

Online Safety Mark Desktop Assessment Feedback



School:	Ethos College		
Assessment date:	July 5 th , 2021	Assessor:	Ron Richards
Headteacher:	Rebecca Smith	Contact Person:	Ameer Abdullah

Thank you for your application and for the supporting documents.

The application form, the review and the supporting documents suggest that the school has continued to improve its online safety provision and that the school remains at (and, in places, above) Online Safety Mark benchmark levels. It gave me pleasure to read the application form and the review which made it clear that there has been ongoing progress in recent years.

There are many positive aspects to your review, including:

- The application form and the detailed review clearly describe the improvements and developments that have taken place.
- Development points from the previous Assessor Report appear to have been addressed:
 - The technical infrastructure appears to be more secure with better processes in place with the new (Trust wide) infrastructure support contract
 - The previous Assessor recommended that the online safety policy should be reviewed and updated. This appears to have taken place and the policy submitted reads well and covers most of the important areas. The Assessor recommended including social media in the Online Safety Policy, but this has not been addressed. However, I note that there is a separate Social Media Policy.
 - There are new reporting systems in place and these should help to address any online safety incidents that occur.
- The Trust-wide Online Safety Group is a positive development which should help to support the online safety provision across the academies – particularly given the risks attached to staff turnover in a relatively small organisation.
- I sense that there is a strong commitment to safeguard, protect and educate staff, students and trustees in the acceptable use of technology and social media.

Time does not allow me to list all the developments and improvements that I can identify when I compare your review to that of three years ago, but it is worth summing these up as more mature and embedded provision.

In terms of development points I would like to suggest:

- At the last assessment one aspect was rated at level 1. The current review suggests that 15 aspects are at level 1. In reading your review and application form, it does not feel to me that there has been that much improvement in provision, particularly given all the disruption of the last 16 months (almost half the period since the last assessment) and the change in online safety leadership. This may be an unfair comment, given that I do not have the luxury of being able to visit to see for myself. However, it is important that self review is accurate, so I would suggest that next year you should look critically at your review (preferably as a group) to check that your provision really does reflect the level 1 statement for those aspects.
- It is difficult to tell what your online safety curriculum covers, the list of topics in the SMSC curriculum does not suggest wide online safety coverage. You may wish to further develop the programme through investigating [SWGfL Project Evolve](#) which now has a wide range of online safety resources, planning tools and assessments.

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- Some of your online safety training did not take place in 2020. It is important that staff (and governors / Trustees) receive thorough updates to increase their awareness of more recent trends and developments.
 - Over the last year or so it has been difficult to actively involve children in online safety groups, peer to peer activities and to increase their levels of responsibility. Hopefully the coming months may allow us to again expand these activities. It would be good to see the development of a digital leader / online safety leader group (or similar).
 - It would appear that a lot of good work has taken place with and for parents and carers. Given the nature of your establishment it is important that this continues and where possible is extended. As we have found over the last 15/16 months, there is an essential partnership between parents/carers and the school to ensure that children can stay safe online.

In three years time to achieve the award again you would be required to have a full assessment. This would allow the Assessor to have the opportunity to see and to comment on, the many developments that have taken place. In reading the review and the application, I would expect this to be an enjoyable Assessor visit.

I am pleased to confirm that the school has been awarded the Online Safety Mark for a further three years.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'R. Richards'.

Ron Richards