



# Online safety self-assessment tool

Creating safer online environments



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**This self-assessment tool is designed for school leadership teams to examine their school's online safety environment. It provides tailored suggestions to help schools improve their practices.**

Some assessment questions refer to standards, policies and procedures, therefore, this guide should always be read alongside specific requirements for your school and/or education sector.

Question	Practical suggestions to create safer online spaces	To do	Review date
Is school leadership committed to creating and maintaining a safe online environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage a positive school climate and help-seeking culture where students feel safe and supported to report online incidents.</li> <li>• Send clear anti-bullying messages (including anti-cyberbullying) and promote healthy and respectful relationships through the whole school. Include online safety in the school's mission and values.</li> <li>• Promote online safety at assemblies and in newsletters to inform the school community about where to find support and advice.</li> </ul>		
Is the school actively implementing child safe standards?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement jurisdiction-specific child safe standards as an overarching framework for student safety, including online safety.</li> <li>• Refer to jurisdictional guides and handbooks for implementation advice.</li> <li>• Access <a href="#">free child safe e-learning modules</a> and training resources available at the state and territory level.</li> </ul>		
Does the school have staff responsible for online safety?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While all members of school communities should promote online safety, assign specific roles with this responsibility.</li> <li>• Establish a dedicated online safety team that champions online safety. This team might include health and physical education staff, digital technologies staff, student wellbeing coordinators, students and parents/carers.</li> <li>• Nominate a primary and a secondary staff member to join the <a href="#">eSafety Champions Network</a>.</li> </ul>		

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Does the school have policies and procedures to prevent and respond to online safety incidents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create policies and procedures to prevent and respond to online safety incidents.</li> <li>• Refer to <a href="#">Prepare 2 - Checklist for developing effective online safety policies and procedures</a> to support good practice.</li> </ul>		
Do policies and procedures outline expected behaviours and roles of school community members when engaging online or using digital technologies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set out the school's expectations and make clear what behaviour is/is not acceptable for students, staff and families when engaging with the school community online or using digital technologies.</li> <li>• Refer to eSafety's <a href="#">Prepare 2 - Checklist for developing effective online safety policies and procedures</a> and <a href="#">Engage 5 - School charter of commitment to online safety</a> to prepare policies and procedures and support good practice.</li> </ul>		
Does the school effectively plan and assess the risks and benefits before introducing new online platforms or technologies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Endeavour to use software, online products and collaboration tools with the highest safety, privacy and security standards possible. See <a href="#">The eSafety Guide</a> for information on common social media, games, apps and sites.</li> <li>• Conduct risk assessments before using any platform or technology within the school, for school purposes or in a way that impacts the school community. Assess it for safety, privacy, security and age-appropriateness.</li> <li>• Refer to eSafety's <a href="#">Prepare 3 - New technologies risk-assessment tool</a> to assess risks and benefits before introducing new digital technologies or social media platforms.</li> <li>• Ensure that only approved apps, services and platforms are used within the school.</li> <li>• Carefully read product terms and conditions and pay special attention to how user data will be protected. Be alert to the potential for unauthorised access.</li> <li>• Be aware that parents and carers may have different levels of awareness and comfort with the type, nature and volume of learning apps used in schools.</li> </ul>		

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Does the school minimise the risks of exposure to sensitive/harmful information through actively monitoring and filtering harmful content?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate technologies to monitor and filter harmful content. These tools are often provided by the education department or sector.</li> <li>• Ensure staff understand how filtering technology works and that they allow access to age-appropriate content for educational purposes.</li> <li>• Filtering can help monitor and limit what students access online, however no filter is 100% effective. Filters or other controls should complement not replace online safety education.</li> <li>• A good practice is for the ICT Manager to provide a regular report with usage trends to the school leadership team.</li> <li>• Establish response processes that focus on safety and wellbeing when responding to instances where students have tried to access harmful content.</li> <li>• Encourage parents and carers to use parental controls, including in-app options. These must always be used in combination with other protective strategies. Refer to eSafety's <a href="#">advice on parental controls</a>.</li> </ul>		
Has the school considered how to minimise the risk of students being inappropriately contacted via email?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid simple email naming conventions (for example, using students' real names), which can make it easier for strangers to identify and contact students. Consider safer alternatives like student numbers, partial name combinations – or a blend of both.</li> <li>• Ensure monitoring and filtering tools are in place for email activities on school ICT systems.</li> <li>• Communicate to staff, parents/carers and students about the risk of inappropriate contact using school email addresses.</li> <li>• Teach students what to do if they receive unauthorised communication, including how to block unknown email addresses.</li> </ul>		

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Do policies or procedures specify who will monitor the school's social media accounts and websites, and when they will be moderated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least two members of staff should have access to school social media accounts and websites, including a member of the school leadership team. These accounts should be monitored regularly, and moderated.</li> <li>eSafety's <a href="#">Prepare 4 – Guidelines for social media use – video sharing and online collaboration</a> and school and/or education sector policies can help to support good practice.</li> <li>For the latest information on how social media age restrictions affect educators, see <a href="#">eSafety's guidance</a>.</li> </ul>		
Are there clear guidelines about the acceptable use of the school's name, logo and brand?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate guidelines about the acceptable use of the school's name, logo and brand to all members of the school community.</li> <li>eSafety's <a href="#">Prepare 4 - Guidelines for social media use - video sharing and online collaboration</a> and school and/or education sector policies can help to support good practice.</li> </ul>		

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Does the school provide information to students and their parents/ carers about how their personal information (such as names, photos, work samples or and other identifying information) will be used online?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always seek consent from students, parent/carers and staff before publishing their information online. This could be via an annual blanket consent form for regular communications such as newsletters, with specific consent sought for special events and unscheduled communications.</li> <li>• Explain how student images will be used so parents/carers and students understand what they are consenting to and who will have access to their images or information.</li> <li>• Inform parents/carers when online accounts are created for students (e.g. for resource subscriptions and learning apps, platforms and services) and share the strategies being used to protect students' identities.</li> <li>• Where possible, use only first names when publishing student information online.</li> <li>• Consider circumstances that could place a student at risk of harm if their image or information is shared. For example, where there are legal proceedings or a court order relating to child protection, custody, domestic violence or family separation.</li> <li>• Be aware of the implications of the social media age restrictions on access to social media.</li> </ul>		
Does the school have clear policies and procedures about how photos and videos of students will be managed, stored and shared?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store photos and videos of students securely with password-protected access.</li> <li>• Ensure procedures are clear, easy to follow and accessible to staff, students and parents/carers.</li> <li>• Refer to eSafety's <a href="#">Prepare 4 – Guidelines for social media use – video sharing and online collaboration</a> and education sector policies to support good practice.</li> </ul>		

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Does the school have procedures in place for responding to online safety incidents, for example serious cyberbullying or image-based abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have clear procedures in place so that if an online safety incident is reported, students and staff know what to do and where to access help.</li> <li>• Use eSafety's <a href="#">Respond</a> resources to support good practice.</li> </ul>		
Does the school engage the whole school community to create and maintain a safe and positive online environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve the whole school community in online safety, including opportunities for meaningful student participation and parent/carer engagement.</li> <li>• Use eSafety's <a href="#">Engage</a> resources for advice on involving the whole school community in online safety.</li> </ul>		
Does the school take a comprehensive approach to online safety education through curriculum and teacher professional learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support staff and educate students to have positive and safer online experiences as part of a comprehensive approach.</li> <li>• Use eSafety's <a href="#">Educate</a> resources for advice on building the online safety knowledge, skills and capabilities of the school community.</li> </ul>		
Does the school use preventative, harm minimisation and incident management strategies to support everyone involved in online incidents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools can better respond to incidents by focusing on student wellbeing, restoring relationships, taking a trauma-informed approach and having partnerships with external support services, including local police.</li> <li>• Use eSafety's <a href="#">Respond</a> resources for advice on supporting the school community after an online safety incident, including how to undertake a post-incident review.</li> </ul>		