

Sophia HIGH SCHOOL

Online Learning Policy

2026 - 2027

Online Learning Policy

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Document authors (name)	Melissa McBride Jennifer Callaway
Policy Owner	Jennifer Callaway Vanessa Temple (2024/25 version)

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Online Learning Policy

Introduction

The Online Learning Policy reflects appropriate pedagogy and an understanding of how young children learn best, and follows the guidance of the Department for Education (UK) with relation to Online Learning for children in the primary and secondary phases of learning. It details the delivery of the curriculum through a blend of synchronous (live) and asynchronous (non-live) lesson content.

This document sets out the policy of with respect of use of technology for online teaching and learning and operates in addition to our existing policies such as;

- SHS Curriculum Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Online Safeguarding Policy
- Digital Safety Policy
- IT Acceptable Usage Policy
- Data Protection Policy

SHS Online Learning

Aim and Vision

- To enable students to fully engage with synchronous and asynchronous learning at a level appropriate for their age and developmental stage.
- That we turn all challenges into advantages and opportunities for the school and community.
- To safeguard students and staff when engaging with Online Learning.
- To ensure that students are clear on the purpose and intended outcomes of their Online Learning experience.
- To provide appropriate learning experiences across curriculum domains to reinforce the application of knowledge, skills and understanding with a clear success criterion for all activities

Scope of this Policy

This policy covers any aspect of student "Online Learning" as used by SHS stakeholders. In all cases students must use their approved school google for education accounts to log in. Students are not to use any other account under any circumstances for the purposes of Online Learning within the school.

The list of applications that will be used for Online Learning will primarily be:

- Google for Education (we have permission to run the full suite)
- Athena, proprietary Digital Education Platform developed by Sophia Technologies

There may be some additional applications that teachers may use, and the teacher will provide the student with the information required to access them. This must, in all cases, use a SHS account as the login.

Additional online learning platforms include:

- Literacy Tree
- IDL
- Oxford Owl Reading
- White Rose Maths
- Athletics
- White Rose Science
- Minecraft Education
- Linguascope
- Frame VR
- Engage VR

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What is Online Learning for Primary & Secondary Students

SHS acknowledges that all children should have a comprehensive and holistic education, accessed from home, whilst still having a supportive social structure and maintaining a small group dynamic.

SHS Online Learning is a holistic early years programme taught in English, closely aligned with the UK National Curriculum for England from KS1 to KS5 (UK statutory guidance) which families access from home, fully supported by a dedicated SHS team.

It includes:

- Daily Live Lessons, online interactions with qualified teachers and a regular peer group. These are recorded and can be accessed online at any time. Attendance is recorded at each lesson and is mandatory.
- Support videos and resources that can be accessed at any time via Google Classroom
- Digital Notebooks which support and extend the lessons.
- Online support materials, stories and games for each topic.
- Tasks and Challenges set to consolidate and extend the learning of each child at an appropriate level.
- UK Qualified and highly experienced teachers who will plan and present lessons and additional learning resources to support appropriate pedagogy for young children.
- Daily digital feedback for all work completed and submitted. Verbal feedback is also provided for all children including those with EAL or ALN, using MOTE.
- Digital record keeping to identify learning and track progress.
- Scheduled weekly or bi-weekly Student Progress Meetings with Parents showing learning successes related to the UK National Curriculum Subjects, PBL and additional programmes such as Mini Duke etc.
- All work shared via Google and Athena, secure and easily used 24-7 by students and parents.

How does this compare to 'face to face' school?

We do not expect our online students to have a full 8-hour day online. The Live Lessons and support activities tasks/challenges and daily practice add up to a significant amount of this time combined. The Live Lessons comprise 50% of the lesson, the remaining 50% is to be spent on Independent Learning, including regular practice of reading and Mathematics.

Just as in a physical school, learning at SHS is not only whole-class teaching. Collaborative group work is an essential part of how children learn — developing communication, cooperation and confidence alongside subject knowledge — and in our online classrooms this takes place in breakout rooms. A breakout room is the online equivalent of a group of children working together at a table in a classroom: the teacher sets the task, the class divides into small groups, and the teacher moves between those groups — joining unannounced, listening, guiding and supporting — exactly as a teacher circulates around a physical classroom during group work.

Our approach to supervising breakout rooms mirrors the standard that applies in any good school: supervision that is present, proportionate and appropriate to the activity, rather than surveillance of every pupil interaction. No physical school records or continuously observes children's group work, corridors or playground conversations; instead, schools rely on adult presence, small numbers, clear behaviour expectations and a strong culture of telling an adult — and so do we.

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The teacher remains in the lesson at all times and retains full control of the session; our groups are deliberately small; and every child always has an immediate exit, able to return to the main room or leave the lesson at any moment, learning from home with a parent or carer nearby. All pupils are taught our digital safety expectations and sign an age-appropriate Digital Safety Agreement each year, and any concern about behaviour in a breakout room is followed up promptly under our Safeguarding and Child Protection and Behaviour policies, exactly as it would be for behaviour in the main classroom. Supervision of breakout rooms is set out in full in the school's Risk Assessment Policy.

Project Based Learning work outside the Live Lesson covers is required for a child to progress according to expected standards in these subject areas of learning.

All work in the Live Lessons and subsequent activities lead to the (UK) expected standards at the end of each Key Stage (KS1 / LKS2 / UKS2, KS3 / KS4 and KS5) expectations at the end of each Unit.

Sophia High School is accredited by the [UK Department for Education](#) as a premium British Online School offering full-time education for students aged 4 - 18.

Sophia High School is accredited with the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) which ensures that our programme is of the highest standard and recognised and accepted internationally. It is also a member of the UK Independent Schools Association (ISA) is a Pearson Centre of Excellence, and an authorised Pearson Remote invigilation Centre.

Supervision of Breakout Rooms and Collaborative Online Learning

Breakout rooms are an integral part of the school's delivery model, enabling paired and small-group collaborative work in line with the pedagogy of the Online Learning Policy. The school's approach to safeguarding within breakout rooms follows the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education: supervision that is reasonable, proportionate and appropriate to the setting, rather than continuous surveillance of every pupil interaction — the same standard that applies to group work, corridors and shared spaces in a physical school.

The following controls apply whenever breakout rooms are in use:

- The class teacher retains host control of the whole session at all times, remains present in the lesson throughout, and moves between breakout rooms on an unannounced basis, as a teacher would circulate between groups in a physical classroom.
- Breakout groups are kept deliberately small, consistent with the school's small-group model.
- Every pupil retains an immediate exit at all times: any pupil may leave a breakout room and return to the main room, or leave the lesson entirely, at any moment. Pupils learn from home, with a parent or carer contactable as set out in the Online Learning Policy.
- All pupils are taught, and sign an age-appropriate Digital Safety Agreement committing to, the expectation that they report immediately to an adult anything that makes them uncomfortable, in a breakout room or anywhere else online. The school's behaviour and anti-bullying expectations apply in breakout rooms exactly as they do in the main classroom and in a physical school.
- Concerns raised about conduct in breakout rooms — by a pupil, parent or member of staff — are followed up promptly under the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Behaviour Policy, and grouping arrangements may be adjusted while any concern is looked into.

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- Structured weekly parent contact provides a regular, reliable route through which concerns about peer interactions are surfaced and acted upon.

The school keeps this model under review as part of its annual policy cycle and its ongoing risk assessment of remote learning.

Technology

Google has been chosen as it has the highest level of online security to ensure safeguarding standards are met. It is easy to access on any device, laptop or tablet via a personal password or QR code, adding to the security. We are permitted to use the full suite of online tools for Google Education Workspace and Google Classroom at Sophia High School.

Sophia High School holds full Cyber Essentials Certification.

Lessons, digital notebooks, additional online games and activities, feedback and Live Lessons are all accessed by families from the secure Google Classroom.

All online content is shared with families through Google and is stored on Google Drive Servers.

SHS provides parents with a live session and supporting video tutorials on how to use the required technology to access online learning, supported by SHS staff. Parents may have this personal session again if needed. Digital Safety Workshops are also provided to parents to ensure they are kept up to date with Filtering and Monitoring at home as part of our Safeguarding Policy.

Live Lessons with small groups of children and their families are hosted on Google and each session has an individual code to ensure the highest level of security.

Pastoral care and Wellbeing of students can be a particular challenge in a remote learning environment. However due to our very small group sizes and weekly contact with parents, teachers are able to maintain strong relationships as they remain in small groups enabling friendships to be formed.

Safeguarding remains our highest priority and all teachers will follow the SHS Safeguarding policy and procedures to maintain the highest standards. Live Lessons are recorded in the main teaching room and placed in the Google Classroom for families to access at any time, and are stored on the SHS Google Drive. Group work in breakout rooms is supervised in real time by the teacher, as described below.

Within a Live Lesson, teachers may use Google Meet breakout rooms for paired and small-group work. Breakout rooms exist only inside the teacher's session: they can only be created by the teacher, only pupils in that lesson can be placed in them, and they close when the teacher ends them; no pupil can create a breakout room independently.

The teacher retains full host control of the session throughout, moves between rooms unannounced as they would between groups in a physical classroom, and can end any room or return any pupil to the main room at any time. Every pupil can also return themselves to the main room at any moment. Breakout rooms are supervised through this live teacher presence — the online equivalent of a teacher circulating during classroom group work — and any concern about behaviour within them is followed up under the SHS Safeguarding and Behaviour policies. The school's supervision model for breakout rooms is set out in full in the Risk Assessment Policy

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Online Learning Charter.

Role of SHS. SHS will:

Employ qualified and experienced teachers appropriate for the British curriculum, that meet all safeguarding and safer recruitment requirements, to teach online.

- Prepare a timetable that meets the needs of the different phases of learning and uses a pedagogically sound model of teaching for both synchronous and asynchronous lessons.
- Give access to live lessons and prepared videos according to the schedule, scheduled each week.
- Provide secure access to online resources, maintaining safeguarding as a priority.
- Set intentional learning pods of between 6-10 students (less in Primary) in the core subjects to keep class sizes low and personalisation high by teaching by phase not age.
- Facilitate online learning via Google.
- Ensure digital feedback, record keeping and reporting are maintained and all work is marked by the teachers and feedback given according to policy.
- Meet with parents individually every week giving updates and progress for each child.
- Present a Student Progress Report according to the Reporting schedule.

Role of the Teacher. SHS Teachers will:

- Use a mix of live lessons and support videos to introduce or consolidate learning for each child according to their developmental level, giving clear explanations, instructions, feedback and guidance.
- Set appropriate tasks and challenges for each child to extend the learning outside the digital classroom.
- Encourage and support participation by children in all activities set.
- Give positive, meaningful feedback for all work submitted according to schedule.
- Prepare all Topic and Lesson Plans to meet the requirements of the UK National Curriculum Programmes of Study and other partner programmes.
- Use English as the language of instruction with the group members.
- Be polite and respectful with other members of the group.
- Attend online weekly, individual meetings with parents to discuss progress and success.
- Use the approved channels of communication only with parents, passing on all questions and concerns for the SHS team for their consideration and action.

Role of the child. SHS students will:

- Participate in all Live Lessons in an appropriate environment to support online learning.
- Attend all Live Lessons and watch all supporting videos with a supporting adult as required
- Complete and record all activities, tasks and challenges according to schedule.
- Use English in Live Lessons with the teachers and other group members.
- Be polite and respectful with other members of the online class.

Role of the parents/guardians/carers. SHS parents will:

- Encourage and support participation by their child in all Live Lessons and activities, tasks and challenges set by the teacher.
- Wherever possible, watch all support videos, complete online activities, and participate in all tasks and challenges (wherever appropriate) with their child. These are supplementary to the Live Lessons and give guidance and practice to support the curriculum.
- Support Online Learning by engaging in daily practice of reading, phonics and number work.
- Send in digitally all completed work and tasks via Google and the SHS platform according to schedule.

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- Attend online weekly or biweekly individual parent meetings with the teacher to discuss progress and success.
- If possible, use English in live lessons with the teachers and other group members.
- Be polite and respectful with other members of the group.
- Use the approved channels of communication with the SHS team only.

Availability

SHS IT team will:

- Use a SHS Admin email address to set up the online platform for each child, giving parents limited, controlled access to the work on the SHS drive.
- Set-up the Google account using the Student Code and send out a personal invitation email to introduce the student and their parents/guardians/carers to their personal Google Classrooms.
- Be the co-pilot of all teacher-accounts and keep videos of all live interactions for monitoring and safeguarding purposes.
- Ensure Teachers use their SHS email address to access the online content.
- Enable Teachers to use the educator dashboard for Google and selected subscribed platforms to access digital content, review the responses of students and give appropriate feedback.
- Run live lessons via the teachers SHS account.
- Track the students' progress on the SHS platform.
- Schedule a weekly individual online meeting for each family to meet with their teacher to discuss progress and success.

Live Lessons

- Scheduled lessons designed to develop a range of skills in specific curriculum areas. Depending on the phase of learning, these will be up to 40 minutes long in total, schedule set by SHS according to parent preferences.
- Focus on learning English and using it in meaningful ways to communicate and build confidence.
- Develop core skills in Speaking, Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, Creatives, Global Citizenship, Digital Citizenship, use of Immersive technologies, Wellbeing and supplementary online activities and resources accessed through Google and the SHS platform. This includes Enrichment activities.
- Support emotional development and mental health through dedicated activities.
- Arts activities to engage creativity and physical fitness.
- Each Live Lesson will follow the specified flow and timings.
- Each section has a specific purpose and is part of a meaningful flow, the same as a lesson in the classroom.
- No child should be engaged in a single static activity for more than 7 – 10 minutes.
- Each Live Lesson is followed by a task/challenge, activity or CANVA Whiteboard activity to allow each child to complete their work without stress and with minimal adult intervention.
- Work will be submitted digitally on Google and the SHS platform for feedback by the teachers.
- Project Based Learning (PBL) Provides independent and collaborative group projects to build on the live lesson learning.

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Additional Online Resources

- Literacy Tree English key texts as well as Guided Reading and Reading for pleasure.
- www.oxfordowl.co.uk for teacher use and also free use for families after account creation.
- TWINKL phonics programme
- White Rose Mathematics
- Mathletics to support mathematics development
- White Rose Science
- Linguascope to support ESL and MFL languages
- Minecraft Education
- Additional resources to support individual learning journeys.

(Recordings of all Live Lessons are available on the SHS platform to watch when needed.)

Response Times

Personal feedback to work submitted will be given within 24 hours of submission, because many of our students complete their work in the evening, and so will be responded to by the relevant teacher the following day. Teachers will follow the Feedback and Marking Policy, which is consistent across the school.

Resources

All supporting material required for each lesson will be uploaded onto the Google Classroom for that day. Links uploaded lead to supporting videos, books or games, that are all hosted on the SHS server. Links to videos will be to YouTube and so parental supervision may be needed to ensure online safe practice is observed.

The purpose of a Live Lesson is:

- To give every child a feeling of connection to their teacher and Live Lesson group members.
- To interact with each child in a personal and meaningful way.
- To give a high level of quality, personal instruction based on the Lesson Plan, but flexible to meet the individual needs of the group.

The Live Lesson is not primarily about delivering content, but about responding to the personal learning levels of each child, encouraging and motivating, and moving them along their learning journey at an appropriate level and pace:

- To encourage children to reflect on the work discussed and tasks/challenges set.
- For children to show what they know in a way, and it at a level they are confident. All children will be asked to show specific learning in every session.
- To gain insights into learning based on professional observations made about work submitted online throughout the week and shown in the Live Lesson.
- To engage parents in a structured and meaningful way, showing that we know their child and care about them.
- Based on work feedback, the teacher identifies children to respond to specific questions and records on the lesson plan to ensure personal goals are set and met for each child.

Digital Notebooks and additional resources which support and extend the lessons.

- Each lesson has Digital Workbook pages and/or activity to consolidate the learning of the lesson.
- The tasks and challenges set are to extend the learning at home with fun activities linked to the subject/theme and are to be completed outside the Live Lessons, but recorded on Google.
- Reading books and the reading record are to be completed according to schedule by children, teachers and parents. This includes spellings and other literacy-based activities.

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Attendance and Active Engagement

In order to achieve the best possible results during Live Lessons, students' personal devices (PC/laptop - not iPad) need to be charged, with a solid wi-fi connection, a functional camera and microphone. Earphones with a microphone can also help avoid distraction and maintain focus. VR Headsets are encouraged from KS2 upwards for our Immersive Based Learning Environments.

Other physical resources provided in the Resource Pack should be on hand to use if needed.

Teachers reserve the right to MUTE an entire group if it is very noisy, and individual children will UNMUTE when asked. Any individual child (or parent, sibling etc.) who uses rude language or actions will be removed from the group and this will be discussed with the parents and SHS management (see the Parent Charter).

Students are expected to attend live lessons with their camera on, their full face visible and their true background showing.

Blurred backgrounds, virtual backgrounds, avatars and filters are not permitted unless specifically approved by the school to meet an identified need. Any approved adjustment must be recorded on the student's Pupil Passport and the school's approved adjustment list.

Where approval has been granted, the same blurred background, approved virtual background, avatar or filter must be used consistently across all lessons and must not be switched on, off or changed during a lesson.

Submission and Evaluation of Work/Record Keeping

All students should be responsive to tasks proposed by the teacher during the Live Lesson and follow the teacher's instructions as to submission of digital Notebook activities, tasks/challenges and other supplementary activities.

Work submitted online:

SHS Teachers will:

- Check each child's submissions each week to see that they are working towards their individual goals and give appropriate feedback within 24 hours. We believe that updated data based on close observation drives the learning.
- Use this information to inform their record keeping against learning and development targets from the UK National Curriculum and appropriate levels of support materials such as Literacy Tree etc.
- Assess all submissions to give insights into learning and set the individual goals for the next week or Live Lesson.
- Ensure all curriculum areas are covered throughout the year.
- Complete appropriate assessments according to the SHS Term Calendar.
- Record keeping by the teacher will be regular and ongoing, based on observations in the Live Lessons and also work submitted online. Records will be kept on the SHS platform and inform information shared in the Student Reports.
- Assessments and examinations will be scheduled throughout the year and parents will be informed of these dates and the subsequent results.
- All work will be subject to internal moderation linked to UK standards to ensure SHS students are in line with UK expectations of excellence.

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Technical Problems

Teachers should contact the SHS IT Team in case of a technical problem.

Parents may be contacted to inform them that they have internet or device issues if they are not present for the Live Lesson and it becomes apparent that the child cannot join effectively.

For clarification, students/parents:

- Will log on using their Student Code and personal link to the Google Classroom.
- Will access interactive video lessons for each day plus other online activities stored on the SHS platform (limited, controlled access).
- Submit pictures or videos of work daily for feedback and encouragement.
- Will access Live Lessons via Google Meet according to schedule.

List of Contacts

Student engagement will be closely monitored by teachers, and at request the SHS Senior Leadership Team. Non-attendance in Live Lessons and a failure to submit additional work will be discussed at the weekly parent meeting, with a member of the Senior Leadership Team if it becomes apparent that this is an ongoing issue, and escalated to the Director of Education if attendance falls below 90% (see attendance policy for details).

Members of the Senior Leadership team will be available to meet with families via confirmed appointment to discuss any questions that arise and offer additional support if requested.

11.0 Child Protection & Safeguarding

Supporting policies can be found on our website, or at parent's request:

- SHS Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SHS Online Safeguarding Policy
- SHS Data Protection Policy
- SHS Risk Assessment Policy - Remote Learning Risk Assessment
- SHS Digital Safety and Acceptance Use
- SHS Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy
- CIS Guidelines for Safeguarding Distance Learners

Communication and Collaboration (tools)

All communication among members of our community should take place via the school approved channels: SHS email address, Google, SHS Platform. Students should always be aware when they are in a live lesson that they are being recorded by their teacher.

Live Lessons will be recorded and stored for future use by families, and also in cases where there is a parent concern. They will also be used for professional observation and feedback from the SHS Leadership Team. Pre-recorded support lessons are recorded by teachers to support lesson continuity in case of absence, or additional content to support areas of challenge for learners.

The most effective partnerships have each member working together towards a common goal. Our goal is to encourage and enable our children to be confident, effective communicators who can work independently or collaboratively, mindful of the world around them and respectful of other people, religions and cultures. We expect our parents to respect and follow these goals whilst working online with their children.

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12.0 Privacy

12.1 Data Privacy Statement

Our SHS Online Learning Policy operates in addition to the SHS Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy, and all related Safeguarding Policies, which are available from our website. For clarity, we will outline aspects specific to online learning, but this should be read alongside our existing policies mentioned above.

What we retain:

- Login activity, specifically, the last time a student logged in to their SHS account.
- The date and time of if/when a student completes their digital Notebook, sends feedback and accesses the teacher's feedback and responses.
- In Live Lessons within the main classroom, all audio, video, annotations and screen share activity of both teacher and participants (audio/video is not recorded if the student is on mute and the video is not enabled).

Why we retain it:

- To assist us in making sure students are engaging in learning sufficiently and in good time.
- To assist us in generating appropriate and relevant feedback to parents on progress.
- To provide revision materials by means of replying to topics covered in a live class, and to ensure those who might be unable to attend live classes can still cover the same content as the rest of the class.
- To provide a record of activity in the event of a disciplinary or other issue arising during a live class.

Where we retain it:

All data is kept within SHS's own systems which requires a valid SHS login to access.

How long we retain it for:

Ordinarily this is cleared at the end of each year. In any case, activity and content will not be retained beyond the student's exit from the school, either through early exit or through graduation.

12.2 Video Recordings: Live Lessons are recorded in the main classroom to provide the highest quality of teacher instruction and to allow students and families to revisit teaching at any time. Recordings capture teaching and activity in the main teaching room of the Live Lesson. Small-group work in breakout rooms is supervised through live teacher presence, with the teacher moving between rooms throughout, in line with the school's supervision model set out in the Risk Assessment Policy.

Recordings are exclusively published on the current platform used by SHS and cannot be shared, edited or reused in any way. This also applies to the use of screenshots or pictures of the videos, which is strictly forbidden.

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12.2.1 Supervision in a home-based school. The school's approach to supervision follows the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education: supervision that is reasonable, proportionate and appropriate to the setting, rather than continuous surveillance of every pupil interaction. This is the same standard that applies to group work, corridors and shared spaces in a physical school, none of which are recorded or continuously observed in any school.

Because SHS pupils learn from home, safeguarding is a genuine partnership between school and family. The school is responsible for supervision within the lesson: teacher presence throughout lessons and effective host controls over participation and access, small group sizes, taught digital safety expectations, and prompt follow-up of any concern under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Parents and carers are responsible for the home learning environment: ensuring their child learns in an appropriate, openly accessible space in the home; maintaining age-appropriate oversight of their child's online activity, supported by the parental controls and Filtering and Monitoring guidance provided through our Digital Safety Workshops; and raising any concern about their child's experience promptly with the class teacher or at the weekly parent meeting. This shared model reflects the reality that in a home-based school, the supervising adults are the teacher within the lesson and the parent within the home, working together.

12.3 Online Behaviour

During the entire time of their online courses and work, students should complete their online learning in a location and manner that enables appropriate parental oversight so that they can be vigilant of their children's online experience. Students should report to their parents or teachers any inappropriate, harmful or concerning content, contact or conduct they encounter online. Parents are encouraged to set up parental controls on their child's device(s), in order to monitor more efficiently their screen time and online habits.

The SHS community is always expected to follow the online code of conduct, as if they were in school. These expectations apply in every part of the school's provision — Live Lessons, breakout rooms, chat, shared documents, digital notebooks and all collaborative spaces. In particular, any form of mockery, exclusion, unkindness or any actions that would be considered bullying or harassment will be treated as seriously as if it happened in a physical school.

12.4 Child-on-child behaviour

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, SHS recognises that inappropriate behaviour between children can occur in any school, including online, and adopts the principle that "it could happen here." All staff are trained to recognise, respond to and report concerns about child-on-child behaviour, however minor they may first appear, and no concern is dismissed as banter or as part of growing up. Concerns are recorded in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, followed up under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Behaviour Policy, and grouping or class arrangements may be adjusted while a concern is looked into. Pupils are taught, through their Digital Safety Agreements and the curriculum, to tell an adult immediately about anything that makes them or another pupil uncomfortable, and parents are asked to raise concerns promptly with the class teacher or at the weekly parent meeting so the school can act quickly. This includes bullying, prejudice-based abuse, online abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence and the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, which are managed in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

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12.5 Behaviour outside school platforms

All school communication and collaboration takes place through school-approved channels only: SHS email, Google Workspace for Education and the SHS platform. The school does not operate, monitor, endorse or have oversight of private messaging groups, social media or other platforms that pupils or families may use outside school, and pupils under the minimum age set by a platform's own terms should not hold accounts on it. Responsibility for supervising children's use of such platforms rests with parents and carers, supported by the guidance in our Digital Safety Workshops.

However, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the school's Behaviour Policy, where the school becomes aware of online behaviour outside its platforms that affects the safety or wellbeing of SHS pupils — including bullying, harassment or hurtful messages between members of the school community — it will respond: concerns will be recorded, the DSL informed, the pupils involved spoken with, expectations reinforced, and sanctions applied or external agencies involved where appropriate. Parents are strongly encouraged to inform the school promptly of any such behaviour so that it can act.

12.6 Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

Sophia High School is a mobile phone-free learning environment by default, in line with DfE guidance. Pupils learn on a PC or laptop as set out in the Online Learning Policy; personal mobile phones and other personal devices are not part of the school's delivery model and must not be used during the school day; including Live Lessons, breakout rooms and independent study time. Phones should be switched off or on silent and kept out of sight of the learning space.

Because our pupils learn from home, this expectation is delivered in partnership with parents and carers, who agree to support it as part of the home learning environment: providing a learning space where the phone is put away, and supporting the school's camera-on policy, which supports safeguarding, attendance monitoring and pupil engagement. Teachers will address visible phone use or distraction during lessons as they would any other behaviour matter, and repeated concerns will be raised with parents at the weekly parent meeting and managed under the Behaviour Policy.

Mobile phones must never be used to photograph, film or record any part of a lesson or any member of the school community; this is strictly forbidden under this policy and the Online Learning Policy.

Exceptions are made only where formally agreed; for example where a phone is required for an identified accessibility or medical need, or briefly for a technical purpose authorised by the teacher (such as account verification). Any exception is recorded and kept under review.

13. Wellbeing

13.1 Wellbeing by design

Pupil wellbeing is built into the school's delivery model rather than added to it: deliberately small class groups in which teachers know each child well; daily live contact with a consistent teacher and peer group; dedicated wellbeing and emotional development activities within the curriculum; and weekly individual parent meetings, which give every family a regular, reliable route to raise concerns about their child's confidence, friendships or emotional state — and give the school a regular opportunity to share its own observations. Pastoral care is led by the Deputy Head: Pastoral and overseen by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

13.2 Early identification

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, all staff are trained to identify early signs that a pupil may be struggling — including changes in attendance, engagement, camera use, participation, the quality or completion of work, interactions with peers in lessons and breakout rooms, or things a child says or writes. In an online school these signals are often visible earlier than in a physical one, because every pupil's participation and submitted work is seen daily by their teacher. Staff report any concern about a pupil's wellbeing or mental health to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, however small it may seem; where a concern relates to a child's mental health, the DSL will consider what support is appropriate, involving parents and, where needed, external services. Absence, as well as reduced presence and engagement, is treated as a potential warning sign of a range of underlying concerns.

13.3 Responding to a child in distress

If a member of staff believes a child is in immediate danger or requires emergency medical attention during or outside a lesson, they will contact the parent or carer at the child's location immediately and, where necessary, call 999 and provide the emergency services with the child's home address held on the school's records. If a concern is urgent but not an emergency, staff will contact the parent or carer and the DSL, and families may be directed to NHS 111. Because our pupils learn from home, parents and carers are asked to ensure the school always holds up-to-date contact details and home address information, and that a responsible adult is contactable throughout the school day, as set out in the Parent Terms and Conditions.

13.4 Healthy technology habits

While facing their computers, students are encouraged to keep the right distance from the screen, watch their body posture, take regular breaks, get fresh air and exercise, keep a healthy balance between online and offline activities, and reduce non-academic screen time. Our timetable is designed to support this: pupils are not expected to spend a full school day online, live lessons are balanced with offline independent learning, and no child is engaged in a single static activity for an extended period. The school provides ergonomic guidance to parents and pupils annually, and our mobile phone-free approach (see the Digital Safety Policy) further supports pupils' balance between connected and offline time.

We provide ergonomic advice to parents and students annually.

For more advice, please follow the link: <https://www.wikihow.com/Sit-at-a-Computer>