

### **The Purpose of this Policy**

Phonics Tuition Thurrock works with children and families as part of its activities.

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children is paramount when adults or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices
- Provide staff 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

This Policy applies to all staff and children, and anyone involved in Phonics Tuition Thurrock's activities.

### **Legal Framework**

This Policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. Summaries of the key legislation and guidance are available on:

- Online abuse – <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety/preventing-online-abuse-and-harm>
- Child protection – <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system>

We believe that:

- Children should never experience abuse of any kind
- Children 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

We recognise that:

- 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 and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online
- We have a responsibility to help keep children safe online, whether or not they are using Phonics Tuition Thurrock's network and devices
- Working in partnership with children, their parents/carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children's welfare and in helping children to be responsible in their approach to online safety
- All children, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse

### **How we will Keep Children Safe**

We will seek to keep children safe by:

- I, as the Online Safety Co-ordinator, will take lead responsibility for online safety
- Providing clear and specific directions to staff on how to behave online through our Staff Code of Conduct
- Supporting and encouraging the children using our service to use the internet in a way that keeps them safe
- Supporting and encouraging parents/carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online
- 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
- Reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly
- 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 and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given
- Providing training for staff about online safety
- Examining and risk assessing any Phonics activity/games websites and new technologies before they are used within the organisation
- Supervising children while taking part in Phonics activities/games online using the organisation's devices

### **Online Abuse**

In the event that 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 training for staff on dealing with all forms of abuse
- 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

### **Related Policies and Procedures**

This Policy should be read alongside our other policies and procedures, including:

- Safeguarding
- Complaints procedure against staff
- Staff code of conduct
- Photography and sharing images

### **Contact Details**

***Designated Safeguarding Lead & Online Safety Co-ordinator***

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This Policy was last reviewed in: April 2025

**Signed:** *L. McDonald*