Children's Acceptable Use Policy: Use of Computers, iPads and the Internet

Introduction

Manor Farm Fun Ltd encourages the safe and appropriate use of technology to support learning, creativity, communication and exploration. This policy outlines the expectations for children and young people when accessing computers, iPads, the internet and other digital technology within setting.

Manor Farm recognises that children and young people have differing levels of understanding, communication and awareness of online risks. Staff will provide appropriate guidance, supervision and support, taking account of individual needs.

Safe Use of Technology

Children and young people are expected to:

- Use technology safely, responsibly and respectfully.
- Follow instructions and guidance provided by staff.
- Access only websites, games, applications and online content approved by staff.
- Ask a member of staff for support if they are unsure whether something is safe or appropriate.
- Treat equipment with care and respect.
- Respect the privacy and personal information of others.
- Inform a trusted adult if something online causes concern, upset or discomfort.

Internet Access

- Internet access will be appropriately supervised by staff at all times.
- Managed filtering and security systems are used to help prevent access to inappropriate or harmful online content.
- Internet activity will be monitored in accordance with Manor Farm's online safety and safeguarding procedures.
- Children and young people must not attempt to bypass filtering, security settings or access restrictions.

- Any accidental access to inappropriate, harmful or upsetting content should be reported to a member of staff immediately so that our IT Manager can be informed as soon as possible.

Manor Farm recognises that filtering systems cannot guarantee that all inappropriate content will be blocked. Staff supervision and safeguarding oversight remain essential.

Email and Online Communication

Where children and young people are provided access to our Manor Farm pupil email account, access will be appropriately managed and supported by staff.

Children and young people are expected to:

- Use the designated pupil email account appropriately and for agreed purposes.
- Keep usernames and passwords secure.
- Avoid sharing personal information, including home addresses, telephone numbers and passwords.
- Communicate politely and respectfully.
- Report any inappropriate, upsetting or threatening emails or messages to a member of staff.

Children and young people should understand that electronic communications are not necessarily private and may be subject to appropriate safeguarding or monitoring arrangements.

Social Media, Messaging and Online Gaming

Access to open social networking sites, messaging services, message boards and blogs is restricted unless specifically approved by Manor Farm for an educational purpose.

Children and young people must be supported to understand the importance of:

- Treating others respectfully online.
- Not using digital platforms to bully, threaten, upset or embarrass others.
- Respecting other people's privacy.
- Not sharing photographs, videos or personal information about others without appropriate permission.

- Reporting unwanted contact, inappropriate messages or online interactions that cause concern.

Personal Phones and Electronic Devices

Personal mobile phones, iPads and other electronic devices must be handed to the child's class lead on arrival and stored securely during the day.

Where an individual need has been identified, access to a personal device may be agreed by staff to support communication, emotional regulation or wellbeing. For example, a child may be permitted to use their device to listen to music or contact a parent or carer.

Any agreed use will take place in an appropriate designated space, with staff support, and the device will be returned for secure storage afterwards.

Children and young people must not take photographs, videos or recordings of other children, young people or staff.

Children and young people are not permitted to access Manor Farm's internal Wi-Fi network.

Video Calls and Online Meetings

Video calls and online meetings may only take place where agreed by parents or carers and authorised by the Senior Leadership Team, for example, to engage in an external therapy session as agreed within the young person's educational package by the Local Authority or as part of the young person's EHC Plan annual review.

Such activities will:

- Use an approved digital platform.
- Be appropriately supervised by a member of staff.
- Take place in a suitable environment.
- Be managed in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements.
- Only be recorded where there is an authorised and legitimate reason.

Responding to Online Safety Concerns

Children and young people are encouraged to seek help from a trusted adult whenever they encounter something online that makes them feel worried, uncomfortable, upset or unsafe.

This includes:

- Exposure to inappropriate or upsetting content.
- Unkind, threatening or bullying messages.
- Unwanted contact from another person.
- Requests for personal information, photographs or videos.
- Attempts to encourage secrecy or inappropriate communication.
- Accidental access to restricted or unsuitable websites.

Staff will respond to concerns sensitively and in accordance with Manor Farm's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Children and young people will be encouraged to report concerns without fear of being blamed or discouraged from seeking help.

Failure to Follow the Policy

Where a child or young person does not follow these expectations, staff will respond in a supportive, therapeutic and proportionate manner, helping them understand the potential risks and make safer choices.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the concern, access to a device, website or online service may be restricted or subject to additional supervision. More serious or repeated concerns will be referred to the Leadership Team and managed in accordance with safeguarding and behaviour procedures.

Manor Farm's priority is to promote positive digital experiences while maintaining the safety, wellbeing and protection of all children, young people and staff.

Curriculum and Teaching

Online safety education is incorporated into Manor Farm's PSHE and computing curriculum, alongside informal, responsive discussions and learning opportunities arising naturally throughout the day.

Teaching is adapted to reflect the age, developmental stage, individual needs and understanding of each child or young person. The aim is to develop the knowledge, confidence and skills needed to use technology safely, responsibly and appropriately.

Children and young people will be supported to develop an understanding of:

- **Personal information and security:** The importance of keeping usernames, passwords and personal information private and not sharing these with others.
- **Acceptable use:** What constitutes appropriate and inappropriate internet use, including the expectations and boundaries for accessing online content.
- **Online research:** How to search for, locate, retrieve and evaluate information effectively, including recognising unreliable or misleading content.
- **Safe searching:** How to carry out online searches safely and reduce the risk of accessing inappropriate or harmful material.
- **Digital content and publishing:** The responsible and appropriate use of the internet to create, publish and share information.
- **Critical awareness:** The importance of questioning and checking the accuracy, reliability and suitability of information encountered online.
- **Online communication:** How to communicate safely and respectfully through digital platforms and understand the potential risks of online interactions.
- **Reporting concerns:** What to do if they encounter inappropriate content, unwanted contact, online abuse or anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- **Cyberbullying:** How to recognise, respond to and report bullying or harassment occurring through the internet, social media, messaging or other digital platforms.

Manor Farm aims to ensure that children and young people understand how to seek help from a trusted adult and feel confident to raise concerns without fear of blame or judgement.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance, technology or safeguarding practice require an update.

Policy Last Reviewed: 10th November 2026

Next Review Due: 10th November 2027

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