



Bacon Garth Primary School

SEXTING POLICY

Person Responsible for Implementation and Monitoring:

Headteacher, E-Safety Co-ordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead

Introduction

'Sexting' is one of a number of risk-taking behaviours associated with the use of digital devices, social media and / or the internet. It is accepted that children experiment and challenge boundaries and therefore the risks associated with 'online' activity can never be completely eliminated. Sexting is also referred to as 'youth produced sexual imagery'.

At Bacon Garth Primary School, we take a proactive approach in helping students and staff understand, assess, manage and avoid risks associated with online activity. We recognise our duty of care to the pupils involved in such activity, as well as the responsibility to report such behaviours where legal or safeguarding boundaries are crossed. The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures for dealing with such issues, in line with UK Council for Child Internet Safety Guidance 'Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people.' There are a number of definitions for sexting; many professionals consider this to be 'sending or posting sexually suggestive images, including nude or semi-nude photographs, via mobiles or over the internet.'

For the purpose of this policy, sexting is defined simply as:

"Images or videos generated by children under the age of 18 or of children under the age of 18 that are indecent or of a sexual nature."

Sexting is illegal, as it constitutes possessing and / or sharing an indecent image of a child. The relevant legislation is the Protection of Children Act (1978) and the Sexual Offences Act (2003).

Although the production of such imagery will likely take place outside of school, the issues often manifest themselves in school and we therefore need to be able to respond quickly and confidently to ensure that children are safeguarded, supported and educated. According to UKCIS, "Most young people aren't sharing sexual imagery of themselves the potential risks are significant."



Summary of Required Actions

When an incident involving youth produced sexual imagery comes to the school's attention:

- The incident will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy DSL as soon as possible.
- The DSL / Deputy DSL should hold an initial review meeting with appropriate school staff. The purpose of this is to establish the facts and assess the risks.
- There should be subsequent interviews with the child(ren) involved, if appropriate.
- Parents should be informed at an early stage and involved in the process, unless there is a good reason to believe that involving parents would put the child at risk of harm.
- At any point in the process, if there is a concern that the young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm, a referral should be made to Saph, the local social care team and / or the police.

Policy Review

This policy is based on guidance from UKCIS. It will be reviewed and updated regularly, to meet the changing needs of the school and in light of any new initiatives / guidance; at the minimum this will be annually.