

## Online Safety Mark Assessor Report Form

School:	West Drayton Academy	Date of assessment:	30/09/2024
Assessor:	Liam Buggs	Headteacher:	Richard Yates
Moderator:	Ron Richards	School Contact Person:	Summer Callis

### Element A – Policy and Leadership

Leadership in online safety at West Drayton Academy is clearly well-established and effective, with a strategic and collaborative approach that permeates the entire school community. The school operates an Online Safety Group, comprising a diverse range of roles and responsibilities, including key members of the teaching staff, support staff, and governance. This multi-disciplinary group ensures that online safety is approached with input from various perspectives. The Designated Safeguarding Lead works closely with the Online Safety Leader, creating a seamless connection between safeguarding protocols and the vision for online safety education. This partnership ensures that the safeguarding aspects of online safety are aligned with the educational provision, ensuring both are fully integrated across the school's operations.

Staff receive online safety training at least once a year, which they report as valuable in raising awareness of current issues that may be affecting students and their families. These training sessions ensure staff are kept informed of emerging threats and challenges in the digital world. In addition, updates on online safety matters are delivered through weekly bulletins and staff briefings, providing real-time guidance when necessary. The school has developed a robust set of policies to support staff and students in this area, including the Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Agreements/Chromebook Usage Agreements, and the Social Media Policy. These policies are not merely documents but are actively understood and practiced by staff across all roles. Staff speak confidently about what these policies mean for their day-to-day responsibilities, demonstrating that online safety is embedded in the culture of the school and is a lived practice by all members of the community.

The school also collaborates with other local safeguarding hubs, integrating locally relevant online safety issues into its own contextual safeguarding approach. This collaboration strengthens the school's capacity to address community-specific challenges and ensures it remains responsive to local online safety concerns. Parents and carers have access to an online concern form, allowing them to report any online safety issues directly to the school. Submissions are reviewed by the Online Safety Leader, ensuring swift and appropriate action is taken. Internally, any incidents are logged in line with safeguarding procedures using CPOMS, allowing for consistent and detailed tracking of online safety issues. This comprehensive approach reflects West Drayton Academy's unwavering commitment to safeguarding its students in the digital world.

### Element B – Education

West Drayton Academy has established a robust and dynamic online safety education provision, rooted in the Education for a Connected World Framework. Teachers make thoughtful and intentional choices about the themes and activities, tailoring them both proactively and reactively to meet the evolving needs of their students. Online safety learning takes place each half term, ensuring that key discussions around online safety are sustained throughout the academic year. This curriculum is not isolated but is carefully integrated across multiple subjects, including Computing, PSHE, and Citizenship, providing a holistic approach to digital safety education. Events such as Internet Safety Day and Anti-bullying Week are prominently recognised and celebrated, reinforcing the school's commitment to fostering a safe online environment.

Additionally, the online safety lead has developed a comprehensive coverage tracker to monitor students' engagement with the material and to ensure that any pupil who may have missed an important lesson is given the opportunity to catch up. This tracking helps maintain consistency in the delivery of online safety education

across the school. Parents and carers have also acknowledged the significant impact of the school's online safety journey, noting that it has contributed to a greater awareness of the risks associated with technology use at home and equipped students with the tools they need to stay safe online.

Students are not just passive recipients of this education but are actively involved in shaping and delivering it. The Online Safety Ambassadors, a group of students from Years 4-6, play a key role in this effort. They participate in assemblies where they share their top online safety tip of the week and serve as a point of contact for their peers with any online safety concerns. This student-led initiative fosters a sense of responsibility and peer support, ensuring that the culture of online safety is not only teacher-driven but also student-empowered, making it a truly inclusive and engaging aspect of school life.

## **Element C - Technology**

The school demonstrated a strong understanding of its secure infrastructure, providing detailed evidence of the measures in place to safeguard the network and its users. Key security practices such as regular password resets, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), and Sophos anti-virus are actively implemented across the network. The school's federation employs a distinctive setup, utilising Google as its primary ecosystem while deploying MFA through an Azure sync. This approach allows staff to securely access their accounts without the need to use personal mobile devices while on school premises, ensuring both convenience and security.

The school's filtering and monitoring provisions were also a topic of discussion. Filtering is managed through LGfL (strict mode), and the procedures for handling incidents where staff or students encounter inappropriate websites were well-defined. Clear protocols are in place to ensure quick resolution, with groups of stakeholders knowledgeable about how such incidents are managed. However, there is an opportunity for the school to further refine its monitoring practices, particularly in relation to how actionable data is captured and utilised from the monitoring systems. This is addressed in more detail under the Areas for Further Development section of the report.

The school's infrastructure is not only robust but also subject to continuous review, with adjustments made in alignment with best practices. One example of this proactive approach is the planned restriction of USB removable storage devices, which reflects the school's commitment to mitigating emerging security risks.

Additionally, the trust currently holds the Cyber Essentials certification and is actively exploring the possibility of pursuing Cyber Essentials+ certification, a move that would further enhance the school's cybersecurity posture. This forward-thinking approach to digital security underscores the trust's dedication to maintaining a secure environment for both staff and students, ensuring that its infrastructure evolves in line with the latest industry standards and best practices.

## **Element D – Outcomes**

The school has established multiple channels, both internal and external, for reporting online safety concerns. Internally, these concerns are directed to the online safety leader and members of the safeguarding team, ensuring that they are addressed promptly or referred to external agencies if further intervention is required. The school also collects and reports data on online safety to the governors on the academy council, providing oversight, support, and strategic challenge, particularly within the safeguarding framework. This structured reporting allows for comprehensive tracking and reflection on the school's efforts. Feedback from staff, students, and parents highlighted the positive impact of these internal and external support systems, contributing to a strong sense of a safety-focused culture within the school. Online safety is clearly a core focus, and the school places significant emphasis on helping all children develop their knowledge and understanding in this critical and ever-evolving area. Staff, regardless of their specific role, fully recognise the importance of online safety and understand how they contribute to fostering a collective community that

prioritises safety in the digital world. This commitment to a proactive, community-based approach reinforces the school's dedication to safeguarding its students.

### **Areas of strength and good practice**

The online safety education provision at West Drayton Academy is both comprehensive and thoughtfully designed, extending beyond classroom learning into the broader school community. The program is structured to be both proactive, addressing potential online risks before they escalate, and reactive, ensuring swift responses to emerging digital challenges. Parents and carers have expressed their appreciation for the school's efforts in keeping them informed through regular communications such as newsletters and online resources. Additionally, many parents have shared how their children's responsible use of technology at home has significantly improved due to the lessons and guidance provided at school. This approach ensures that students receive consistent online safety messaging in all areas of their lives, reinforcing their ability to navigate the digital world safely.

A key feature of the school's online safety strategy is the active involvement of the Online Safety Ambassadors. This group of student representatives plays a pivotal role in fostering a peer-led culture of digital safety. By acting as intermediaries between students and staff, the ambassadors help raise awareness of online safety issues and offer peer support when needed. Their participation in key events, such as assemblies and workshops, allows them to contribute meaningfully to the school's overall online safety efforts. This initiative not only empowers students to take leadership roles but also highlights the positive impact of a collaborative approach to online safety education. By giving students a voice in this critical area, the school fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility that resonates across the student body.

West Drayton Academy has established a set of well-defined online safety policies, including guidelines for acceptable use and social media, which are consistently applied throughout the school. These policies provide essential support for both staff and students, ensuring a shared understanding of expectations and standards. What truly distinguishes the school's approach is the way these policies are actively integrated into daily practice, rather than simply existing as standalone documents. Staff members at all levels are engaged with these guidelines, contributing to a cohesive and supportive environment where students feel secure in exploring digital spaces. The leadership's commitment to continually reviewing and enhancing these practices ensures that the school's online safety provision remains current and effective, helping students to confidently navigate an increasingly digital world.

### **Areas for further development**

To ensure stronger compliance with the filtering and monitoring requirements outlined by the Department for Education, as embedded in the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance, the school should consider implementing a comprehensive monitoring product for both staff and students. This tool should deliver key actionable data to members of the safeguarding team, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSL, in a timely and efficient manner. This will ensure that any concerns are flagged and addressed without delay. In addition, involving the governing body more actively in monitoring activities could further strengthen this area. Governors could participate in filtering and monitoring stress tests alongside members of the online safety group to gain firsthand insights into the technical provisions in place. Such engagement would help provide assurance that the school's infrastructure is robust enough to protect children when using school devices.

There is also potential to expand the role of the Online Safety Ambassadors, particularly in engaging parents and carers more directly. These student leaders could take on a more visible role in parent-focused events such as online safety workshops or parent evenings, which the school already hosts. Empowering students to present at these events not only reinforces their leadership role but also amplifies the impact of the online safety message by involving those most affected—children. This approach would allow parents to witness the

depth of their children's understanding and commitment to safe online behavior, further embedding the importance of this issue within the school community.

The online safety curriculum at West Drayton Academy is already a notable strength, with clear opportunities for further development through the use of additional resources from Project Evolve. In particular, the incorporation of Knowledge Maps could significantly enhance the school's ability to assess students' understanding of various online safety strands before and after key lessons. These maps would align well with the school's current use of conversation starters to initiate computing lessons and would allow for a more structured, data-driven approach to tracking student progress. Since the school is already familiar with Project Evolve, integrating this additional resource should streamline assessment processes, reducing teacher workload while providing more actionable data. This, in turn, would allow the school to take a more proactive and reactive stance in its approach to online safety education, ensuring that any emerging risks are promptly addressed and that students' learning is effectively supported.

### **Additional Comments**

N/A

### **Assessor's Recommendation**

The school has reached the standards required to be awarded the Online Safety Mark