Scrutiny Review of Online Strategies in Schools - Executive Response and Action Plan

Recommendations	Response/Actions	Lead	Timeline
Recommendation 1 - That Council work with schools that do not currently have an online safety strategy to develop this policy, providing advice and guidance and signposting to resources online where appropriate (paragraph 3.6).	Response: Schools are expected by DfE/Ofsted to have online safety policies and in London LGfL have model policies for schools to customise as they wish. Actions: CSF Department will request copies of online safety policies from all schools and engage with schools which currently do not comply. Schools will be asked to examine online safety policies as part of their annual safeguarding audits	SMISS Team School Improvement Service	Nov 15 Annual review
Recommendation 2 – That the council and schools provide more regular training for parents and carers to educate them on the risks that young people face, how to manage these and on the safe use of new technologies and discuss what training and awareness raising is required/appropriate, for example, bulletins (paragraph 4.7).	Response: CSF Department already offers this training to schools – in current year 6 sessions have been provided and 4 are already booked. Action: CSF Department will remind schools of training offer and encourage take-up. Termly online safety bulletin to be sent to schools.	SMISS Team	Ongoing
Recommendation 3 – That schools and the council equip children and their families to remain safe online by signposting to, and providing, information and resources on new and potential risks to young people when online (paragraph 4.7).	Response: CSF Department have produced an online safety booklet for parents/pupils. Action: CSF Department will provide updates for booklet on emerging risks – eg radicalisation	SMISS Team	Ongoing

	via internet. Schools to be strongly encouraged to add ParentInfo (CEOP, Parentzone) icon with link and or RSS feed to school websites.		
Recommendation 4 – That schools brief new students on the positives and negatives surrounding the use of the internet, for example, profiles on social media sites and potential impact on future employment and educational opportunities, when they sign up to the schools acceptable user agreement (paragraph 4.10).	Response: See response to rec 3 above. Additionally schools have Acceptable Use policies and expect teachers, parents and pupils to explicitly agree the terms. Action: CSF Department will continue to raise the profile of schools' role in advising pupils of safe use of internet.	School Improvement Service	Ongoing
Recommendation 5 – That Cabinet engage with the council's corporate communications team to consider how best to raise awareness of online safety issues and how schools and parents can best support young people when online (paragraph 4.10).	Response: To date, there has been no formal corporate communications strategy in connection with online safety for children and young people. Action: CSF Department will ask corporate communications team to develop and implement online safety communications campaign/strategy during 2016-17.	Commissioning, Strategy and Performance Division	During 2016-17 corporate service planning process
Recommendation 6 – That Cabinet explore the use of existing volunteers in libraries being asked to include raising awareness amongst parents and young people on online safety issues and measures to their role (paragraph 4.10).	Response: Libraries offer free BYOD (bring your own device) Wi-Fi access to library members as well as providing internet access from public access library computers. Equipping library staff and volunteers with advisory skills would appear sensible. Action: Meeting with Head of Libraries has already been arranged to progress this recommendation.	Commissioning, Strategy and Performance	Nov 15

		Division	
Recommendation 7 - That Cabinet identify schools that are exemplars of good practice in relation to online safety to provide peer support to schools that require guidance, advice and support on online safety issues or policy paragraph 4.10).	Response: CSF Department already promotes the exemplar model in the context of school improvement. To extend the use of the model to incorporate online safety appears sensible. Action: CSF Department will encourage Merton Education Partnership to focus on the issue of online safety in their broader agenda and will encourage exemplar school (s) to come forward.	School Improvement Service	Ongoing
Recommendation 8 – All schools should be encouraged to undertake the safety audit developed by the council annually to ensure that their online safety strategies and measures are effective (paragraph 4.13).	Response: See recommendation one action: Schools will be asked to examine online safety policies as part of their annual safeguarding audits	School Improvement Service	Annual review
Recommendation 9 – That schools notify the council's MASH team regarding any safeguarding issues concerning online safety and that the MASH team analyse that data to determine if any vulnerable groups or demographics require additional support to manage online risks. This should feed into schools online safety policies and action plans (paragraph 6.18).	Response: Schools are already expected to operate within London-wide and local safeguarding procedures and to routinely refer to MASH any safeguarding concerns including in connection with online safety. Active commitment to partnership working is a requirement of the new Ofsted school inspection framework. Action: MASH team to be asked to report any trend data to School Improvement Service	MASH/School Improvement Service	Quarterly
Recommendation 10 – That the council encourage schools to include online safety on every school council meeting agenda, as a standard item, to enable young people to raise any issues or concerns and for schools to then respond appropriately (paragraph 7.3).	Response: It is agreed that open communication in schools about online safety issues is inherently helpful for both pupils and school leaders.		

	Action: CSF Department will encourage Merton Education Partnership to raise the profile of the issue of online safety in their broader safeguarding agenda and to engage with Merton schools accordingly.	School Improvement Service	Ongoing
Recommendation 11 - That Cabinet explore, with schools, the possibility of rolling out existing mechanisms to enable young people to raise concerns anonymously in the first instance to then allow a decision to be taken on how best to respond paragraph 7.3).	Response: Schools already have mechanisms in place to support anonymous raising of concerns eg re bullying. Action: CSF Department will encourage schools to use existing channels for anonymous concerns re online safety issues.	School Improvement Service	Ongoing
Recommendation 12 – That schools encourage young people to become online safety champions and to provide support and/or mentor other pupils to provide advice and guidance on any online safety issues they are encountering (paragraph 7.8).	Response: Peer support/championing models are often seen as more attractive to young people than alternative approaches led by adults. This recommendation, therefore, appears sensible. Action: CSF Department will engage with schools and promote a peer online safety champion model.	School Improvement Service	Ongoing