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Online/E-safety Policy

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12. **Policy Outline:**

Online and e-safety is an integral part of safeguarding. Accordingly, this policy is written in line with ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ 2021 (KCSIE) and other statutory documents; it is designed to sit alongside the school’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will take lead responsibility for any online safety issues and concerns and follow the school’s safeguarding and child protection procedures.

*This policy aims to:*

* Set out expectations for all online behaviour, attitudes and activities and use of digital technology (including when devices are offline)
* Help all stakeholders to recognise that online/digital behaviour standards (including social media activity) must be upheld beyond the confines of the school gates and school day, and regardless of device or platform
* Facilitate the safe, responsible and respectful use of technology to support teaching & learning, increase attainment and prepare children and young people for the risks and opportunities of today’s and tomorrow’s digital world, to survive and thrive online
* Help school staff working with children to understand their roles and responsibilities to work safely and responsibly with technology and the online world:
* for the protection and benefit of the children and young people in their care, and
* for their own protection, minimising misplaced or malicious allegations and to better understand their own standards and practice
* for the benefit of the school, supporting the school ethos, aims and objectives, and protecting the reputation of the school and profession
* Establish clear structures by which online misdemeanours will be treated, and procedures to follow where there are doubts or concerns.

This policy applies to all members of the Valley Gardens School Community (including staff, volunteers, contractors, pupils, parents/carers, visitors and community users) who have access to our digital technology, networks and systems, whether on-site or remotely, and at any time.

1. **Key Roles**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Headteacher | * Oversee the activities of the designated safeguarding lead and ensure that the DSL responsibilities listed in the section below are being followed and fully supported. * Ensure that policies and procedures are followed by all staff |
| Designated Safeguarding Lead | * Take lead responsibility for Child Protection and Safeguarding (including online safety). * Take day to day responsibility for online safety issues and be aware of the potential for serious child protection concerns * Ensure all staff are aware of the procedures that need to be followed in the event of an online safety incident, and that these are logged in the same way as any other safeguarding incident * Review and update this policy, other online safety documents (e.g. Acceptable Use Policies) and the strategy on which they are based (in harmony with policies for behaviour, safeguarding, Prevent and others) and submit for review to the headteacher |
| Online Safety Coordinator | * Ensure that online safety education is embedded across the curriculum and beyond, in wider school life * Liaise with school technical, pastoral, and support staff as appropriate * Oversee and discuss ‘appropriate filtering and monitoring’ |
| Safeguarding Governor & Governors | * Have regular strategic reviews with the online-safety coordinator / DSL * Approve this policy and strategy and subsequently review its effectiveness * Through review, ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place. |
| Head of Computing | * Oversee the delivery of the online safety element of the Computing curriculum in accordance with the national curriculum * Work closely with the DSL and all other staff to ensure an understanding of the issues, approaches and messaging within Computing * Collaborate with technical staff and others responsible for ICT use in school to ensure a common and consistent approach, in line with acceptable-use agreements, including remote learning agreements. |
| Network Manager | * Keep up to date with the school’s online safety policy and technical information in order to effectively carry out their online safety role and to inform and update others as relevant * Support and advise on the implementation of ‘appropriate filtering and monitoring’ as decided by the DSL and senior management team * Maintain up-to-date documentation of the school’s online security and technical procedures * Monitor the use of school technology, online platforms and social media presence and that any misuse/attempted misuse is identified and reported in line with school policy |
| PSHE/SMSC Coordinator | * Embed consent, mental wellbeing, healthy relationships and staying safe online into the PSHE/ Relationships Education curriculum, complementing the existing computing curriculum – and how to use technology safely, responsibly and respectfully. Lessons will also cover how to keep personal information private, and help young people navigate the virtual world, challenge harmful content and balance online and offline worlds. |
| Other staff | * Read and follow this policy in conjunction with the school’s main child protection and safeguarding policy * Record online-safety incidents in the same way as any safeguarding incident and report in accordance with school procedures. * Notify the DSL if policy does not reflect practice in your school and follow escalation procedures if concerns are not promptly acted upon * Whenever overseeing the use of technology (devices, the internet, remote learning, new technology such as augmented reality, etc) in school or setting as homework tasks, encourage sensible use, monitor what pupils are doing and consider potential dangers and the age appropriateness of websites (ask your DSL what appropriate filtering and monitoring policies are in place) * To carefully supervise and guide pupils when engaged in learning activities involving online technology (including, remote learning, extra-curricular and extended school activities if relevant), supporting them with search skills, critical thinking (e.g. fake news), age appropriate materials and signposting, and legal issues such as copyright and data law * Encourage pupils to follow their acceptable use policy, including the remote learning responsible user agreement for pupils, remind them about it and enforce school sanctions * Notify the DSL of new trends and issues before they become a problem * Take a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and low-level sexual harassment * Receive regular updates from the DSL and have a healthy curiosity for online safety issues * Model safe, responsible and professional behaviours in their own use of technology. This includes outside the school hours and site, and on social media, in all aspects upholding the reputation of the school and of the professional reputation of all staff. * Follow the remote learning policy and teacher protocols during any part or full school closure |
| Pupils | * Read, understand, sign and adhere to the pupil acceptable use policy, including the remote learning responsible use policy * Understand the importance of reporting abuse, misuse or access to inappropriate materials * Know what action to take if they or someone they know feels worried or vulnerable when using online technology * To understand the importance of adopting safe and responsible behaviours and good online safety practice when using digital technologies outside of school and realise that the school’s acceptable use policies (including remote learning policies) cover actions out of school, including on social media |
| Parents | * Read, sign and promote the school’s parental acceptable use policy (AUP), Including remote learning policies and read the pupil AUP and encourage their children to follow it * Consult with the school if they have any concerns about their children’s use of technology * Promote positive online safety and model safe, responsible and positive behaviours in their own use of technology, including on social media: not sharing other’s images or details without permission and refraining from posting negative, threatening or violent comments about others, including the school staff, volunteers, contractors, pupils or other parents/carers. |
| External groups/volunteers and contractors | * Read, understand, sign and adhere to an acceptable use policy (AUP) * Report any concerns, no matter how small, to the designated safeguarding lead as named in the AUP * Maintain an awareness of current online safety issues and guidance * Model safe, responsible and professional behaviours in their own use of technology |

1. **Curriculum Links**

**The following subjects have the clearest online safety links**

• PSHE and Relationships Education

• Computing

However, as stated in the role descriptors above, it is the role of all staff to identify opportunities to thread online safety through all school activities, both outside the classroom and within the curriculum, supporting curriculum/stage/subject leads, and making the most of unexpected learning opportunities as they arise (which have a unique value for pupils)

Whenever overseeing the use of technology (devices, the internet, remote learning, new technology such as augmented reality, etc) in school or setting as homework tasks, all staff should encourage sensible use, monitor what pupils are doing and consider potential dangers and the age appropriateness of websites (ask your DSL what appropriate filtering and monitoring policies are in place).

Equally, all staff should carefully supervise and guide pupils when engaged in learning activities involving online technology (including, remote learning, extra-curricular and extended school activities if relevant), supporting them with search skills, critical thinking (e.g. fake news), age appropriate materials and signposting, and legal issues such as copyright and data law.

It is vital that all staff recognise that online-safety is a part of safeguarding (as well as being a curriculum strand of Computing and PSHE

1. **Dealing with a concern**

General concerns must be handled in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

The school's procedures for dealing with online-safety are mostly detailed in the following policies (primarily in the first key document):

• Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

• Anti-Bullying Policy

• Behaviour Policy (including school sanctions)

Valley Gardens commits to take all reasonable precautions to ensure online safety, but recognises that incidents will occur both inside school and outside school (and that those from outside school will continue to impact on pupils when they come into school). All members of the school are encouraged to report issues swiftly to allow us to deal with them quickly and sensitively through the school’s escalation processes.

Any suspected online risk or infringement should be reported to the designated safeguarding lead on the same day – where clearly urgent, it will be made by the end of the lesson.

Any concern/allegation about staff misuse is always referred directly to the Headteacher, unless the concern is about the Headteacher in which case the complaint is referred to the Governing Body and the LADO (Local Authority’s Designated Officer). Staff may also use the NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline.

The school will actively seek support from other agencies as needed (i.e. the local authority, LGfL, UK Safer Internet Centre’s Professionals’ Online Safety Helpline, NCA CEOP, Prevent Officer, Police, IWF). We will inform parents/carers of online-safety incidents involving their children, and the Police where staff or pupils engage in or are subject to behaviour which we consider is particularly disturbing or breaks the law.

1. **Inappropriate behaviour:**

Bullying of another person will be treated with the highest severity.

Online, Cyber Bullying

* Lessons concerning cyber bullying and e-safety to be carried out through the computing and PSHE curriculum.
* By cyber bullying, the School is referring to: bullying by email, messages, images, calls or other electronic communication.
* Use of mobile phone cameras to cause distress, fear or humiliation.
* Posting threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating material on websites (including social networking sites).
* Hijacking or hacking email accounts.
* Making threatening, abusive, defamatory or humiliating remarks in chat rooms or on instant messaging services.
* The use of Social Media for the use of bullying, grooming, abuse and radicalisation.

Pupils should be aware that cyber bullying is generally criminal in character and that English law does apply. The School will endeavour to resolve all matters using the School's Behaviour Policy without Police involvement but parents of victims do have the right to seek Police intervention. This will be closely linked to the School's Anti-Bullying Policy, the schools Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and our Peer-on-peer abuse policy which can be read separately or in conjunction with this policy.

1. **Security and Monitoring**

Monitoring

The school reserves the right to monitor the use of the network, internet and e-mail systems. If it is discovered that any of the systems are being abused and/or that the terms of this policy are being breached, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Property

Pupils and staff should treat any property belonging to the school with respect and reasonable care and report any faults or breakages to a member of office staff.

**Viruses**

Pupils and staff should be aware of the potential damage that can be caused by computer viruses. Pupils and staff must not download, install or run any programs or data (including computer games) or open emails from unknown or unidentifiable sources.

**System Security**

* + All computers and laptops are password protected. Passwords are changed on a regular basis.
  + Pupils should not attempt to gain unauthorised access to anyone else's user area or to any information which they are not authorised to access.
  + Do not make deliberate attempts to disrupt or damage the school network, any device attached to it or any data stored on it or transmitted across.
  + Do not alter school hardware in any way.
  + Do not knowingly misuse headphones or any external devices e.g. printers, mouses.
  + Do not eat or drink while using the computer.
  + All users should log out of any device properly as well as ensure the device is shutdown in order to protect user data.

**Leaving workstations**

If a person leaves their workstation for any period of time they should log out of their workstation or ensure the screen is locked.

**Internet**

The School recognises the benefits to using the Internet in an educational environment. The Internet facility is provided for school related activities only. The school monitors the use of the Internet.

The school internet system has a filtering and monitoring system which monitors and filters all website access against preset policies. Any inappropriate material, whether it be sexual, violent, extremist or illegal in nature will be blocked and the System Administrator alerted, who will in turn alert the school Designated Safeguarding Lead, as to the inappropriate material being accessed.

Viewing, retrieving or downloading of any material that the school considers inappropriate will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

**Photographs and images**

It is our intention to provide an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used. Photography and video are familiar features of life, playing a significant role in commerce, entertainment and communication; it is commonplace in our homes and it is an important element of school life.

At Valley Gardens we feel it is vital that achievements are recognised and that pupils feel valued, proud and happy. Photography is a useful tool within school and it is employed routinely in many ways, for example; record keeping, displays, special events, teachers' lessons and the children's own work.

On occasions photos are also used for the Press, school website, school social media account and other promotional purposes.

Children will only be named in photographs that are displayed within the school. We will not provide children's full names for any other purpose unless special parental consent has been received.

We are, however, sensitive to the wishes and rights of parents who may not wish their children to be photographed and who may have concerns about the use of such images.

All parents are asked to give consent for photography of their child by completing a permission slip that is held on file. A register is kept of children who must not be included in press, website or any other photographic image, still or moving.

All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that no child on the register is photographed or videoed by a visitor to school or while on an educational visit outside school. The exception to this may be photographs taken by parents at events such as concerts and church services.

From time to time we invite the Press into school to share special events and achievements within the local community. We will allow local newspapers to take photographs of children, when appropriate, provided that parental consent has been given.

Some newspapers insist that children's names must be published with their photographs. If not, they may decline to cover school events. Therefore we will normally give the children's full names (but not addresses) to newspapers only if requested by them. That is why it is important for you to tell us whether you have any objections.

When a commercial photographer/filmmaker (e.g. Phototronics) is used we will;

• Provide a clear brief

• Issue Identification

• Inform parents and children

• Obtain consent

• Not allow unsupervised access to children

**Taking of images:**

**Pupils:**

The school encourages children to take photographs on school trips or on residential visits using a disposable camera as a way of recording events.

There is no reason why pupils should not be allowed to take photographs so long as anyone photographing respects the privacy of the person being photographed. This is seen as part of the school's code of behaviour.

Infringement of this respect of privacy is akin to bullying and will be dealt with in the same way as any other breach of school discipline.

Under no circumstances will pupils be allowed to bring to school or take on trips any electronic devices such as tablets, smartphones, smartwatches, laptop or other computer devices which have the capability to film videos or internet access.

Should the school learn about any inappropriateness of image use involving our pupils or staff, we will immediately act and report it as we would for any other child protection issue.

**Staff:**

Only the school's cameras or video equipment should be used by staff when taking photographs. All equipment must be signed out and returned to the Network Manager.

All images taken must be deemed suitable without putting the child in any compromising positions that could cause embarrassment or distress.

Under no circumstances will a camera be allowed into the bathroom areas unless a member of the Senior Management team is present.

Photographs taken as records of events or for educational purposes may be displayed around the school. They are then archived or shredded after use.

Photographs are not exchanged with anyone outside school, or removed for private use by any employee or volunteer.

1. **Staff Personal Safety and usage**

It is vitally important that staff are careful about content that they search out or download. Every time you view a page on the internet, it is possible to trace your visit back to the school computer. This means that it is possible to tell if the school computer was being used to look at inappropriate web pages.

Staff need to ensure that films or other material shown to children are age-appropriate.

Staff must be aware of their responsibilities to the school when using social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or TikTok. Our staff code of conduct and confidentiality policy must be adhered to at all times, even outside of working hours. It is important to maintain your status as a professional teacher.

Disciplinary action could result if the school is brought into disrepute.

* + Staff must not post anything on any online site that could be construed to have an adverse impact on the school's reputation.
  + Staff must not post photos related to the school on any internet site including pupils, parents, staff or the school branding (uniform).
  + Staff must not form online friendships with pupils and parents.
  + Staff must not post anything on to social networking sites that would offend any other member of staff, pupil or parent using the school.
  + Staff should use their school email account for all school-related communications.
  + Staff should not use mobile phones in front of pupils, except for educational or safeguarding reasons (e.g. ringing emergency services).
  + Staff to be aware of the various members of staff responsible for Safeguarding issues
  + Staff members should refer to the Staff Code of Conduct for more detailed information.

**Use of email**

Email is provided for school related purposes only. The school monitors the use of email and disciplinary action may be taken if inappropriate uses of personal emails are discovered.

Email should be treated in the same way as any other form of written communication. Anything that is written in an email is treated in the same way as any form of writing. Pupils and staff should not include anything in an email that is not appropriate to be published generally. Any email message which is abusive, discriminatory on grounds of sex, race, disability, sexual orientation or religious belief, or defamatory is not permitted.

All files and emails on the system are property of the School. As such, system administrators and staff have the right to access them if required.

**Use of mobile phones**

The school accepts that employees will bring their mobile phones to work. Mobile phones and personally owned devices brought into school are the responsibility of the device owner. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

* Employees are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during lessons or formal school time and should not use recording equipment on their mobile phones or personal devices to take photographs/videos of children if other options are available. Any photographs taken must be deleted from personal devices immediately after use.
* Staff use of mobile phones during the school day will normally be limited to the morning/lunch break and after school.
* Mobile phones should be switched off (or silent) and left in a safe place during lesson times. Staff should use phones in designated areas such as the staff room or an empty classroom. If a private call needs to be made then a request can be made to the Headteacher.
* Mobile phones are not permitted to be used in areas where children are present*. (In the event that an employee has a particular reason for a specified period of time, they may request via the Headteacher that they leave their phone on during working hours.)*
  + If a staff member breaches the school policy then disciplinary action may be taken as appropriate.
  + Staff should ensure that their phones are protected with PIN/access codes in case of loss or theft.
  + Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present unless the School phone is being used for a medical reason, Out of School Care, or the member of staff is on a trip in a remote location where the phone is being used for work purposes

1. **Pupil Personal safety and usage**

The school will organise internet safety lessons which are delivered through your computing and PSHE lessons.

Additionally:

* + Pupils must not play with or remove any cables etc that are attached to a school computer.
  + Pupils will be taught how to stay safe when working online at school and at home.
  + Pupils must not post anything on to social networking sites that would offend any other member of staff, pupil or parent using the school.
  + Pupils must not post anything on any online site that can be constructed to have an adverse impact on the school's reputation.
  + Pupils must not post photos of video related to the school on any internet sites including pupils, staff, parents or the school branding (uniform).
  + Pupils should never reveal their full name, any address or contact details, any school or network user ID or password online, even if communicating with known acquaintances.
  + Pupils should be aware that the potential exists for predators to remain entirely anonymous and easily pose as someone else.
  + Pupils should employ a healthy mistrust of anyone that they "meet" online unless their identity can be verified.
  + The use of chat rooms and social networking sites are not permitted in school.
  + Do not arrange to meet anyone you have met on the internet - people are not always who they say they are.

Use of mobile devices:

* Pupils are not permitted to use or carry mobile phones within school and their use by pupils in school is banned. This includes external areas such as the playground and school field.
* Pupils who wish to have a phone for walking to and from school must hand in their mobile phone to their form teacher when they arrive in the morning for safe-keeping to be kept in a locked location during school hours.
* Pupils must retrieve their mobile at the end of the day just before leaving the school premises. Devices brought into school are done so at the risk and responsibility of the device owner.
* If a pupil breaches the school policy then the phone or device will be confiscated and will be held in a secure place in the school office. Mobile phones and devices will be released to parents or carers in accordance with school policy.

1. **Advice to parent/carers on safety**

The school will update parent/carers with information on new developments on e-safety as and when appropriate. We are committed to supporting our pupils and parents with online safety, though we would also make the following recommendations.

* The school advises that parental control software is often available via an ISP so that parent/carers can manage and control their child's computer and internet activity. Mobile phone operators also offer free parental control software services to limit the kind of content your children can access through the mobile network.
* We recommend that computers for children should be used in a shared space where parents can see the screen.
* Parents should take an interest in their children's internet use and discuss various issues pertaining to the internet.
* Parents should be aware of various age limits on games and social networking sites.
* Parents should discuss the care needed when their children meet online "friends". Only talk to people they know. Parents should remind their children not to give out any personal details nor details of family and friends, even to people they know.
* Parents should encourage their children to tell them if anything online makes them feel uncomfortable.
* Parents should make their child aware of the dangers of meeting someone they have only met online.
* Parents should be aware that they are in control and that they have every right to check on their children's online activities as well as their mobile usage.
* Parents should encourage offline activities. Socialising with friends and taking part in physical activities is really important.

You can find out more about how children use social media, the apps they use, the risks they face, how to use privacy settings, and advice and tips about how to talk to children about e-safety at;

*The UK Safer Internet Centre website*

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk>

*CEOP's Thinkuknow website*

<http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

<http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk/parents>

*Internet Matters*

<http://www.internetmatters.org>

*Childnet*

<http://www.childnet.com/sns>

*NSPCC*

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety>

*Parent Zone*

<http://www.parentzone.org.uk>

*Ask About Games (where families make sense of video games)*

<http://www.askaboutgames.com>

1. **Reporting a concern**

Parent/carers who have any e-safety concerns should contact the school. You should also contact the appropriate services and internet providers to resolve your concern.

If you are concerned about online grooming or sexual behaviour online you can contact CEOP: http://www.ceop.police.uk or alternatively you can click on the 'Report Abuse' button located at http://www.thinkyouknow.co.uk.

If you stumble across criminal sexual or obscene content on the internet you should report it to the Internet Watch Foundation: http://www.iwf.org.uk.

You can also report directly to your local police force.

If you think your child is in immediate danger call 999.

1. **Social Media Policy**

Social media (including here all apps, sites and games that allow sharing and interaction between users) is a fact of modern life, and as a school, we accept that many parents, staff and pupils will use it. However, as stated in the acceptable use policies which all members of the school community sign, we expect everybody to behave in a positive manner, engaging respectfully with the school and each other on social media, in the same way as they would face to face.

This positive behaviour can be summarised as not making any posts which are or could be construed as bullying, aggressive, rude, insulting, illegal or otherwise inappropriate, or which might bring the school or (particularly for staff) teaching profession into disrepute. This applies both to public pages and to private posts, e.g. parent chats, pages or groups.

If parents have a concern about the school, we would urge them to contact us directly and in private to resolve the matter. If an issue cannot be resolved in this way, the school complaints procedure should be followed. Sharing complaints on social media is unlikely to help resolve the matter, but can cause upset to staff, pupils and parents, also undermining staff morale and the reputation of the school (which is important for the pupils we serve).

Many social media platforms have a minimum age of 13, but the school regularly deals with issues arising on social media with pupils under the age of 13. We ask parents to respect age ratings on social media platforms wherever possible and not encourage or condone underage use. It is worth noting that following on from the government’s Safer Internet Strategy, enforcement and age checking is likely to become more stringent over the coming years.

However, the school has to strike a difficult balance of not encouraging underage use at the same time as needing to acknowledge reality in order to best help our pupils to avoid or cope with issues if they arise. Online safety lessons will look at social media and other online behaviour, how to be a good friend online and how to report bullying, misuse, intimidation or abuse. However, children will often learn most from the models of behaviour they see and experience, which will often be from adults.

Parents can best support this by talking to their children about the apps, sites and games they use, with whom, for how long, and when.

Email is the official electronic communication channel between parents and the school.

Pupils and parents are not allowed\* to be ‘friends’ with or make a friend request\*\* to any staff, volunteers and contractors or otherwise communicate via social media.

Pupils and parents are discouraged from ‘following’ staff, volunteer or contractor public accounts (e.g. following a staff member with a public Instagram account). However, we accept that this can be hard to control (but this highlights the need for staff to remain professional in their private lives). In the reverse situation, however, staff must not follow such public pupil accounts.

*\* Exceptions may be made, e.g. for pre-existing family links, but these must be approved by the Headteacher, and should be declared upon entry of the pupil or staff member to the school).*

*\*\* Any attempt to do so may be a safeguarding concern or disciplinary matter and should be notified to the DSL (if by a child) or to the Headteacher (if by a staff member).*

Staff are reminded that they are obliged not to bring the school or profession into disrepute and the easiest way to avoid this is to have the strictest privacy settings and avoid inappropriate sharing and oversharing online. They should never discuss the school or its stakeholders on social media and be careful that their personal opinions might not be attributed to the school, trust or local authority, bringing the school into disrepute.

All members of the school community are reminded that particularly in the context of social media, it is important to comply with the school policy on Digital Images and Video and permission is sought before uploading photographs, videos or any other information about other people.

1. **Remote learning**

**Outline**

Remote learning is a method by which a teacher is able to continue teaching a pupil, or an entire class, using online resources or facilities such as Google Classroom. Remote learning can consist of ‘self-guided’ lessons, which contain resources, videos and instructions that allow a pupil to independently work though the lesson – or they may take the form of ‘live lessons’ where the teacher interacts with the pupils through video-conferencing technology.

The preferred method of the school is for staff, where possible, to directly teach the lesson via ‘live lessons’. Such sessions are interactive and children participating will be able to ask questions online to deepen their understanding – working with the teacher as they would in a classroom. In some cases work will instead be delivered via ‘self-guided’ lesson, though children should still be able to contact their teacher and ask for help and feedback via their Google Classroom.

Remote learning will take place in the event of children having to be sent home to self-isolate or in the event of a national lockdown;

* Remote learning will only be delivered by approved staff from Valley Gardens Middle School
* Remote learning, in particular live lessons, is the preferred method offered by the school, but must be consented to by parent/carers. Parent/carers who are unable or unwilling to access virtual learning should contact the school for alternative support.
* Pupils and staff will only make use of the software and platforms that has been risk assessed and approved for remote learning by the school.
* Pupils and staff will only communicate through the approved channels established by the school and at the approved times.

**Getting online**

All remote learning is delivered through the school ‘Realsmart’ platform. This can be accessed from the school website: www.valleygardensmiddle.org

Staff and students will need to log in and they should then be able to access the Google Classrooms where work is set and marked. In the event of a technical difficulty, the school should be contacted.

lessons will be held at the same time they would normally take place on the school timetable, with the assigned teacher for the lesson taking the class. In the event of technical difficulties parent/carers can also contact the school office at vgmsoffice@valleygardensmiddle.org and we will provide assistance.

**Safeguarding & Data Protection**

Staff and pupils will abide by the school code-of-conduct at all times and all virtual lessons will be recorded. This recording will not be shared with any outside third parties and will not be used by the school at a later date without the consent of any participants filmed during the recording. The school will take all appropriate measures to protect all personal data in line with GDPR.

Staff and pupils will only communicate via valid school email accounts and aim to only communicate during school hours for the purposes of virtual learning. Staff and pupils are advised not to share any personal information during virtual learning sessions.

The information provided in this document applies to whole class virtual teaching. If a situation should arise where one-to-one interaction is required, additional risk assessments and safeguarding procedures will be put in place.

If a parent/carer, pupil or member of staff becomes aware of, or has a safeguarding concern during a virtual lesson they must report it to the schools safeguarding lead

**Agreed Conduct**

* Only the pupil should be visible or audible during the lesson, other members of the household should not interact with the class. Pupils should wear headphones for GDPR reasons whilst taking part in a ‘live lesson’.
* Parent/carers should be aware that virtual learning is taking place and ensure they have given consent for this to happen
* The device used for the lesson should be, where practical, in an area of the house where it is conducive to work, but not isolated (try to use a quiet room downstairs if possible)
* The background should be as neutral as feasibly possible and personal information should be protected (photos of family members should be removed for example)
* Pupils and staff will both be dressed appropriately. For the pupils this should be the same way as they would on a non-uniform day in school
* Normal school rules apply, be sensible, kind and respectful.

**Agreed pupil conduct**

Whilst you are learning at home remotely, it is very important for your safety and everyone else in your class, that you act responsibly and don’t put yourself (or others) at risk. Here is some guidance and some rules we expect you to follow when in your remote classroom:

* You should be the only person from your home that can be seen or heard in a live lesson.1
* When taking part in a live lesson you should wear headphones. This makes it safer for everyone.
* You should be dressed appropriately2 and be ready to learn.
* You should try to have a neutral or blurred background behind you when you are visible.3
* When you start the lesson, mute your microphone and don’t write anything in any chat boxes, until a teacher has told you to start
* If a teacher asks you to put on your camera for a moment to check you are present and that you are okay – please do so.
* You should show kindness and respect at all times. Rude or unacceptable behaviour in class will result in you being removed from the classroom and your parents being contacted. Teachers will still give out epraise points and demerits for good/bad behaviour.
* All the sessions are recorded for your safety and you must not make any of your own recordings.
* You must not use nicknames or a fake name whilst using remote learning.
* If something happens that you are worried about, you should contact your teacher or get your parents to contact the school. You can also use the Share and Care form on your homepage to bring up a worry.4
* You should leave a virtual classroom if there is no teacher or responsible adult inside.
* Online safety is very important. You must only use the websites that your teacher directs you to and you must not share any information about your learning with anyone else online outside of your class.

1 It is polite to remind other people in your house that you are in a virtual lesson so they don’t forget and accidentally wander into the background or shout something embarrassing in the house that they wouldn’t want your classmates to hear. If this does happen, let your teacher know and they will help.

2 You don’t have to wear school uniform when working from home, but you should wear clothing that is appropriate to wear online and be seen by others. For instance, you shouldn’t be wearing pyjamas.

3 Remember other people might be able to see what is in your background, so avoid photos of family members and personal items where possible. You can blur your background on Google Meet and Microsoft Teams.

4 If your parent/carer needs to talk to a teacher – please ask them not to do this during a live lesson. They should contact the school office or your teacher outside of the lesson time.