



# Merridale Primary School

## Filtering and Monitoring Strategy

September 2024 – September 2025

### What is filtering and monitoring?

Filtering and monitoring systems are used to keep pupils safe when using school's IT systems.

**Filtering systems:** block access to harmful sites and content.

**Monitoring systems:** identify when a user accesses, searches for certain types of harmful content or types harmful words/phrases on school devices.

In order to comply with DfE '[Filtering and monitoring standards for schools and colleges](#)' as well as the requirements of [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), and to ensure our children are safeguarded during the school day, Merridale Primary school has developed the following filtering and monitoring strategy.

### Our systems:

Filtering – Lightspeed Solutions

Monitoring - SENSO

We have ensured that both filtering and monitoring systems are compliant with the [UK Safer Internet Centre's 'Filtering Provider Response 2023'](#) and therefore:

- are a member of Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and blocks access to illegal Child Abuse Images and Content (CAIC).
- integrates the 'the police assessed list of unlawful terrorist content, produced on behalf of the Home Office'.
- filters and monitors illegal and harmful online content such as content which promotes discrimination or extremism, drugs/substance misuse, malware/hacking, gambling, piracy and copyright theft, pro-self-harm, eating disorder and/or suicide content, pornographic content and violent material.

We work with Wolverhampton E-Services to ensure that our filtering and monitoring systems are continually reviewed to reflect our needs and requirements.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Merridale Primary school understands that day to day management of the school systems sits with the DSL and the IT service provider. However, we have assigned the following roles and responsibilities:

#### DSL & IT support

The DSL, SLT and IT support work closely to:

- Procure systems.
- Identify risk.
- Carry out reviews.
- Carry out checks.

The DSL is responsible for overseeing and acting on:

- Filtering and monitoring reports
- Safeguarding concerns
- Checks to filtering and monitoring systems
- Requested changes to systems
- SENSO reports are sent automatically to the DSL. As our DSL is also our headteacher, our DDSL and deputy headteacher, also receives filtering and monitoring reports.

Our safeguarding team (DSL and 2 DDSLs) alongside the computing lead regularly review any CPOMS posts categorized as “E-safety concerns” and respond to these on a case-by-case basis e.g. speaking to parents and individual children, providing responsive lessons, adapting our e-safety curriculum and seeking external advice.

Our IT support Wolverhampton E-services is responsible for:

- Maintaining the filtering and monitoring system
- Providing suitable training for school staff
- Checking the system or completing actions following any concerns

#### **SLT is responsible for:**

- Procuring the appropriate filtering and monitoring systems
- Understanding and documenting what is blocked or allowed, and why.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of provision, making sure that incidents are urgently picked up, acted on and outcomes are recorded.
- Overseeing reports
- Making sure staff:
  - Understand their role.
  - Are trained appropriately.
  - Follow policies, processes and procedures.
  - Act on reports and concerns

SLT also work closely with governors, the DSL and IT support (name)

#### **All staff**

All staff are clear on:

- The expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring as part of their safeguarding training eg monitoring children’s screens.
- How to report safeguarding and technical concerns, such as if:
  - They witness or suspect unsuitable material has been accessed.
  - They are able to access unsuitable material.
  - They are teaching topics that could create unusual activity on the filtering/monitoring logs eg World War II
  - There is a failure in the software or an abuse of the system.
  - There are perceived unreasonable restrictions that affect teaching and learning or administrative tasks.
  - They notice abbreviations or misspellings that allow access to restricted material.

## The Governing Board

The Governing Board has overall strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring. They will ensure they understand the standards, that they understand the systems that the school uses and that they are confident to question whether standards are being met. They will also be made aware of any safeguarding concerns (and the school's response) that our systems highlight.

The named Governor responsible for making sure the standards are met is Gurdeep Aulakh.

## Our approach

How we monitor

- staff physically monitoring by watching users' screens
- Children from year 2 onwards log on with individual log ons. Where individual log ons are not possible (e.g. with the ipads) children always use the same device to enable accurate tracing of activity.
- Network monitoring / filtering logs of internet traffic and web access. We analyse these log files every term in order to spot potential trends.
- Individual device monitoring using SENSO software. We ensure that all children have individual login details so that they can be identifiable if monitoring software highlights concerns.

We ensure that:

- Whilst blocking harmful, illegal and inappropriate content, our filtering system does not 'overblock' i.e. it does not negatively impact on teaching and learning or administration.
- Our students receive a high quality, needs-driven, online safety curriculum so that they are able to assess and manage risk, particularly when not protected by our systems on their own devices.

## Reviewing provision

In order to ensure that our systems are fit for purpose, Merridale Primary School reviews filtering and monitoring provision **annually** (last reviewed July 2023) or where:

- we identify a safeguarding risk.
- there's a change in our working practice (e.g. we allow remote access or staff to bring their own device)
- we introduce new technology.

**The following are involved in our review:**

- Senior leadership team (SLT)
- Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- IT support
- Responsible governor

We use the following document to assist in this review:



## KeyDoc\_Filtering\_and\_monitoring\_review

We also carry the following checks more often:

- monthly (eg reviewing filtering log files, test of the school's filtering system using the [SWGFL testing tool](#) etc)
- Monthly system checks with IT support to ensure they are working as expected.
- Termly – which sites are blocked, which are allowed and the rationale.
- Termly – that all staff understand their responsibilities and how to report and record concerns.

## Appendix 1

### Standards checklist



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## Appendix 2

### Annual review template



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## Appendix 3

Filtering and monitoring provider responses (download here <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/teachers-and-school-staff/appropriate-filtering-and-monitoring/appropriate-monitoring>)