E-Safety Policy

1. Introduction

Orchard Academy recognizes the pivotal role that digital technology plays in online education and the associated risks. This E-Safety Policy outlines our commitment to ensuring a safe and secure online learning environment for our students, staff, and community. We aim to empower individuals to use technology effectively while minimising potential risks.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect students and staff from potential online risks and harm.
- Ensure that all members of the Orchard Academy community understand their responsibilities regarding e-safety.
- Provide guidance on the appropriate use of technology and online resources in an educational context.
- Establish clear protocols for reporting and managing e-safety incidents.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Orchard Academy community, including students, staff, parents, and visitors, and covers all digital platforms and devices utilised for online education.

4. E-Safety Education

Orchard Academy is committed to fostering a culture of e-safety through education and awareness. Key components of our e-safety education program include:

- **Online Curriculum Integration**: E-safety principles are embedded within the online curriculum, teaching students about safe online practices, digital citizenship, and responsible technology use.
- **Staff Training**: Regular professional development sessions will be provided to staff to ensure they are well-informed about e-safety issues and best practices in an online learning environment.
- **Parent Engagement**: We will offer workshops and resources for parents to support their children's e-safety education at home, ensuring they understand the challenges of online learning.

5. Responsibilities

- **Leadership Team**: The Trust Board is responsible for the implementation of this policy and ensuring adequate resources for e-safety initiatives. The CEO and Executive Principal will oversee compliance and swiftly address any breaches.
- **Designated E-Safety Coordinator**: A designated member of the leadership team will oversee e-safety practices, manage incidents, and ensure the policy remains current and effective.
- **All Staff**: All staff members are expected to promote a culture of e-safety, report any concerns, and model safe online behaviours in virtual classrooms and interactions.
- **Students**: Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own e-safety, report any inappropriate behaviour, and support their peers in safe online practices.

6. Acceptable Use Policy

All users of Orchard Academy's digital platforms must adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy, which includes:

- Using technology responsibly and solely for educational purposes.
- Respecting the privacy and rights of others in online environments.
- Reporting any suspicious activity or e-safety concerns to a trusted adult.

7. Monitoring and Filtering

Orchard Academy will implement appropriate monitoring and filtering systems to protect students from accessing inappropriate content. This includes:

- Regular reviews of online engagement to identify any patterns of misuse.
- Utilising technology to filter harmful content and monitor online activities within the learning platforms.

8. Reporting and Managing Incidents

All e-safety incidents should be reported immediately to the designated E-Safety Coordinator or a member of the leadership team. Procedures for managing incidents include:

- Prompt and fair investigation of reported incidents.
- Taking appropriate actions to address the issue, including disciplinary measures if necessary.
- Documenting incidents and responses to ensure transparency and accountability.

9. Support and Resources

Orchard Academy will provide resources and support for students and staff regarding e-safety, including:

- Access to e-safety guides and materials specific to online learning.
- Information on how to report concerns and seek assistance.
- Collaboration with external agencies to enhance e-safety initiatives and awareness.

10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the leadership team and updated as necessary to reflect changes in technology, legislation, and best practices in online education. All updates will be communicated to the Orchard Academy community.

11. Conclusion

Orchard Academy is dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of our students and staff in the online learning environment. Through this E-Safety Policy, we aim to promote responsible use of technology, equip individuals with the knowledge to navigate online risks, and create a secure and enriching virtual learning experience for all.

Approved by: Management Committee of Orchard Academy
Next Review Date: September 2025