Green Labyrinth

E - Safety Policy
2025-2026

Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
	October 2024	T Tuffin	October 2026

Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date

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This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies

- Anti-Bullying - Child on Child Abuse
- Behaviour
- Code of Conduct for Staff/ Staff Behaviour Policy
- GDPR – UK Data Protection 2018
- Recruitment and Selection
- Safeguarding
- Whistleblowing

Definitions

- **E – Safety (Online Safety):** E-safety is the term used to describe the concept of keeping users safe while using the internet. It is also the practice of using technology safely and responsibly. It includes the use of the internet and other electronic means of communication, such as text messages, email, and gaming devices.
- **Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 20245 as:
  'Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge; protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, **including online**; preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.' [1]

The principles and procedures for safeguarding adults – ie those aged 18 or over – are largely the same in terms of how they will impact on the decisions of members of staff from Green Labyrinth. However, the laws regarding adults and their capacity to make decisions about themselves, differs from the protection of children.

Introduction

At Green Labyrinth, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. The safety and welfare of all learners and staff at Green Labyrinth is of paramount importance. Everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status.

Overall Aims

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[1] Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

At Green Labyrinth we believe that learners should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices
- provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety
- ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

We recognise that:

- technology and the use of ICT equipment is part of everyday life and that it is an essential part of learning and employment
- the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however it can also present risks and challenges
- we have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online
- we have a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online, whether or not they are using Green Labyrinth's network and devices
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

All action taken by Green Labyrinth will be in accordance with current legislation and Statutory guidance:
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) which sets out the multiagency working arrangements to help, protect and promote the welfare of children up until the age of 18. **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)** is statutory guidance

issued by the Department for Education which all schools and colleges must have regard to when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England including the Online Safety Act 2023[2].

The policy applies to all staff, volunteers, learners and anyone involved in Green Labyrinth's activities.

Green Labyrinth's E – Safety / Online Safety Framework

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- appointing an **Online Safety Coordinator** who will closely with the Designated Safeguarding lead
- providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online through our behaviour code for staff
- supporting and encouraging the young people using our service to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others
- displaying up to date online safety posters
- supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online
- developing and reviewing an online safety agreement for use with young people
- developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult or a child or young person
- reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly
- installing and monitoring an online screening tool - Smoothwall
- ensuring that user names, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively

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[2] Online Safety Act 2023

- ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only as appropriate
- ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given
- providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety
- examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

Curriculum

As part of the tutorial's curriculum, all learners will undertake awareness lessons in E - Safety. This is further reinforced in all other areas of the curriculum, especially when working with technology.

The key messages from these lessons are:

- The dangers of using the internet both at home and at school
- What to do if they come across inappropriate text or images
- How to stay safe when communicating online
- How to take appropriate action when things go wrong
- How to stay safe when using Social Networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram etc.
- How to stay safe in chat rooms/discussion forums
- What to do if they are a victim of cyberbullying
- The dangers of 'sexting'

Bring Your Own Device

If a learner chooses to bring their electronic device to the centre, they must adhere to all Green Labyrinth rules relating to such technologies. A breach of these rules will result in sanctions as outlined in the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Learners are not permitted to show or share inappropriate or illegal content from their own devices on Green Labyrinth premises. This may result in their phone being confiscated and handed to the Police.

Remote Learning

If required, a teacher may lecture learners remotely via a video conferencing tool. To promote a safe experience and environment for both learner and teacher, both parties must adhere to the guidelines below:

- No 1:1s; groups of 3 or more including the teacher, only
- Staff and learners must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and where possible be against a neutral background
- The live class should be recorded and backed up on the Green Labyrinth cloud, so that if any issues were to arise, the video can be reviewed
- Live classes should be kept to a reasonable length of time
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background

Role of the Online Safety Coordinator

The Online Safety Coordinator is a member of staff, who will work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as they undertake their lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection within Green Labyrinth.

They will have the appropriate training, knowledge and skills to carry out this role. The broad areas of responsibility for the Online Safety Coordinator are:

- Liaising with the DSL on any matters related to e – safety / online safety
- Undertaking training to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role (updated annually)
- Supporting the DSL to provide e - safety input for new staff at their induction
- Overseeing the effective use of the Smoothwall screening tool
- Maintaining the security of the ICT network, including social media
- Supporting the DSL to secure any evidence required from the Green Labyrinth network, related to online safety concerns.

Green Labyrinth's E – Safety / Online Safety Procedures

If online abuse occurs, we will respond to it by:

- having clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place for responding to abuse (including online abuse)
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying or cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
- making sure our response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders and our organisation as a whole into account
- reviewing the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals, in order to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term.

Reporting Concerns

The procedure to respond to a concern about a child is detailed in the Safeguarding Policy.

Members of staff with a concern about a learner or who have received a disclosure from a learner should inform the DSL or one of their deputies as soon as possible.

Incidents of cyberbullying are likely to involve use of the Green Labyrinth's behaviour policy and associated procedures.

Involving Parents and Carers

In general, the DSL (or one of their deputies) will discuss any child protection concerns with parents/carers before making a referral to another agency including the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). There may be occasions when the DSL will contact another agency **before** informing parents/carers because they consider that by contacting them it may increase the risk of harm to the child.

The Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe and promoting their welfare. Fears about sharing information <u>must not</u> be

__allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.__

Training

In addition to this policy, **all** staff working directly with children will have e – safety training included in their induction and annual safeguarding training. In addition they can undertake certificated CPD on this subject sourced via leading providers.

Appendix A - Online Safety Concerns

Cyberbullying/online bullying

Cyberbullying/online bullying includes:

- excluding a child from online games, activities or friendship groups
- sending threatening, upsetting or abusive messages
- creating and sharing embarrassing or malicious images or videos
- 'trolling' - sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name.

Bullying and cyberbullying can be a form of discrimination, particularly if it is based on a child's disability, race, religion or belief, gender identity or sexuality.

Sexting

The action or practice of sending sexually explicit photographs or messages via mobile phone.

Sextortion

A type of online blackmail where criminals threaten to share sexual pictures, videos, or information about you.

Sending Nudes / Semi Nudes

the sending or posting of naked or partially naked images, videos or livestreams online by young people under the age of 18. This could be via text, email, social media and gaming platforms

Radicalisation

The process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies.

Phishing

A form of online fraud where attackers attempt to steal sensitive information such as passwords, credit card numbers, or bank account details. This is typically done by sending deceptive emails or messages that appear to be from trusted sources like banks or well-known websites.

Appendix B – The 4 Cs of Online Safety

The 4 Cs of online safety are a framework for identifying and addressing online risks for children and young people:

- **Content**: Harmful or inappropriate content, such as illegal images, words, or videos.

  This includes downloading information, some of which may be illegal, contain extremist material and be dishonest or inappropriate. This presents risks to Green Labyrinth or partners, if using their equipment. Posting personal information can also pose risks as previously mentioned in the 'contact' category. Potential data breaches and non-following of GDPR policy is a big risk in regard to the 'content' of data. This is inclusive of sharing, controlling, processing and even holding/storing data – there needs to be a rationale for the processing, sharing and storing of content/data – this always needs to be considered when collecting information, as does the timeframe for storage along with the security.

- **Contact**: The risk of harm from interacting with other users online, such as peer pressure or inappropriate advertising. Social networking sites, chatrooms and phone apps allow people to meet new friends but unfortunately not everyone is who they claim to be.

- **Conduct**: The way people behave online, such as online bullying. This behaviour can be by or towards individuals and can include cyberbullying and cyberstalking. Behaviours can also include racism and piracy. When using equipment provided by Green Labyrinth you have a right to be protected and a duty to behave honestly and responsibly. Incorrect use of equipment including downloading or passing on illegal or inappropriate content can result in the user committing a criminal offence. Any inappropriate act, that offends or harms others, is taken very seriously and will be reported to the Police. This is both in and outside of Green Labyrinth. Never share information that is considered private and confidential.
- **Commerce**: The risk of harm from online gambling, phishing, financial scams, or inappropriate advertising. This includes the risk of financial abuse when making a purchase online through an unsecure source.
- **Online Safety** – new risks and tools as set out by keeping children safe in Education 2025 highlights.
- **Content risks** now include misinformation, disinformation & conspiracy theories: we will use the DFE' plan technology for Green labyrinth annually.
- **Generative AI:** follow DFE 2025 guidance – AI must be age appropriate, safe, transparent.
- Cybersecurity; IT systems must meet national security Standards