Supporting 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance 2020

The Department for Education's latest update of its Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance came into force on 1st September 2020, ready for the 2020-21 school year.

Safeguarding runs through every part of a school and this year's update reinforces the need for all staff to be aware of the full range of safeguarding topics (and in particular mental health, domestic abuse, child criminal/sexual exploitation and county lines) – recognising the signs, giving support and knowing when to refer it onwards.

In this document, we outline how our IT Management and Safeguarding solution (NetSupport DNA), our Classroom Management solution (NetSupport School) and our platform for remote learning (classroom.cloud) can help schools to meet their safeguarding requirements in line with the guidance, whilst simultaneously offering support to students in need.

*The following tables show a quote from the Draft – [Keeping children safe in education](#) (2020) guidance (from **Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff** and **Part two: The management of safeguarding**) plus its given number in the document, followed by an explanation of how NetSupport's solutions help support each one.*

Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff

What school and college staff should know and do

The role of school and college staff

6. "School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating."

With the help of the Keyword and Phrase monitoring tool (NetSupport DNA) and via Monitor Mode in NetSupport School, teachers can gain an insight into students' activity as they use school technology. In addition, NetSupport DNA allows teachers to document any concerns about individual students via its 'Add a concern' feature and teachers can see a 'History' of concerns. Students can also 'Report a concern' to a trusted teacher directly from their desktop – or the school's website out of school hours. In addition, its self-service directory of external online resources enables them to seek help outside of the school if they wish.

7. "**All** staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn."

NetSupport School delivers a secure learning environment with its "Always-on" security settings, the ability to create lists of approved/restricted websites and control of portable media device use. NetSupport DNA offers a full safeguarding toolkit including tools such as alerting, monitoring, user profile creation, internet/application metering and USB endpoint security – to ensure systems are as safe, yet as flexible, as can be. There is now a 'Health and Social Distancing' AUP available to provide updates across the school - and a report to show who has read and accepted all AUPs. In addition, classroom.cloud ensures security for students learning remotely by allowing the school to define the dates and times staff will connect to them, as well as approved school network details, thereby protecting them from unauthorised connections.

8. "**All** staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years." Having an insight into students' activity is invaluable and could help facilitate an early intervention when students are engaged in activity that could place them at risk. NetSupport DNA provides teachers with this via its contextual intelligence-based Risk Index that produces a risk score for an individual student at that moment in time, meaning that teachers can intervene as necessary. They can also use the 'Add a concern' tool to make notes of a developing situation with a student. Vulnerable students can be marked as such within NetSupport DNA, enabling an extra layer of support.

11. "The designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) are most likely to have a complete safeguarding picture and be the most appropriate person to advise on the response to safeguarding concerns."

NetSupport DNA's safeguarding module can be operated by safeguarding staff, independently of the IT team, ensuring confidentiality and enabling their professional response. When a safeguarding keyword is triggered, DSLs and supporting staff can now 'tick' or 'untick' it to highlight whether their review of the incident is complete; a useful feature to help staff track which ones need attention.

What school and college staff need to know

13. "**All** staff should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include the child protection policy, behaviour policy, staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct), safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and the role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies). Copies of policies and a copy of part one of this document (KSCIE) should be provided to staff at induction."

NetSupport DNA provides a flexible method of delivering and tracking policy distribution in a school; automatically presenting them to new staff to read, to all staff when updates have been applied, or to students to agree to an Acceptable Use Policy. The single upload saves time for administrators, who can assign the policy to a distribution list, and, as a bonus, ensures an accurate record is kept of who has seen and agreed to each policy. In response to the pandemic, a template is now also provided for a Health and Social Distancing AUP.

What school and college staff should look out for

Abuse and neglect

21. "**All** staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. **All** staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence."

Using sophisticated contextual AI risk analysis, NetSupport DNA extends the concept of context to factors within the school. The contextual intelligence-based Risk Index automatically assesses the context and history of a child's activities on the school's network – devices used, time of day, websites visited etc – and, from this, creates a numerical risk index. A high-risk index could result if a child has repeatedly researched a safeguarding topic (e.g. suicide) out of hours in an unmonitored setting such as the library. A lower index rating could result from a student searching a lower risk keyword in a local application during school hours that may have been used in a lesson.

Safeguarding issues

27. "**All** staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting … put children in danger."

NetSupport DNA's Keyword and Phrase monitoring feature has a database of over 12,000 safeguarding terms, compiled with the Internet Watch Foundation and schools we work with – as well as including the Counter Terrorism Referral Unit (CTIRU) list (which schools can choose to enable or disable). When any terms in the database are triggered, staff can see these in a word cloud, enabling them to spot trending issues at a glance – and when reviewing these events, staff can highlight the status of their review by marking it as 'in progress' or 'complete', so all staff are aware.

Staff using NetSupport School can conduct regular wellbeing surveys via its Student Feedback mode, to get an idea of who is thriving and who may be struggling with any kind of issue. Staff concerned about any student can use the chat and message functions to start a conversation with them in both NetSupport School and classroom.cloud, which may be easier for them than discussing things face to face.

Record keeping

54. "All concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing..."

NetSupport School can provide a record of students' keyboard activity, website and application usage for that lesson, while in NetSupport DNA, using 'Report a concern', students can confide their worries to staff and attach screenshots, messages or other evidence to their concern record – and the teacher can add their own notes. Teachers can also 'Add a concern', if confided in verbally by a student. The 'History of concerns' tool means that safeguarding staff can track these over time – and the ability to re-assign them to another member of the safeguarding team means they are always visible.

Why is all of this important?

55. "It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating..." Alongside all the alerting features in NetSupport DNA, teachers can also flag any students they know are particularly at risk as 'vulnerable' on the system – and even group these students together so they can be monitored in a single view. This makes it easier for concerned staff to keep an eye on these students, so they can act quickly if necessary.

Part two: The management of safeguarding

The designated safeguarding lead

69. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility to safeguarding and child protection ... remains with the designated safeguarding lead. This responsibility should not be delegated."

The structure of your safeguarding team can be defined in NetSupport DNA by setting up different safeguarding roles. The designated safeguarding lead who has overall responsibility can be assigned the 'Safeguarding Administrator' role that allows full access to all eSafety tools. The role of 'Safeguarding User' can then be applied to deputies and other members of the team for more streamlined access, if appropriate.

Information sharing

82. "Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect..."

For any serious safeguarding incident that needs to be referred to external agencies, evidence and records are key. The fact that NetSupport DNA records triggered keywords or reported concerns now forms an important part of an evidence trail – and that the school has been able to classify its vulnerable students demonstrates its vigilance. Any retrospective information required can be extracted from DNA either from its reporting tools – plus, depending on severity, triggered events are stored as a simple log, a screenshot or screen recording that provide the full background to an event.

83. It is important that governing bodies and proprietors are aware that among other obligations, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR place duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully and to keep the information they hold safe and secure.

NetSupport DNA's GDPR toolkit can help school administrators to know exactly what data they hold by identifying all file types that may contain confidential information about students or staff. It also includes using tools to record whether the software used in the school is GDPR compliant in terms of the student personal data it stores. In addition, to help schools reduce the amount of sensitive data they keep, a data retention policy can be set to run and delete data of over a specified age.

Staff training

90. "In addition, all staff should receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates ... to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively."

Any updated policies or information sheets can be distributed to staff via NetSupport DNA and senior leaders can see via its tracking who has read and acknowledged them. In addition, the opportunity for ad hoc safeguarding update training is provided as terms occur in the student-generated word cloud – meaning that staff can either share information between themselves or talk about topics with students, as necessary.

Online safety

92. "As schools and colleges increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material."

As students learn online digital citizenship skills, NetSupport School narrows the parameters of how far they can go with the ability for the teacher to create 'allowed' and 'restricted' website lists to ensure unsuitable sites are out of reach. NetSupport DNA also allows the creation of profiles to meet the need of each year group – ensuring that internet access is age appropriate, while allowing the students the flexibility to learn about the online world. In addition, in classroom.cloud, teachers can open web pages directly onto students' screens, thereby eliminating any chance of them accessing unsuitable content.

Opportunities to teach safeguarding

95. "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 as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding."

Over-blocking can mean that any potential safeguarding problems are simply shifted elsewhere, so NetSupport DNA offers teachers an insight into their students' online activities so that they are aware of exactly what risks students are being exposed to, as well as being able to gauge their understanding of the elements of digital citizenship. Its flexible tools ensure that checks are in place to ensure a safe environment in which to learn.

Inspection

96. "Since September 2019, Ofsted's inspections of early years, schools and post-16 provision are carried out under **Ofsted's Education Framework**. Inspectors will always report on whether or not arrangements for safeguarding children and learners are effective."

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. In addition, the GDPR toolkit helps schools ensure the protection of students' data, which ties into the confidentiality needed for safeguarding issues.

Peer on peer abuse

106. "Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that their child protection policy includes: procedures to minimise the risk of peer on peer abuse ... [and] how allegations of peer on peer abuse will be recorded…"

NetSupport DNA's Keyword and Phrase monitoring can give teachers an insight into whether forms of peer on peer abuse are occurring, while at the same time helping to detect safeguarding issues across all topics – including any reference to upskirting (declared a criminal offence in April 2019). DNA's language packs also allow teachers to extend their safeguarding provision to a wider group of students, as the packs allow them to see and monitor phonetic representations of what students are typing in languages other than English.

Annex C: Online Safety - Filters and monitoring (p. 102)

Protecting children

"Governing bodies and proprietors should be doing all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to … risks from the school's or college's IT system. As part of this process, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their school or college has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place."

In addition to web filtering with age-appropriate settings, NetSupport DNA's safeguarding toolkit allows schools to proactively and reactively safeguard students by alerting teachers to which students are engaged in concerning activity – and tracking application use for context to help avoid false alarms or over-blocking. Thanks to screen monitoring and alerts, safeguarding leads are alerted at the earliest opportunity and can take the appropriate action for each triggered event. In addition, classroom.cloud ensures safe connections to students working remotely at home by enabling the school to define the dates and times these are allowed, as well as the approved network details, to shield them from unauthorised connections.