



Woodland Pathways

ICT, Online Safety & Technology Policy

Date created or revised: 0925

Date of next review: 0926

1. Policy Statement

Woodland Pathways is committed to ensuring that all use of technology supports **learning, safeguarding, and wellbeing**, while protecting children, young people, and staff from harm.

We recognise that technology is a powerful tool within education — particularly for engagement, communication, and personalised learning — but also presents risks that must be actively managed.

This policy ensures that all digital activity is:

- Safe and appropriately supervised
- Aligned with safeguarding responsibilities
- Compliant with UK GDPR and data protection law
- In line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** and the **Prevent Duty**

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff, practitioners, volunteers, and contractors
- All learners accessing Woodland Pathways provision
- Parents/carers, commissioning bodies, and visiting professionals

It covers all forms of technology, including:

- Mobile phones and smart devices
- Internet access (including hotspots and site networks)
- Photography and video
- Online platforms and communication systems
- Both company and personal devices used for work purposes

3. Aims

Woodland Pathways aims to:

- Safeguard all learners when using technology
- Promote safe, responsible, and informed digital behaviour
- Ensure all staff model professional and appropriate technology use
- Maintain clear boundaries in communication and data handling
- Support learners to understand online risks and how to seek help

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Directors / Safeguarding Leads

- Hold overall responsibility for online safety and ICT use
 - Ensure policies are implemented, reviewed, and compliant
 - Oversee safeguarding concerns related to online activity
 - Ensure staff receive appropriate training
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Staff and Practitioners

- Supervise all learner use of technology
 - Follow this policy, safeguarding procedures, and code of conduct
 - Report any concerns immediately
 - Use only approved systems and communication channels
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Learners

- Follow agreed expectations for safe use
- Use technology only when supervised and authorised
- Report anything that feels unsafe or inappropriate

5. Safe Use of Technology

Technology use at Woodland Pathways is:

- **Purposeful** – linked to learning, engagement, or safeguarding
- **Proportionate** – appropriate to age, need, and risk
- **Supervised** – particularly where internet access is involved

Use may include:

- Academic learning (research, writing, digital tasks)
- Applied learning (e.g. drone technology, data handling, problem-solving)
- Recording evidence of learning (with consent)
- Communication with professionals and commissioning bodies

6. Personal Devices and Professional Use

Staff may use personal devices under strict conditions:

- Devices must be password protected and secure
- A dedicated work account/email must be used
- No learner data is stored permanently on personal devices
- All work remains professional and transparent

Strict Prohibitions

Staff must not:

- Communicate with learners via personal phone numbers
- Use personal email, WhatsApp, or social media with learners
- Store learner data or images long-term on personal devices
- Use personal cloud storage for any Woodland Pathways data

7. Photography, Video and Digital Media

Images or video may only be taken where:

- Appropriate consent is in place
- The purpose is educational, safeguarding, or reporting

All images must:

- Be uploaded to a secure system as soon as possible
- Be deleted from the device immediately after upload
- Not be stored on personal devices or personal cloud services

Failure to comply may be treated as a data breach and safeguarding concern.

8. Online Safety Education

Learners are supported to understand:

- Risks such as grooming, exploitation, and cyberbullying
- Safe sharing of personal information
- How to identify misinformation and online manipulation
- Appropriate online behaviour and digital responsibility

- How to seek help if something feels unsafe

This is delivered in a way that is:

- Age-appropriate
- Trauma-informed
- Individualised to learner needs

9. Filtering, Monitoring and Supervision

As Woodland Pathways operates primarily in outdoor and flexible environments:

- Internet access may be via hotspots or third-party networks
- Filtering may vary depending on location

Therefore:

- **All online activity is directly supervised**
- Devices are used only for agreed educational purposes
- Any attempt to access harmful content is treated as a safeguarding concern

Where site-based filtering exists, it is adopted and supported.

10. Communication and Professional Boundaries

- All communication with learners must be authorised and appropriate
- Personal contact (social media, messaging apps) is strictly prohibited
- Communication with parents/carers must remain professional

This ensures clear safeguarding boundaries at all times.

11. Social Media Use

Staff must:

- Maintain professional boundaries online
- Avoid posting content that could bring Woodland Pathways into disrepute
- Not identify or discuss learners online

12. Data Protection and Security

All staff must:

- Follow Woodland Pathways GDPR/Data Protection Policy
- Keep devices secure and locked when unattended
- Protect passwords and login information
- Avoid accessing sensitive data on unsecured networks

Personal data must always be:

- Stored securely
- Shared only when necessary and lawful
- Handled in line with safeguarding expectations

13. Unacceptable Use

Unacceptable behaviour includes:

- Accessing inappropriate or illegal material
- Cyberbullying, harassment, or exploitation
- Sharing images or information without consent
- Misuse of personal data
- Inappropriate digital contact with learners

Such behaviour will be treated as:

Safeguarding concerns and/or disciplinary matters

14. Responding to Concerns

All online safety concerns are treated as safeguarding issues.

Staff must:

- Report concerns immediately to the Safeguarding Lead
- Record concerns in line with safeguarding procedures

Woodland Pathways will:

- Inform commissioning schools or local authorities
- Refer to appropriate agencies (e.g. Social Care, Police, Prevent) where required

15. Acceptable Use Agreements

All staff, practitioners, and learners:

- Agree to expectations around safe technology use
- Receive guidance at induction
- Are reminded regularly of expectations

Breaches are managed in line with safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

16. Training and Awareness

All staff receive:

- Online safety and safeguarding training
- GDPR and data protection training
- Ongoing updates in line with legislation and best practice

17. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed:

- Annually
- Following any incidents or concerns
- In response to changes in legislation or Local Authority guidance

18. Contact Information

Woodland Pathways

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