



Eversholt Lower School

Keeping children safe in education - How Eversholt Lower School meets the requirements through DB Primary.

Eversholt Lower School is a smaller than average Primary school set in rural Bedfordshire. It has three mixed-age group classes covering Reception to Year 4. The school utilises a range of online resources including; Espresso and DB Primary. This case study sets out how they use DB Primary to meet aspects of the Keeping Children Safe in Education requirements.

Using filtering and monitoring systems to ensure safety online

Keeping Children Safe in Education (Annex C: Online Safety) sets out clearly, a set of requirements for schools. These include the need to monitor and filter content for children to ensure that the risk in three core areas (Content, Contact & Conduct) are minimised.

Eversholt engages in a wide range of teaching and learning activities including communication between children and staff, file sharing for homework, blogging and accessing online content including English, Maths and Computing resources. These activities are seen as central to children's learning not only due to the quality of the activities in themselves and their outcomes, but also in the nature of their delivery as online activities. Preparation for an ever-changing world with access to online activities and resources, collaboration and communication is seen as an integral part of creating and delivering a coherent and appropriate curriculum with creativity at its heart.

As part of developing a digitally literate curriculum, the Eversholt school has placed online safety at its core. The children are regularly taught about e-Safety in a number of ways (digitally and practically) and this is threaded through all subjects and offline learning too. The school uses its links to DB Primary to facilitate learning globally, by sharing files and activities to link to their twinning project with schools in other countries.

The school has been able to limit the exposure to other online activities through insecure sites, by utilising the resources provided within DB Primary. For instance, there are many freely available blogging sites online, but frequently schools are unclear of where and how these are managed. Eversholt Lower School uses class blogs effectively for learning, and the children have the opportunity to blog also. DB Primary gives assurances through being a known, accredited provider about the origins, data collection and storage when using such tools.

Furthermore, the portal has inbuilt monitoring and audit trails. This means that it is easy to identify who has made a particular post, when and from where it was posted. The school teaches children and parents about this and to date has had no issues raised. Sharing audit trails with children is an excellent way for them to begin to understand the nature of digital footprints. This is a worthwhile activity in itself, let alone its role in reducing misuse of the system.

Any system is only ever as good as its weakest point. Typically in a system used by young children this is the security of passwords. Using DB Primary, Eversholt Lower School has ensure all their children have unique, easy to remember but fairly random passwords. However, this alone cannot ensure that children won't share their passwords – this requires good quality teaching, which is undertaken at Eversholt Lower School from an early age. The audit trails within DB Primary then gives the school the confidence that should a password become compromised they would be able to quickly identify where this has taken place.

An additional facility that has proved invaluable to the school is the 'Filter' that is inbuilt into the DB platform. This means that any inappropriate words used in any of the platform tools are immediately flagged to the school. This is a rare occurrence at Eversholt, but the system has been shown to be effective.

Filtering and monitoring are not sufficient in themselves, to guarantee that children are using the tools appropriately or safely. Children's understanding of the appropriate use of technology requires quality teaching. The school prides itself on the quality of relationships, learning and teaching that promotes children's wellbeing both online and offline. It is assured that this is transferred to children's behaviour online. Expectations are made quite explicit when children are introduced to the platform and activities are planned to increase children's awareness and responsibility over time. The unique facility of the "whistleblowing" tool within the platform which allows children to immediately report concerns, underpins this.

| Data Protection

Another consideration for schools is Data Protection. With the changes to data protection requirements through the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that comes into force on 25th May 2018 schools need to ensure themselves that providers are GDPR compliant. At Eversholt, the knowledge that New Era Education (providers of DB Primary) are GDPR compliant, host their services within the UK and EU and are UK based thereby subject to UK law is a key consideration and reason for using DB Primary to provide online teaching and learning resources.

| Teaching children how to stay safe online

Keeping Children Safe in Education sets a responsibility on schools to teach online safety. It indicates quite clearly that Governors and proprietors should not allow Filtering, Monitoring or Blocking to prevent the effective teaching about how to stay safe.

It is widely acknowledged that primary-aged children learn best through first-hand experience and that staying safe online requires safe practices to be embedded and understood by children. They need to learn what behaviours are appropriate, how to conduct themselves online, how to avoid offence or upset; they need to understand what happens to their contributions online, how they may be copied, shared, published or traced. These things cannot be effectively taught through an annual Safer Internet Day or week, however valuable these activities may be in bringing focus to the issues. They need to be developed over time with children having the opportunity to explore, investigate and develop their practice. Using DB Primary in effective ways enables schools to do this.



Pamela Finch – Headteacher, Eversholt Lower School:

I have been the Headteacher at Eversholt for four years this year, and am very proud of the digital literacy our children share within the curriculum. Having been in teaching for 21 years, I have seen the dawning of 'computing' in the curriculum and how the opportunities for learning have developed. It is not without its complications. Whether that be funding sources to ensure children have high quality opportunities, or the barriers to learning safely. Our children are taught about e-Safety using our E-Cadet scheme in school, ...

...right from the very beginning. Our older pupils teach the younger pupils how and why to keep safe, thus expanding their own understanding in the process.

We use the learning platform to ensure that the children have a safe way to share files and communicate online. More than this however, we know that children will be attracted to gaming and using a safe platform allows them to share games safely.

We chose to continue using DB under current GDPR expectations, because the company is UK based and is therefore accountable to us for our data.

Eversholt is a very small rural school and understanding our global environment is key to our curriculum here. Our teachers are committed to expanding the experiences the children have and connecting them to the wider world. Using a platform is part of this process, and supports the full curriculum.



Summary

Eversholt Lower School are successfully teaching their pupils about online safety with the help of DB Primary and its inbuilt features, including the filtering systems. The school are using the tools they have to ensure their pupils are ready for a digital future.