

Serco Education Online Safety Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy statement

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- ensure the safety and wellbeing of our learners is paramount when they are using the internet, social media or mobile devices.
- provide staff and subcontractors 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.

The policy statement applies to all staff, subcontractors and learners involved in Serco Education's activities.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect learners in England. The key pieces of legislation and guidance include:

- Education Act 2002
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Equality Act 2010

We believe that:

- No learners should ever experience abuse of any kind.
- 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.

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, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online.
- We have a responsibility to help keep our learners safe online, whether or not they are using Serco Education's network and devices.
- All learners, 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.
- Working in partnership with our learners, their employers, their carers where appropriate and other agencies is essential in promoting people's welfare and in helping people to be responsible in their approach to online safety.

We will seek to keep our learners safe by:

- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Officers.
- Providing clear and specific directions to staff and subcontractors on how to behave online through our Code of Conduct.
- Supporting and encouraging our learners to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others.
- Supporting and encouraging employers to do what they can to keep their employees safe online.
- Developing an online safety agreement.
- Developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour.
- Reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly.
- Ensuring that usernames, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively.
- Ensuring personal information about all staff and learners is held securely and shared only as appropriate.
- Ensuring that images of our staff and learners 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 subcontractors about online safety.
- Examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

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 subcontractors on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying/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.

Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures, including:

- Safeguarding policy:
 - Procedures for responding to concerns about a learner's wellbeing.
 - Dealing with allegations of abuse made against a learner.
 - Managing allegations against staff and subcontractors.
- Code of Conduct for staff and subcontractors.
- Anti-bullying policy and procedures.