

## EDUCATION & YOUTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Thursday, 1 July 2021
<b>Report Subject</b>	Social Media & Internet Safety
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Education
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Officer (Education and Youth)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Operational

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the majority of children and young people today the internet is an integral part to their lives. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to increased time online for everyone and has also highlighted the risks posed to children and young people online by harmful activity and content.

The safety and welfare of learners is paramount, with safeguarding an integral principle of digital learning. The overarching aim is to help protect children and young people from illegal, harmful and false content on the internet and to promote safe, responsible and considerate behaviour online. This is reflected in the approach driven by Welsh Government in their guidance, the Curriculum for Wales and through the provision of resources on Hwb. Locally the coordination of safeguarding training, policies, procedures and self-evaluation tools enables the Council to monitor schools implementation of the guidance and provide support.

This report has been developed to provide members with an update on the Portfolio's Social Media and Internet Safety policy and provision following the previous report given in 2019.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That members receive the report on social media and internet safety and confirm they have received an appropriate level of assurance about the education offer to schools in relation to online safety, including social media.
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## **REPORT DETAILS**

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EXPLAINING THE NATIONAL CONTEXT</b>
1.01	<p>The 'Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes report' 2020/21 by Ofcom explores media use, attitudes and understanding among children and young people aged 5-15 years, as well as media access and use by young children aged 3-4 years. Below is a summary of media use among 5-15s in Wales in 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 62% have their own tablet and 62% their own smartphone</li><li>• To go online – 70% use a laptop, 67% a tablet and 67% a smartphone</li><li>• 48% watch live broadcast TV and 90% watch video on demand content (this includes subscription services including Netflix and broadcast catch up services including BBCiplayer and websites like you tube and vimeo.</li><li>• 69% play games online</li><li>• 51% use social media apps/sites</li><li>• 65% use messaging apps / sites</li><li>• 98% use video sharing platforms (VSP)</li><li>• 38% use live streaming apps/sites</li><li>• 71% are aware of potential vlogger endorsements (12-15s who go online).</li><li>• 49% are aware of ad placements in search engines (8-15s who go online and use search engines.</li><li>• 30% have seen worrying or nasty content online (8-15s who go online).</li></ul> <p>Among the findings nationally, almost all children aged 8-15 years who went online reported that they had received some sort of information or advice about online safety and said they would tell someone if they saw something worrying online. Among 12-15 year olds, comparable proportions had received this from either a parent or teacher (around eight in ten); while those aged 8-11years were more likely to have had advice from their parent (87% vs. 80% teacher). This information is very encouraging as it provides some level of assurance that primary and secondary schools are delivering on key aspects outlined in the Digital Competency Framework (DCF) and also many parents are also providing support and advice.</p>
1.02	<p><b>School Health Research Network (SHRN)</b> The School Health Research Network (SHRN) conduct a national health and wellbeing survey every two years with secondary school aged children in</p>

Wales. The most recent survey was conducted during the Autumn term 2019; 6733 pupils from all 11 secondary schools in Flintshire participated in the survey. This is higher than the first survey undertaken in Autumn 2017 which had 6585 participants.

Following the survey, schools received an individual report of their findings in Spring 2020, and members of the Healthy Schools team were able to develop one page profiles summarising each school's data and provide support in the development of action plans accordingly. The SHRN County report was issued May 2020 and the County SHRN Action Plan 2019-2024 has been updated to reflect the latest data. The implementation of this is overseen by the Flintshire Emotional Wellbeing Steering Group.

Survey questions relevant to this report include: cyberbullying, explicit images and online contact with friends they got to know through the internet.

**Students who have ever sent someone a sexually explicit image of themselves:** on average 10% of Flintshire learners reported that they have sent a sexually explicit image of themselves, which is the same as the national average. This is 2% lower than in 2017.

**Students who have been cyberbullied in the past couple of months\*:** (\*Includes students who have been bullied once or more in the past couple of months): On average 20% of Flintshire learners reported that they had been cyberbullied in the past couple of months which is 2% higher than the national average of 18%. However, this is lower than in 2017 when 23% reported that they had been cyber bullied.

**Students who have online contact almost all the time throughout the day with friends they got to know through the internet:** on average 5% of Flintshire learners reported that they had online contact almost all the time throughout the day with friends they got to know through the internet. This is 1% lower than the national average. The term 'online contact' in the context of this survey question relates to 'sending and receiving text messages, emoticons, and photo, video or audio messages through instant messaging (e.g. WhatsApp, Snapchat), social network sites (e.g. Facebook) or e-mail (on a computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone)'. There is no comparative data for this question as it was not asked in 2019.

The next survey will take place between September – December 2021 and all Flintshire secondary schools are encouraged to participate. Reports will be available in Spring/Summer 2022.

A new digital system for reporting bullying incidents has been developed taking into account the Welsh Government's 'Rights, respect, and equality: Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools 2019'. This will be in place from September 2021 for Flintshire primary and secondary schools. The new online system will provide a more accurate picture of bullying within schools in its various forms and how schools are addressing concerns reported.

1.03

**UK Government: The Online Safety Bill**

	<p>In April 2019 the UK Government produced The Online Harms White Paper which set out the plans for a package of measures to keep UK internet users safe online and managing online harms. As part of the Online Harms White Paper, a regulatory framework would be introduced. This would include a mandatory ‘duty of care’ that would require companies ‘in scope’ to take reasonable steps to keep their users safe and tackle illegal and harmful activity on their services. The duty of care would be overseen by an independent regulator that would have effective enforcement powers to ensure that companies are compliant with the applicable Codes.</p> <p>The Online Harms White Paper was consulted on in Summer 2019 and the UK Government published an initial response in Feb 2020. Thereafter a full Government response was published in December 2020. The consultation highlighted the urgent need for action to protect users, particularly children, from significant harm. Companies and user groups welcomed the Government’s intention to provide regulatory clarity and certainty. Legislation and regulation in the UK will form only part of the response required in order to tackle online harms. Notably in the full Government response, it confirms that Ofcom will be named as the regulator in legislation, and sets out the intended policy position. It is anticipated that The Online Safety Bill will be ready in 2021.</p>
1.04	<p><b>Welsh Government: Action Plan</b></p> <p>The first national Online Safety Action Plan for Children and Young People in Wales was launched in July 2018 and sets out how the Welsh Government would work with teachers, parents and carers, learners and partners to keep children and young people safe online. The action plan provided a focus for the Government’s online safety work, building on the achievements over the last few years including the Hwb Online Safety Zone (now referred to as the Keeping Safe Online Zone) and the 360 degree safe Cymru online safety self-assessment tool. In 2019 this action plan was updated and additional actions added. The 2020 action plan has broadened the scope to account for the areas of cyber resilience and data protection and provides a strategic vision to keep children and young people safe online in Wales.</p>
1.05	<p><b>Welsh Government Guidance</b></p> <p>During the COVID-19 outbreak, the Welsh Government developed dedicated guidance ‘Live-streaming and video conferencing: safeguarding principles and practice’. The guidance was issued in May 2020 and outlined key considerations for safe practice when live-streaming or video conferencing to support remote learning. The guidance formed part of the continuity of learning ‘Stay Safe. Stay Learning.’ programme and is aimed at maintained schools and settings in Wales. When schools decide to use live-streaming or video-conferencing, governing bodies, head teachers and staff must have full regard to national safeguarding guidance and local safeguarding policies.</p> <p>Also published in 2020 was the revised ‘Keeping Learners Safe’ guidance which outlines the role of local authorities and governing bodies in</p>

	<p>safeguarding children under the Education Act 2002. The guidance relates directly to the new Wales Safeguarding Procedures and duties under The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Notably it also includes a Safeguarding Audit Tool the purpose of which is to support all schools to review their safeguarding arrangements. The audit tool can help schools to identify strengths and weaknesses in their safeguarding arrangements and to ensure they are exercising their legal safeguarding obligations in line with the Keeping Learners Safe statutory guidance. This tool will form the basis of the Council's monitoring obligations going forward. Schools' Acceptable Use policies will be monitored as part of the safeguarding self-evaluation process.</p> <p>The 'Sharing Nudes and Semi-nudes Guidance: Responding to incidents and safeguarding children and young people' was also published in December 2020. The advice aims to support schools in developing procedures to respond to incidents involving sharing nudes or semi-nudes and signposts to resources and sources of support. This guidance replaces 'Sexting: Responding to incidents and safeguarding learners' published in 2017.</p>
1.06	<p><b>Curriculum for Wales</b></p> <p>The Curriculum for Wales guidance was published in January 2020 and aims to help schools develop their own curriculum. Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competence will be statutory responsibilities across all areas of learning and experience within Curriculum for Wales when it is rolled out from September 2022. The Digital Competency Framework (DCF) was the first element of the new curriculum for Wales to be made available in 2016. It was developed by practitioners from Digital Pioneer Schools, drawing on research, including consideration of existing regional and international digital frameworks.</p> <p>The DCF sets out the digital skills to be attained by learners aged between 3 and 16-plus across four strands: Citizenship: Interacting and collaborating: Producing: Data and Computational Thinking. The Citizenship Strand focuses on developing and applying critical thinking skills and strategies. It includes specific elements focused on online behaviour, cyberbullying together with health and well-being.</p>
1.07	<p><b>Hwb</b></p> <p>Hwb is the Welsh Government's programme of action for improving the use of digital technology for learning and teaching in schools. Hwb includes multiple strands of work e.g. investment in broadband, education technology (EdTech) in-school infrastructure and the Hwb platform comprising of multiple cloud services. Hwb aims to provide learners, families, education practitioners, professionals and governors with the latest resources, information and guidance to enhance their digital resilience. The Keeping Safe Online Zone on Hwb has been designed and developed to support online safety in education across Wales. It provides an extensive suite of up-to-date bilingual resources, Welsh Government guidance and links to further sources of support on a range of online safety issues.</p>

1.08	<p><b>360 Degree Safe Cymru</b></p> <p>360 Degree Safe Cymru is an online safety self-review tool for schools in Wales which is part of Hwb. It allows schools to review their online safety policy and practice and benchmark their progress against other schools nationally. 360 Degree Safe Cymru was updated in March 2021 to make the tool easier and quicker to use.</p> <p>The review takes schools through each aspect of online safety, helping them to collaborate, report, and progress. The 360 Degree Safe platform is used by 95% of schools in Wales and in Flintshire 68/78 schools are registered (increasing from 61 in 2019)</p> <p>360 Safe Cymru is split into a number of aspects which cover the main areas of online safety in a school, e.g. responsibilities, policy, communications, technical security, etc. Each aspect offers five level statements, ranging from 'nothing in place' to the aspirational practice. Included for each aspect are target levels reflecting good online safety practice, and included for every single level are suggested improvement actions that describe how schools might reach the next level. Schools are encouraged to have a group of users, alongside a nominated lead, so that they can work collaboratively on the review, bringing together many areas of expertise.</p> <p>Analysis of 360 Safe Cymru, shows that schools in Wales report that the strongest aspects of their online safety provision are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• filtering and monitoring</li> <li>• policy scope</li> <li>• policy development</li> <li>• acceptable use</li> <li>• digital and video images.</li> </ul> <p>While areas for improvement are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community</li> <li>• impact of the online safety policy and practice</li> <li>• staff training</li> <li>• governor education</li> <li>• self-evaluation.</li> </ul> <p>The data shows that schools perform better in areas of policy and where services (such as filtering) are provided for them. Other areas are more difficult to develop and embed, but often lead to the most effective practice.</p> <p>As of June 2021, 29 of the 68 registered schools in Flintshire have completed all the aspects of the 360 Degree Safe programme.</p>
1.09	<p><b>All Wales School Liaison Core Programme</b></p> <p>The All Wales School Liaison Core Programme (AWSLCP) is a partnership between the Welsh Government and the four Welsh Police Forces. School Community Police Officers (SCPO) deliver a programme of lessons in</p>

	<p>schools and provide a variety of supportive school policing and safeguarding activities. In addition to the core program of lessons there are variety of themed lessons schools can choose for delivery. Lessons relating to online safety include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay SMART (Internet Safety)</li> <li>• Be cyber safe (Cyberbullying)</li> <li>• Risk Pics (Sexting)</li> <li>• Look who's talking (Grooming)</li> <li>•</li> </ul> <p>During the Covid-19 pandemic many officers were able to provide delivery online and face to face lessons have since returned. Officers provide an invaluable source of support to schools in dealing with a wide variety of issues including those online.</p>
1.10	<p><b>Estyn</b></p> <p>The new inspection framework is set to be introduced in September 2021 and will reflect the new curriculum and arrangements for self-evaluation. At present no date has been confirmed for when school inspections will resume.</p>

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	The provision for support for schools comes predominately through GwE, the regional school improvement service and Hwb.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
3.01	<p>The risk for the Council is the potential to breach statutory legislation related to safeguarding and the wellbeing of children. This includes the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2020. There is also potential for reputational damage and negative press coverage if there are significant breaches of policy involving learners or Flintshire employees in relation to internet and/or social media activity and findings from Estyn Inspections.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the Council having named officers with specific responsibilities for safeguarding in schools. The Council also provides firewall and web filtering services to schools via a service level agreement. A rolling safeguarding training programme for head teachers / designated safeguarding leads is in place. The dissemination of relevant information to schools is undertaken, alongside the monitoring of self-evaluations and annual reporting by schools on the implementation of relevant policies including Safeguarding, and Acceptable Use.</p>

<b>4.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
4.01	None.

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	None.

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<p><b>Children and parents: Media use and attitudes report 2020</b>  <a href="https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/217825/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2020-21.pdf">https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0025/217825/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-report-2020-21.pdf</a></p> <p><b>School Health Research Network National Report 2019/20</b>  <a href="https://www.shrn.org.uk/national-report-2019-20/">https://www.shrn.org.uk/national-report-2019-20/</a></p> <p><b>The Online Harms White Paper: Full government response to the consultation December 2020</b>  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/online-harms-white-paper/outcome/online-harms-white-paper-full-government-response">https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/online-harms-white-paper/outcome/online-harms-white-paper-full-government-response</a></p> <p><b>Enhancing digital resilience in education: An action plan to protect children and young people online – summary of actions</b>  <a href="https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/342ef42c-7717-4e5b-b72f-646a2d774518/enhancing-digital-resilience-in-education-an-action-plan-to-protect-children-and-young-people-online-summary-of-actions.pdf">https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/342ef42c-7717-4e5b-b72f-646a2d774518/enhancing-digital-resilience-in-education-an-action-plan-to-protect-children-and-young-people-online-summary-of-actions.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Live-streaming and video-conferencing: safeguarding principles and practice In September 2020</b>  <a href="https://hwb.gov.wales/zones/keeping-safe-online/live-streaming-and-video-conferencing-safeguarding-principles-and-practice/">https://hwb.gov.wales/zones/keeping-safe-online/live-streaming-and-video-conferencing-safeguarding-principles-and-practice/</a></p> <p><b>Keeping Learners Safe Guidance 2020</b>  <a href="https://gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe">https://gov.wales/keeping-learners-safe</a></p> <p><b>Sharing nudes and semi-nudes Guidance 2020</b>  <a href="https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/6ad01b82-3a2c-4bf4-bd21-f5bac42655a4/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-guidance-for-education-settings-in-wales-final-english-011220.pdf">https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/6ad01b82-3a2c-4bf4-bd21-f5bac42655a4/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-guidance-for-education-settings-in-wales-final-english-011220.pdf</a></p> <p><b>All Wales School Liaison Core Programme Lesson Matrix 2020/21</b>  <a href="https://schoolbeat.cymru/uploads/media/2020-21-Lesson-Matrix-SchoolBeat.pdf">https://schoolbeat.cymru/uploads/media/2020-21-Lesson-Matrix-SchoolBeat.pdf</a></p>

<b>7.00</b>	<b>CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS</b>
7.01	<p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Claire Sinnott, Learning Advisor – Health, Wellbeing &amp; Safeguarding</p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> 01352 704054</p> <p><b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:Claire.sinnott@flintshire.gov.uk">Claire.sinnott@flintshire.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>8.00</b>	<b>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</b>
	<p><b>AWSLCP</b> The All Wales School Liaison Core Programme</p> <p><b>DCF</b> Digital Competency Framework</p> <p><b>Hwb</b> <i>Hwb</i> is a platform with online tools and resources to support education in Wales. <a href="https://hwb.gov.wales/">https://hwb.gov.wales/</a></p> <p><b>SHRN</b> School Health Research Network <a href="https://www.shrn.org.uk/">https://www.shrn.org.uk/</a></p> <p><b>360 degree safe</b> <b>Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.</b> A self-review tool to help schools review their online safety policy and practice. <a href="https://360safe.org.uk">https://360safe.org.uk</a></p>