Developing online safety policies

It is the responsibility of all schools to develop and maintain their own online safety policy.

Your online safety policy is an overarching document that describes how you manage the IT and online systems within your school community. It should include key elements such as:

- description of education and curriculum
- conduct and incident management
- roles and responsibilities
- internet management
- managing IT and communication systems (including email)
- equipment
- data security.

This document will also link to Acceptable Use Agreements for:

- staff and governors
- volunteers and contractors
- pupils (by key stage) (This document should be referenced in the first unit for each year group to help develop class rules for online safety.)
- parents
- visitors to the school (many schools with electronic sign-in now include a reminder of online policy).

Templates for appropriate documentation can be found online at:

- London Grid for Learning: www.lgfl.net/online-safety/resource-centre?s=24
- Kent: www.kelsi.org.uk
- South West Grid for learning: http://swgfl.org.uk
- Safer Internet centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/teachers-and-professionals/e-safety-policy

Many schools provide a form for parents to sign when children start school, for photograph and video permissions, which also encourages parents to work towards promoting positive behaviour both on and offline. This works to discourage negative comments on online communities such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter.