

Oastlers School receives award for Online Safety

An Assessor from the South West Grid for Learning recently visited Oastlers School to review the school's online safety provision. The Assessor met school staff, parents and carers, Governors and learners and was pleased to find that the school provides a high level of protection for users of the new technologies.

The South West Grid for Learning Trust provides the internet connection and a range of other services to schools across the SW region and is in the forefront of national developments in online safety. To enhance these services, they have developed a tool to help schools address online safety issues, not least the changes to Ofsted inspections, which include a stronger focus on safeguarding. The online tool allows schools to evaluate their online safety policy and practice and then suggests how the school might do more to protect young people and staff.

To apply for the 360 degree safe Online Safety Mark, schools have to reach a series of benchmark levels when they complete the online self review. The evidence is then verified by a visit from experienced Assessors.

The prime benefit of using the review and applying for the Online Safety Mark is that it does not focus on the individual aspects of online safety such as technological solutions, but instead it online safety into school policy and the curriculum, challenging teachers and managers in the school to think about their provision and its continual evolution.

Schools are expected to show that they have provided a high standard of online safety education and awareness for all staff , learners and also for parents and carers, to ensure that these users of the new technologies can be safe online – whether they are in school, in their homes or out and about using mobile phones or other handheld devices.

Following their visit the Assessor(s) reported that:

'The schools approach to online safety is exemplary and views safeguarding and learner welfare as paramount concerns'.

'Learners have an excellent understanding of all the major issues regarding online safety and know how to report any incident that they are concerned about'.

'The school has an outstanding reporting procedure for incidents'.

Ron Richards, Lead Assessor for the 360 degree safe Online Safety Mark congratulated the school on its success and commented that it was re-assuring to know that the school had put a lot of thought and effort into improving the on-line safety of the staff and young people, by addressing these important safeguarding issues.