



Acceptable Use Policy (Including Remote Online Learning & Communication)

The Avenue

Approved by:	Clare Cragg, Principal
Approved:	May 2025
Next review:	May 2027

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the expectations and acceptable use of technology, communication tools, and remote learning platforms within The Avenue, a specialist independent school for children and young people with autism. It ensures that the use of such technologies promotes a safe, inclusive, and effective learning environment in line with safeguarding duties and the Independent School Standards (ISS), especially regarding:

- **Safeguarding welfare, health, and safety of pupils (Part 3);**
- **Ensuring appropriate premises and accommodation for pupils (Part 5);**
- **Promoting pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare.**

2. Aims

- To safeguard pupils, staff, and stakeholders when using digital technology.
- To outline safe and responsible behaviour when accessing school ICT systems and remote learning platforms.
- To promote digital literacy and cyber safety in alignment with individual needs, including those of autistic pupils.
- To meet statutory duties under ISS, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), and the Equality Act 2010.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All school-provided digital devices and platforms.
- Personal devices when used for school purposes (e.g., BYOD with prior approval).
- All remote learning tools, including video conferencing, emails, and online learning environments.
- All staff, pupils, parents/carers, contractors, and visitors involved in school-related communication.

4. Responsibilities

School Leadership

- Ensure technology use complies with legal and regulatory frameworks.
- Provide staff training in safe online teaching practices and safeguarding.
- Monitor online activity and respond to breaches.

Staff

- Model responsible and professional use of ICT and communication tools.
- Ensure all remote learning sessions are safe, accessible, and inclusive.
- Report any breaches, cyberbullying, or safeguarding concerns immediately.

Pupils

- Follow school rules on using digital devices, both in school and remotely.
- Use respectful language in all digital communications.
- Avoid sharing personal information or logging in using others' accounts.

Parents/Carers

- Support children in adhering to this policy.
- Ensure appropriate supervision during remote sessions.
- Report concerns or inappropriate online activity.

5. Acceptable Use Guidelines

A. General ICT Use

- Only use school systems for educational purposes.
- Do not install unauthorised software or change system settings.
- Protect log-in credentials and report suspected breaches.

B. Remote Online Learning – The levels of accessibility will vary due to the needs of the children - complex autism and co-occurring conditions.

- All remote sessions must be planned, recorded (where appropriate), and safeguarded in line with KCSIE.
- Pupils should participate from a quiet, appropriate environment (not from bedrooms where possible).
- Communication must remain professional; pupils should dress appropriately.
- Sessions must only be conducted via approved platforms (e.g., MS Teams, Google Classroom, Zoom) and accessed via school accounts.

C. Digital Communication

- School email should only be used for school-related communication.
- Staff must never communicate with pupils using personal accounts or social media.
- Pupils and parents/carers should direct queries via official communication channels.
- All messages should be respectful and appropriate to the learning environment.

D. Online Safety and Cyberbullying

- Bullying, harassment, or exploitation of any kind online will not be tolerated.
- Any such incident will be managed through the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies and may involve external safeguarding agencies.

6. Data Protection & Privacy

All users must:

- Follow GDPR and Data Protection policies when handling personal information.
- Not share images, videos, or personal data without consent.
- Understand that monitoring and filtering systems are in place for safety and compliance.

7. Reasonable Adjustments

Recognising the diverse communication and sensory needs of pupils with autism:

- Support will be provided for pupils to access and understand technology safely.
- Communication platforms may be adapted (e.g., visual timetables, simplified UI).
- Staff will receive training in digital accessibility for autistic learners.

8. Breaches of Policy

Any breach of this policy will be taken seriously and may result in:

- Restriction or withdrawal of technology privileges.
- Disciplinary action (staff or pupils).
- Referral to safeguarding leads or external authorities as appropriate.

9. Policy Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/Senior Leadership Team to reflect updates in technology, safeguarding guidance, and ISS compliance.