

Supporting 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance



The Department for Education has published an updated version of the statutory guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education' (2016), which revises and replaces the 2015 guidance and is effective from 5th September 2016.

The topic of safeguarding is not just something that occurs online; it runs through every area of the school. As such, all staff need to be aware not just of the range of safeguarding topics, (recognising the signs and giving support when required), but also how to play their part in ensuring that the students are educated about the subjects that may affect them or their peers.

This new guidance document sets out what schools and colleges should do to safeguard their students, whilst outlining the legal duties they must fulfil. In summary, there are five main areas where NetSupport DNA can help schools meet their safeguarding obligations:

Filtering and monitoring systems

"Whilst it is essential that governing bodies and proprietors ensure that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, they should be careful that 'over blocking' does not lead to unreasonable restrictions." (Department for Education, Keeping children safe in education, 2016, p.18)

A major responsibility of schools is to protect students from accessing inappropriate content online. As this is not a new concept, many schools already have some kind of filtering system installed. However, now schools must also monitor their students' online activities, which brings a whole new set of requirements such as being able to monitor search terms, what websites are being accessed, what students are talking about on chat applications and more.

- Internet metering
- Report a concern
- Screen monitoring
- Keyword and phrase monitoring
- Endpoint security
- Monitor 'Vulnerable' students

In addition to web filtering with age-appropriate settings, NetSupport DNA provides a range of safeguarding tools to allow schools to proactively and reactively safeguard students. The tools highlight which students are engaged in concerning activity and tracks application use for context to help avoid false alarms/over-blocking. With screen monitoring and alerts, safeguarding leads can take appropriate action for each triggered event.

Safeguarding awareness

"All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues." (Department for Education, Keeping children safe in education, 2016, p.12)

Within the wider topic of safeguarding, online safety is the main area of concern because its scope is so wide. Within this, schools must, at the very least, be aware of the main potential risks for students which are:

- Online bullying
- Radicalisation
- Accessing inappropriate content
- Grooming and sexual abuse.

NetSupport DNA contains detailed reports highlighting trending safeguarding terms/topics (across multiple languages) to help schools make their staff aware of new issues and highlight existing ones. Staff are also able to report any concerns they have about a student via the 'Add a concern' tool.

Staff training

"All staff members should receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training which is regularly updated." (Department for Education, Keeping children safe in education, 2016, p.6)

Schools must ensure that all of their safeguarding, teaching and support staff undergo regular training to ensure that they are aware of the very latest safeguarding topics and potential risks to students. Knowledge of current trends is key, if staff are to act quickly when issues arise.

NetSupport DNA's keyword and phrase monitoring tool shows schools exactly what students are typing, searching for or copying and highlights current trends amongst each year group, ensuring schools can provide relevant training – for everyone – around each topic.

Inclusion of safeguarding in the curriculum

"Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum". (Department for Education, Keeping children safe in education, 2016, p.18)

It's one thing to educate the staff about safeguarding, but students in all year groups must also be aware of the whole range of topics, if they are to learn about protecting themselves and others, plus take responsibility for their own actions online. It is good practice for schools to address such issues through every subject area where appropriate and when opportunities arise – as well as through dedicated subjects such as PSHE.

NetSupport School can help provide a safe and secure teaching environment whilst conducting such lessons. Using screen sharing mode, the teacher can lead the lesson from their PC, ensuring students do not go off task.

Inspection

"Inspectors will always report on whether or not arrangements for safeguarding children and learners are effective." (Department for Education, Keeping children safe in education, 2016, p.18)

In addition to the four areas of judgements listed in the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework (CIF), schools will also be graded on their safeguarding arrangements and requirements. If either is found to be ineffective, the school will be judged as inadequate. Providing a good standard of evidence is key, as Ofsted will require documentation demonstrating how the school has met the areas listed in CIF.

Both NetSupport DNA and NetSupport School retain all documentation electronically, making it easy to access and ensuring everything is covered. From tracking AUPs to monitoring any 'Report a concern' activity and outcomes (including archived reports and viewing the safeguarding keyword reports), staff can gain and demonstrate a greater understanding of safeguarding topics within their school.