



## ONLINE SAFETY POLICY

<b>Policy Date</b>	January 2026
<b>Author</b>	Mike Marshall – Principal Lisa Hesketh – Assistant Principal
<b>Review Date</b>	January 2027

## **Definition of online safety**

Online safety relates to the safe and responsible use of information communication technology (ICT). This includes computers, the internet, mobile communication devices and technological tools that are designed to hold, share or receive information (for example mobile phones, digital cameras and tablets).

## **Statement of Intent**

Turning Point Academy is committed to ensuring the welfare of all members of the school community, promoting not only academic achievements but also developing pupil's moral, social and emotional capabilities to create responsible and mature citizens for the future.

With the increase in technology available to pupils and staff both in and outside of school there is a recognised need to ensure that technologies are being used responsibly, appropriately and safely. This policy outlines the expectations for the use of school technology by all members of the community, and highlights the school's response to the need to educate and inform pupils and parents/carers of the potential risks and dangers of the use of technology outside of school.

Copies of this policy and other related policies are available on request from the school office or on our website.

## **Purpose of Policy**

This Policy applies to all members of the school community, including pupils, parents and carers, staff and trustees. The policy aims to provide the following information:

- What online safety is and how it relates to TPA
- The acceptable use of technologies in school
- How incidents of misuse or abuse of technologies will be dealt with
- Staff and pupil Code of Conduct for the use of technology
- How online safety will be taught across the school
- Staff roles and responsibilities in promoting e-safety
- Parent and carer roles and responsibilities in promoting e-safety

## **The Use of Technology at Turning Point Academy**

We recognise that technology plays an important role in the education of pupils and in day-to-day school life. School equipment such as computers, digital cameras and recording equipment offers a wide range of opportunities for the development of skills and enhances teaching and learning across the curriculum.

The technology available is to be used specifically to enhance the learning process and is offered to pupils and staff alike expressly for this purpose. Use of the technology, including the internet is a privilege and not a right, and is available to those who abide by the school rules and demonstrate a responsible and appropriate manner at all times.

Internet access is available on our site and is strictly monitored and filtered to ensure the content displayed is appropriate to the age of our pupils.

### **Legal Framework**

This policy has been written in line with local and national guidance about online safety and takes into account the potential for incidents of misuse or abuse of technology being acts of criminality.

### **Teaching and Learning**

TPA takes the welfare of pupils and staff seriously and recognises that protecting everyone from potential harm has become a wider issue than only addressing the physical dangers presented in the world around us. The physical and emotional safety and well-being of all members of the school community is paramount, and as such we include online safety within the curriculum to educate pupils on their personal rights and responsibilities when using technology.

The issue of cyber bullying and personal safety when using technology will be explored within personal social health education, linked to additional schemes of work on anti-bullying, respect and relationships. Further opportunities to explore online safety will be utilised throughout the academic year, eg National Anti-bullying Week and through our extensive PSHE and citizenship curriculum.

Pupils will also have the opportunity to be involved in raising awareness of this key issue – members of the school council will engage with staff on publishing school rules on the use of technology, and in devising information for pupils outlining the key points of this policy and further information on how to stay safe online and when using technologies.

### **Managing Internet Access**

Within TPA, access to the internet is offered purely as a tool for teaching and learning. Therefore, pupils and staff may access the internet only when appropriate to school based activities.

Pupils must only access the internet when given permission by a member of staff and only for curriculum-related activities, such as researching a project or downloading information related to coursework or assignments. Any pupils found using the internet for other means will be dealt with in

accordance with the school behaviour policy.

The school network monitors and filters access to inappropriate content, which aims to mitigate accidental contact with material that is age-inappropriate. However, such filtering is not 100% effective and any breaches of filtering or accidental contact with inappropriate content should be reported to the principal immediately.

Access to the internet is not provided for the use of private and personal email accounts, instant messaging accounts or other forms of personal contact or entertainment, including accessing social media accounts.

## **School Website**

The school website is available as a means of communication and promotion of school activities to the wider members of the school community.

Information is updated in agreement with relevant parties. Any information to be added to the website should be forwarded to the principal. Other members of staff, parents and carers, and pupils are strictly prohibited from uploading their own information. The website address is

[www.turningpointacad.co.uk](http://www.turningpointacad.co.uk)

## **Publishing Images**

Images of pupils must not be uploaded to the internet, school website or the schools' social media sites (Facebook and twitter) without a signed consent form from parents or carers to agree to their child being photographed and those images being displayed online and kept electronically. All images must be appropriate and necessary.

Under no circumstances must members of staff display images of pupils on their personal social networking sites or similar personal online websites or pages, and similarly pupils should under no circumstances take photographs of staff members on their personal cameras or electronic communication devices, such as mobile phones, nor should they upload those images to the internet or forward them onwards electronically. There is a separate policy relating to 'taking, storing and using images of pupils.

## **Managing Other Technologies**

### Email

- Digital communications with pupils should be on a professional level and only carried out using official school systems.
- The school's e-mail service should be accessed via the provided web-based interface by default (this is how it is set up for the laptops, school curriculum systems) or Outlook;
- Under no circumstances should staff contact pupils,

- parents/carers or conduct any school business using personal e-mail addresses.
- School e-mail is not to be used for personal use.

### Social Networking Sites

We encourage pupils to use social networking such as Facebook as a way to connect with others, share educational resources, create and curate educational content, and enhance the learning experience. While social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks you should keep in mind when using these tools.

Young people will not be allowed on social networking sites at school; at home it is the parental responsibility, but parents should be aware that it is illegal for children under the age of 13 to be on certain social networking sites.

- **Staff** should not access social networking sites on school equipment in school or at home. Staff should access sites using personal equipment.
- **Staff** users should not reveal names of staff, pupils, parents/carers or any other member of the school community on any social networking site or blog. They must not put photos from their working day on their personal social media pages.
- **Pupils/Parents/carers** should be aware the school will investigate misuse of social networking if it impacts on the well-being of other pupils or stakeholders.
- If inappropriate comments are placed on social networking sites about the school or school staff then advice would be sought from the relevant agencies, including the police if necessary.

TPA will endeavour whenever possible to use social networking in positive ways to publicise, inform and communicate information. The school has an active website and social media accounts which are used to inform, publicise school events and celebrate and share the achievement of pupils.

### Mobile Phones

When on the school grounds, staff are prohibited from using their personal mobile phones when in contact with pupils and should reserve the use of phones until scheduled break times or after the school day. Under no circumstances should personal mobile phones be given to pupils for their use, eg to make an emergency phone call. In these circumstances pupils should be referred to the school office.

Pupils are prohibited from using their personal mobile phones and related communication devices while in school. We would like to encourage parents and carers not to send mobile phones or similar equipment with

pupils to school. TPA cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage. There is a separate policy relating to 'Mobile Phones.'

### **Digital Cameras**

The school holds a digital camera which is provided strictly for the use of cataloguing and recording pupil's work and achievements. Digital cameras should only be used by members of staff or by pupils under the guidance of staff. Cameras are not provided for personal use and should remain on the school grounds at all times, unless being used on a school trip or excursion. Under no circumstances should members of staff use their own personal cameras, including mobile phone cameras, to take images of pupils or their work.

### **Games Consoles and Other Electronic Technology**

Games consoles are not permitted to be brought to or used in school and TPA takes no responsibility for the loss or theft of such items. We strongly advise parents and carers to discourage their children from bringing such items on to the school grounds. Staff are also discouraged from bringing personal technological equipment to school.

The use of these new technologies can put young people at risk within and outside the school. Some of the dangers they may face include:

- Access to illegal, harmful or inappropriate images or other content.
- Unauthorised access to, loss of or sharing of personal information.
- The risk of being subject to grooming by those with whom they make contact on the Internet.
- Risk of radicalisation
- The sharing/distribution of personal images without an individual's consent or knowledge.
- Inappropriate communication/contact with others, including strangers.
- Cyber-bullying.
- Access to unsuitable video/Internet games.
- An inability to evaluate the quality, accuracy and relevance of information on the Internet.
- Plagiarism and copyright infringement.
- Illegal downloading of music or video files.
- The potential for excessive use which may impact on the social and emotional development and learning of the young person.

Many of these risks reflect situations in the off-line world and it is essential that this online safety policy is read and used in conjunction with other school policies; specifically, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Child Protection and Staff Mobile Phone Policy and Pupil Mobile Phone Protocol.

## **Cyber Bullying**

Cyber bullying is the repeated harassment, degradation or abuse of another through or with technology.

TPA takes the issue of cyber bullying very seriously. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy (Including Cyber Bullying) outlines how incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, will be dealt with and how pupils and parents report incidents.

## **Education and Training**

**Online safety education** will be provided in the following ways:

- A planned e-safety programme is provided and is regularly revisited in lessons across the curriculum – this programme covers both the use of ICT and new technologies in school and outside of school.
- Pupils are taught in lessons to be critically aware of the materials/content they access on-line and are guided to validate the accuracy of the information.
- Pupils are helped to understand the need for the Pupil to use the internet appropriately and encouraged to adopt safe and responsible use of ICT, the Internet and mobile devices both within and outside of school.
- Pupils are taught to acknowledge the source of information used and to respect copyright when using material accessed on the Internet.
- Rules for the use of ICT systems and the Internet are posted in school
- Staff act as good role models in their use of ICT, the Internet and mobile devices.

## **Staff Training**

- The principal ensures that staff are aware of the procedures that need to be followed in the event of an e-safety incident taking place.
- Online safety training is available online for staff. An audit of the online safety training needs of all staff will be carried out regularly.
- All new staff receive online safety awareness training as part of their induction programme, ensuring that they fully understand the school Online Safety and Child Protection Policies.

## **Authorising Access**

Access to school technology is a privilege and as such TPA expects school equipment to be used responsibly and appropriately. All members of staff are expected to sign the staff Code of Conduct for the use of technology in school. Pupils are expected to sign and agree to a similar pupil Code of Conduct on induction, countersigned by their parent or carer.

## **Incidents of Online Safety Abuse**

TPA takes incidents of misuse or abuse of technology, including cyber bullying, very seriously. All members of the school community have a clear role to play in reporting such incidents and to work with the school to ensure they are not repeated.

### **Reporting Incidents**

Any online safety incidents must immediately be reported to the Principal who will investigate further following online safety and safeguarding policies and guidance

### **Pupils and Their Parents and Carers**

A pupil or parent/carer concerned about an act of misuse or abuse of technology should report the incident immediately. Pupils are also encouraged to report any concerns or worries.

Some incidents of misuse or abuse of technology may be deemed a criminal offence, or be of a highly serious nature that requires immediate police involvement. In these instances, parents should contact their local police.

### **Staff**

All members of staff have a duty to report any incidents of misuse or abuse of technology. Where staff members are the victims of an abuse of technology, including harassment or cyber bullying, they should save all evidence and present it immediately to the principal. For serious incidents staff should contact the Police at their discretion.

### **Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

Members of staff at TPA have a clear and important role to play in the promotion of online safety across the school. All teachers are responsible for the teaching of online safety and curriculum development, in addition to the general roles that all staff members play in the promotion of responsible behaviour when using technology. There is an 'acceptable use of technology' agreement that all staff sign, setting out everyone's use of technology in and for school.

## **Parent and Carer Responsibilities**

Parents and carers play an important role in developing children's understanding and awareness of e-safety by supporting the school in its endeavours to build pupil's understanding of how to stay safe when using technology. Parents and carers have duty to report any incidents affecting pupils and their schooling to the school to ensure that matters are investigated and dealt with swiftly.

Parents or carers are also required to countersign the pupil Code of Conduct to ensure that their child read and understood the school rules in relation to e-safety.

## **Monitoring and Filtering**

The school recognises that addressing online safety issues should form an integral part of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all pupils will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.

The school has ensured that suitable filtering systems are in place on ICT equipment to prevent children accessing inappropriate material. This system will be monitored and reviewed with any inappropriate behaviours or searches being followed up appropriately.

Further information regarding the school's approach to online safety can be found in this policy.

When school become aware of an online safety issue that has occurred outside of school, it is managed in accordance with this policy and School Behaviour & Relationships Policy.

Staff will be aware that ongoing in-person monitoring is required in addition to the software in place as it is vital staff don't rely solely on IT systems as this may leave some children vulnerable.

Staff will be aware of the filtering and monitoring systems in place and will know how to escalate concerns where they are identified. Staff will be made aware of their expectations and responsibilities relating to filtering and monitoring systems during their induction.

## **Monitoring and Review**

Given the changing nature of technology in school and in the wider world, this policy will be review annually, with sporadic reviews as necessary which as in the event of new technology being utilised as a teaching and learning tool in school.