accordance with school procedures, safeguarding considerations and parental consent arrangements.

Students and staff should respect the privacy and dignity of others when creating or sharing images and must not record, publish or distribute images without appropriate permission.

The misuse of images, including the creation, sharing or manipulation of content in ways that cause harm or distress to others, will be treated seriously and may result in safeguarding or disciplinary action.

8.7 Social Media

The School recognises that social media forms an important part of modern communication and social interaction.

Students will be supported in developing the skills required to use social media safely, responsibly and respectfully. The School encourages students to think critically about the information they share online and to understand that online activity may have long-term consequences.

Staff are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries when using social media and to ensure that personal use does not compromise their professional responsibilities or the School's reputation.

Where social media activity impacts the safety, well-being, or rights of members of the school community, the School may take appropriate action in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.

8.8 Data Protection and Privacy

The ABCIS is committed to protecting personal information and maintaining appropriate standards of privacy and confidentiality.

All members of the school community are responsible for handling personal information appropriately and complying with school procedures relating to data protection and information security.

Students will be taught the importance of protecting personal information and understanding privacy risks within online environments.

Staff must ensure that personal and sensitive information is managed securely and accessed, shared, or stored only in accordance with school procedures.

8.9 Remote Learning and Online Platforms

Where technology supports learning beyond the classroom, the same standards of behaviour, safeguarding and professional conduct apply.

The School will seek to ensure that online learning environments are safe, inclusive and supportive. Staff and students are expected to use approved platforms and to follow school expectations regarding communication, participation and conduct.

Safeguarding considerations will remain central to all remote and online learning arrangements.

9. Managing Online Safety Concerns and Incidents

The ABCIS recognises that, despite preventative measures, online safety concerns and incidents may occur. The School is committed to responding promptly, proportionately and effectively in order to safeguard children, support those affected and minimise further harm.

All concerns relating to online safety will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures, behaviour expectations and relevant policies.

The child's welfare will always be the primary consideration when responding to online safety concerns.

9.1 Reporting Concerns

All members of the school community share responsibility for reporting online safety concerns.

Students are encouraged to seek help from a trusted adult whenever they encounter something online that causes concern, makes them feel unsafe or involves behaviour that may place themselves or others at risk.

Staff must remain vigilant to signs that a child may be experiencing harm online and must report concerns promptly in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures.

Parents are encouraged to communicate concerns to the School where online activity may be affecting the safety, wellbeing or welfare of a child.

Concerns may arise through direct disclosure, observation, monitoring systems, reports from parents, peer reports or information received from external agencies.

9.2 Responding to Concerns

Responses to online safety concerns will be proportionate to the nature and severity of the incident.

Where concerns involve safeguarding issues, they will be referred promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or an appropriate safeguarding leader for assessment and action.

When responding to concerns, the School will consider:

- the age and developmental stage of the child;
- the nature of the online activity;
- any actual or potential harm caused;
- the wishes and needs of the child;
- whether other students may be affected;
- whether the concern forms part of a wider safeguarding issue.

The School recognises that online safety incidents often involve complex social, emotional and safeguarding factors. Responses will therefore prioritise support, education and safeguarding alongside any necessary disciplinary measures.

9.3 Recording and Monitoring

Online safety concerns will be recorded and managed through the School's reporting and monitoring systems.

The School recognises that online safety concerns may present as behavioural, pastoral, wellbeing or safeguarding matters. Concerns will therefore be assessed on a case-by-case basis and managed through the most appropriate procedures whilst ensuring that the welfare of children remains the primary consideration.

Where appropriate, concerns will be recorded on the School's safeguarding and wellbeing recording system (CPOMS) in accordance with established school procedures. This may include concerns relating to behaviour, wellbeing, pastoral support or safeguarding.

Where concerns indicate actual or potential harm to a child, involve abuse or exploitation, or otherwise meet safeguarding thresholds, they will be managed in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Accurate records will be maintained to support effective intervention, facilitate information sharing, identify patterns of behaviour, monitor emerging risks and inform preventative work across the School.

School leaders, pastoral leaders and safeguarding staff will review trends and concerns periodically in order to strengthen the School's approach to online safety, safeguarding and student wellbeing.

9.4 Safeguarding Referrals

Where online activity places a child at risk of significant harm, the School will take appropriate safeguarding action in accordance with its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

This may include consultation with senior leaders, communication with parents, referrals to relevant agencies or engagement with local authorities and law enforcement agencies where appropriate.

The School will act in accordance with local legal requirements and safeguarding procedures whilst remaining informed by recognised international safeguarding best practice.

9.5 Working with Parents

The School recognises that effective responses to online safety concerns often require close collaboration with parents.

Where appropriate, parents will be informed of concerns and involved in discussions regarding support, intervention and next steps. The School will work constructively with families while maintaining its safeguarding responsibilities and prioritising children's welfare.

In some circumstances, informing parents immediately may place a child at greater risk of harm. In such situations, decisions will be made in accordance with safeguarding procedures and professional judgement.

9.6 Preserving Evidence

Where an online safety concern may require investigation, the School will seek to preserve relevant information and evidence where appropriate.

Staff should avoid actions that may compromise investigations or place children at further risk. Staff should refer concerns involving potentially illegal content, exploitation, or serious safeguarding issues immediately to safeguarding leaders.

The School recognises that safeguarding considerations must take precedence over disciplinary or technical investigations.

9.7 Support for Students

Students affected by online safety incidents may require ongoing support.

The School will seek to provide appropriate pastoral and safeguarding support to students who have experienced harm online, caused harm to others or witnessed distressing online behaviour.

Responses will focus not only on addressing the incident itself but also on supporting students' wellbeing, resilience and understanding of safe online behaviour.

The School recognises that many online safety incidents provide opportunities for education and reflection and will seek, where appropriate, to promote learning and positive behavioural change alongside any necessary sanctions.

10. Specific Online Risks

The online environment is constantly evolving and presents a range of potential risks to children. Whilst it is not possible for a policy to address every online risk, The ABCIS seeks to ensure that students, staff and parents are aware of key safeguarding concerns and understand how to respond appropriately when concerns arise.

The School will regularly review its online safety provision in response to technological developments, emerging trends and changes in safeguarding guidance.

10.1 Cyberbullying

The ABCIS recognises that bullying can occur through digital technologies as well as in face-to-face interactions.

Cyberbullying may involve the use of social media, messaging platforms, online gaming environments, email, websites or other digital tools to intimidate, harass, exclude, threaten or humiliate another individual.

The School treats cyberbullying with the same seriousness as any other form of bullying. Allegations of cyberbullying will be investigated promptly and managed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and safeguarding procedures where appropriate.

Students will be encouraged to report concerns, support one another and demonstrate respectful behaviour in all online interactions.

10.2 Child-on-Child Abuse

The ABCIS recognises that technology can be used to facilitate child-on-child abuse.

Online behaviours may include harassment, intimidation, exploitation, coercion, harmful sexual behaviour, the sharing of inappropriate content or other actions that cause harm to another child.

The School adopts a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of any kind and will respond to concerns in accordance with its Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

All concerns involving child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously and managed with consideration for the needs and welfare of all children involved.

10.3 Online Sexual Harassment

Online sexual harassment can occur through social media, messaging platforms, gaming environments and other online spaces.

Examples may include unwanted sexual comments, requests for sexual content, sexualised bullying, sharing sexual rumours, inappropriate messages or the non-consensual sharing of images.

The School recognises that online sexual harassment can have a significant impact on children's wellbeing and sense of safety. The School will not tolerate such behaviour and will address it through safeguarding and behavioural procedures, as appropriate.

Students will learn about healthy relationships, consent, respect, and appropriate online behaviour through the curriculum and pastoral programme.

10.4 Sharing Nude and Semi-Nude Images

The ABCIS recognises that incidents involving the creation, possession or sharing of nude or semi-nude images can present significant safeguarding concerns.

The School will respond to such incidents in accordance with current safeguarding guidance and with the welfare of the child as the primary consideration.

Students should understand that creating, requesting, possessing or sharing such material may place themselves or others at risk and can have serious personal, social and legal consequences.

Staff must not view, copy, print, forward or share such material unless specifically advised to do so as part of an agreed safeguarding response. Report any concerns immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

10.5 Grooming, Exploitation and Harmful Contact

The School recognises that some individuals may use online platforms to manipulate, exploit or abuse children.

Children may be targeted through social media, messaging services, gaming platforms, livestreaming applications or other online environments. Grooming may occur over an extended period and may involve emotional manipulation, coercion, threats, gifts or requests for personal information or images.

Students will be taught how to recognise warning signs, establish healthy boundaries, protect personal information and seek help whenever concerns arise.

Any concerns relating to exploitation or grooming will be treated as safeguarding matters and responded to immediately.

10.6 Harmful Content, Misinformation and Radicalisation

Children may encounter online content that is harmful, inappropriate, misleading or extremist in nature.

The School recognises the risks associated with misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, hate-based content and material that promotes violence, discrimination or extremism.

Students will be supported in developing critical thinking skills and media literacy so that they are better able to evaluate online information and identify unreliable or harmful content.

Concerns relating to radicalisation or extremist content will be managed through safeguarding procedures and in accordance with the School's wider safeguarding responsibilities.

10.7 Artificial Intelligence, Deepfakes and Emerging Risks

The ABCIS recognises that artificial intelligence technologies are becoming increasingly accessible and may create both educational opportunities and safeguarding challenges.

Students may encounter AI-generated content, manipulated images, synthetic media and deepfakes that appear authentic but are misleading or entirely fabricated. Such technologies may be used in ways that contribute to bullying, misinformation, exploitation or reputational harm.

The School will support students in developing an understanding of these technologies and encourage critical evaluation of digital content.

Online safety education will continue to evolve in response to technological developments, ensuring that students are prepared to navigate emerging digital environments safely, responsibly and ethically.

11. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The ABCIS recognises that online safety is a rapidly evolving area of safeguarding. New technologies, platforms and online behaviours continue to emerge and may present both opportunities and risks for children. The School is therefore committed to regularly reviewing its online safety provision to ensure that it remains effective, relevant and responsive to the needs of the school community.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in legislation, safeguarding guidance, technological developments or significant incidents. Reviews will be informed by current safeguarding best practice, developments in educational technology and the evolving online experiences of children and young people.

The Safeguarding Officer, Designated Safeguarding Leads and school leaders will work collaboratively to evaluate the effectiveness of the School's online safety arrangements. This evaluation may include consideration of:

- safeguarding concerns and incident trends;
- student voice and feedback;
- staff feedback and training needs;
- parental feedback;
- developments in technology and online behaviour;
- the effectiveness of filtering and monitoring arrangements;
- curriculum provision and student understanding of online safety.

The School will seek to maintain a culture of continuous improvement in which online safety remains embedded within safeguarding, pastoral care and education.

Regular reporting may be provided to senior leaders, the Governing Body and the Board of Directors as part of the School's wider safeguarding oversight and quality assurance processes.

The School recognises that effective online safety is achieved not through policies alone, but through the collective commitment of students, staff, parents and leaders to creating a safe, respectful and responsible digital culture.

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Safeguarding Officer. The Safeguarding Officer will conduct a review if legislation changes or best practices change. Amendments will be made as necessary to ensure that this policy remains current, relevant, and effective in promoting safeguarding and student welfare.