An online safety action plan for children and young people in Wales
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Audience
All professionals working with children and young people including designated senior persons for child protection (DSPs), teachers and practitioners, and youth workers; local authorities; regional consortia; headteachers and governing bodies of maintained schools; headteachers in charge of pupil referral units; school governors; church diocesan authorities; proprietors of independent schools; local safeguarding boards; third sector organisations; parents and carers; staff within organisations that have a lead responsibility for safeguarding children and/or online safety; all other interested parties.

Overview
This document provides a strategic vision for the work we will take forward to keep children and young people in Wales safe online.

Action required
None – for information only.

Further information
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Additional copies
This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government’s website at www.gov.wales/educationandskills

Mae’r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.
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Ministerial foreword

The internet has revolutionised our lives. At the click of a button we can search for anything, shop online, watch our favourite film or TV programme, follow the news as it happens or play games with people in a different continent. It has also changed the way we communicate and keep in touch with our friends and family.

With so much of our lives being spent online, it is critical that we teach our children and young people the skills they need to use the internet safely. We must equip them with the knowledge and skills to be able to think critically and navigate the digital world in a safe, responsible and respectful way.

For that reason I’m pleased to present our new national online safety action plan for children and young people in Wales. This action plan sets out how the Welsh Government is working with teachers, parents and carers, learners and appropriate partners across Wales to keep our children and young people safe online.

This action plan provides a focus for our online safety work, which has always been a priority for me as a Cabinet Secretary, and as a parent. For me, there is nothing more important than the safety of our children and young people and knowing how to keep safe online is fundamental in the world today.

A lot of excellent work has been achieved in the last few years and this action plan builds on our achievements such as the Hwb Online Safety Zone and our bilingual online safety self-assessment tool, 360 degree safe Cymru.

And to make sure that this action plan addresses the concerns of our children and young people, we worked with the NSPCC and young people to ask them about their online safety concerns. We received hundreds of responses which have informed our action plan and future work, ensuring that we are tackling what is important to children and young people and enabling them to steer a safe course through their online lives.

This action plan is the start. We all play a role – as parents and carers, teachers, learners and stakeholders – in keeping our children and young people safe online. This vital work must not be underestimated and as Cabinet Secretary I’m committed to putting this plan into action.

Kirsty Williams AM
Cabinet Secretary for Education
Introduction

The Welsh Government, on behalf of Welsh Ministers, aims to help protect children and young people from illegal and harmful content on the internet and to promote safe, responsible and considerate behaviour online.

The internet is integral to the lives of children and young people, it provides opportunities to socialise, communicate, be entertained, learn and find support. It can also be exploited by those with malicious intent, targeting vulnerable groups and individuals in our society.

Online safety remains a key Welsh Government priority. This action plan has been commissioned by the Cabinet Secretary for Education to coordinate and build on work that is already underway. It attempts to strike a balance between protecting children and young people from harmful activity online and giving them the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe online.

The commitments and actions in this action plan have been grouped into the following categories.

- **Advice and support** – providing children and young people, education practitioners, education professionals, and parents and carers with information and knowledge to promote online safety for young people.
- **Collaboration** – working together with UK wide partners and other organisations to take coordinated actions to meet our common aims.
- **Communication and promotion** – raising the profile of online safety to reach a wide audience and reinforce the importance of using the internet safely and responsibly.
- **Guidance** – maintaining statutory and non-statutory guidance to reflect technological developments and changes in how the internet is used.
- **Research** – supporting research into the use of the internet by children and young people so that we stay up-to-date with the evolving threats and continue to inform policy development and actions needed to promote online safety.
- **Resources** – providing a range of resources for children and young people, education practitioners, education professionals, and parents and carers to support the delivery of online safety education and promotion.
- **Training and development** – providing relevant training to education practitioners, education professionals, schools and other partners to support the delivery of online safety education to children and young people.
Context

Learning in Digital Wales

Learning in Digital Wales (LiDW) is the Welsh Government programme of action for improving the use of digital technology for learning and teaching in schools. This pivotal education programme provides stakeholders across Wales with access to a range of digital tools and resources that can support and assist the transformation of digital classroom practices.

The LiDW programme encompasses multiple strands of work including online safety actions to support the protection and education of children and young people to use digital tools and the internet safely and appropriately.

Our national mission

Our national mission is a plan of action that sets out how the school system in Wales, including its sixth forms and education other than at school (EOTAS) provision, will move forward up until 2021 to secure the effective implementation of a new curriculum.

Digital competence is a key objective of the new curriculum and the use of digital tools and the internet will underpin the delivery of the curriculum for Wales.

Supporting learners to become competent and confident in the safe and responsible use of the internet and digital tools is vital to support their learning journey. We aim to give them the skills they will need to maximise the use of digital technology as a learning tool as the internet becomes ever more embedded in daily lives.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The UNCRC is an international agreement that protects the human rights of children under the age of 18. The Welsh Government is fully committed to making the principles of the UNCRC a reality for all children and young people in Wales. This action plan will have a positive impact and contribution towards making the articles of the UNCRC a reality for children in Wales.

This action plan recognises that online environments enable children and young people to experience a broad range of their rights including the right to be safe.

Make your space safe: Make your voice heard – Pupil Voice activity

The views of children and young people are integral to the actions that are being taken forward by the Welsh Government to help keep them safe online.

In autumn 2017, an engagement activity pack was designed by the NSPCC and publicised as part of a joint event with the National Assembly for Wales’ Cross Party Group on Children and Young People and the Cross Party Group on Preventing Child Sexual Abuse.
The activity pack was made available through the online safety zone on the Hwb learning platform. The activity pack invited children of all ages to share their views to guide the development of the Welsh Government’s first online safety action plan.

In total 246 children and young people responded to the pack. When asked to identify their wish for one key priority for the online safety action plan, the participant’s top three categories were:

1. bullying
2. concern about strangers
3. deception.

The concerns identified from the engagement activity are a core consideration in the development of the actions that Welsh Government will take forward to protect children and young people using the internet.
Online safety actions delivered to date

In January 2014, the Welsh Government contracted with a specialist provider, South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL), to promote safe, responsible and considerate behaviour online and to help protect children and young people in Wales from illegal and harmful content on the internet by developing a range of online safety tools, resources and activities aimed at education practitioners and professionals, governors, learners, parents and carers in Wales.

Since 2014 the Welsh Government has:

- delivered online safety training to more than 5,000 education practitioners and professionals
- successfully supported the improvement of school’s online safety provision via the 360 degree safe Cymru tool – the tool is provided through the Hwb digital learning platform to help schools to review and improve their online safety policy and practice
- produced the Online Safety Resource for Wales, a series of free lesson plans for every year group from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4 and beyond – the resources are designed to empower learners to think critically, behave safely, and participate responsibly in our digital world
- provided online safety information for education practitioners and professionals, learners, governors parents and carers, and to access through a specific zone on the Hwb digital learning platform in the form of news, resources, information and guidance, and playlists
- provided funding and support through the Learning in Digital Wales (LiDW) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Grant to enable the regional consortia to actively promote digital citizenship and the safe and responsible use of digital technology
- published the guidance *Recommended web filtering standards for schools in Wales* to underpin safeguarding learners online (these standards were reviewed in 2017)
- introduced the Digital Competence Framework in 2016 for all schools in Wales to support learners from 3 to 16 to protect themselves online by embedding the digital skills, knowledge and attitudes across the whole curriculum that enable the confident, creative and critical use of technologies and systems
- commissioned Barnardo’s Cymru to deliver training to all relevant partners on the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) resource package *Hidden*
- supported Safer Internet Day with competitions for children and schools to create opportunities to discuss online safety.
## Summary of actions

### Advice and support

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In recognition of the important role parents and carers play in keeping their children safe online, the Welsh Government will continue to provide bilingual guidance on various online safety issues to support them in keeping their families safe online.</td>
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<td>The Welsh Government will continue to periodically share tips and advice with parents and carers about the safe uses of screen time through our ‘Parenting. Give it time’ campaign website and Facebook pages.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will develop and provide bilingual online safety guidance and resources for school governors to promote further understanding of online safety issues and to help them in their responsibility to keep learners in their school safe online.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will host the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Command on Hwb to promote the National Crime Agency’s button for children and young people, parents and carers, education practitioners and professionals and governors to report any concerns about online sexual abuse.</td>
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### Collaboration

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<td>5</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will continue to build and support the National Online Safety Network, drawing together expertise from the local authorities and regional consortia to share good practice and to build a sustainable, consistent and rigorous approach to online safety across Wales.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will work with UK Safer Internet Centre to support the delivery of online safety events including the annual Safer Internet Day, stakeholder preparation sessions and Online Safety Live briefings.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will engage with the UK Government on the development of a UK Internet Safety Strategy and White Paper.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will continue to participate in the Executive Board of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) to ensure Wales is represented at a UK level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will continue to support the National Safeguarding in Education Group, to draw together local authority leads and other partners to share good practice and complete project work in safeguarding. Officials from Welsh Government will attend to represent the Hwb online safety programme of work.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will continue to engage with the Personal and Social Education (PSE) Advisory Group, considering online safety issues, as appropriate. The PSE Advisory Group will continue to act as a quality assurance for PSE-type lessons when required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Online safety will play a key role in the future of relationships and sexuality education following the recommendations put forward by the Sex and Relationships Education Expert Panel in March 2017.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will promote the use of the Digital Competence Framework, by continuing to work with schools to embed the necessary digital skills, knowledge and attitudes across the whole curriculum to protect learners online.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will continue to provide funding through the Regional School Improvement Grant to enable the regional consortia to actively promote digital citizenship and the safe and responsible use of digital technology.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will participate in the Wales Internet Safety Partnership to provide updates on online safety work programmes and discuss online safety issues.</td>
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The Welsh Government will continue to review and monitor the impact of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) (Wales) Act 2015 and local authorities’ duties in relation to education provision.

The Welsh Government will explore how to strengthen online safety provision in education other than at school (EOTAS) services, including pupil referral units (PRUs).

The Welsh Government’s Health and Education portfolios will jointly fund a pilot to test approaches to the provision of mental health in-reach support to schools from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

The Welsh Government will continue to work with Pioneer Schools through the relevant Areas of Learning and Experience, including Health and well-being, to ensure online safety issues inform the development of the new curriculum framework.

### Communication and promotion

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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will continue to support education stakeholder engagement events which include a focus on online safety.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will continue to provide a dynamic Online Safety Zone on Hwb, for sources of online safety news, events and resources for children, young people, education professionals, governors, parents and carers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will support Safer Internet Day in Wales annually to raise the profile and importance of online safety across Wales.</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will use social media platforms to communicate and raise awareness of the extensive range of online safety activities taking place across Wales.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will continue to work with SWGfL to provide a monthly bilingual online safety newsletter.</td>
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### Guidance

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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will revise and update the statutory safeguarding guidance <em>Keeping learners safe</em>, which will include an update on online safety.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will ensure the issues of online grooming and child sexual exploitation are considered when updating the statutory guidance <em>Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>A multi-agency task and finish group will develop all Wales practice guidance on safeguarding children at risk of online abuse. This will be consulted on and issued by Cardiff and the Vale Safeguarding Board on behalf of The Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Cymru and the Safeguarding Boards in Wales. The National Protection Procedures and supporting practice guidance are intended to be issued in early 2019.</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will maintain the recommended web filtering standards for schools in Wales.</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will review and revise the non-statutory anti-bullying guidance <em>Respecting others</em>, which includes advice on tackling cyberbullying in schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will review the anti-bullying resources that are currently available for schools and assess any needs to better support education practitioners to tackle bullying in education settings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>The Welsh Government will maintain <em>Respect and resilience</em> guidance for schools.</td>
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### Research

31 The Welsh Government will continue to explore current screen time usage by children in Wales to inform policy development in this area.

### Resources

32 The Welsh Government will work with SWGfL to promote and provide access to 360 degree safe Cymru, a bilingual online safety self-assessment tool that is available to all maintained schools in Wales through single sign-on (SSO) with Hwb. The content of the tool, in addition to the associated policy templates will be updated once every two years.

33 The Welsh Government will develop bilingual online safety resources for primary and secondary children on a range of specific online safety issues.

34 The Welsh Government will explore what online safety resources are available and how they can be tailored for home-educating parents and carers.

35 The Welsh Government will continue to develop a range of bilingual online safety materials for education practitioners, including classroom resources and teachers guides.

36 The Welsh Government will continue to provide new materials to enable education practitioners to host online safety sessions for parents and carers.

37 The Welsh Government will continue to work with Common Sense Media and SWGfL to develop and publish over 50 bilingual lesson plans and associated resources on a range of online safety issues.

38 The Welsh Government will continue to review, update and publish the Online Safety Resource for Wales on Hwb.

39 The Welsh Government will part-fund the development of a Year 6 child sexual exploitation resource.

40 The Welsh Government will develop and roll out a safeguarding audit tool and guidance for schools to use to assess their safeguarding provision.

41 The Welsh Government will work with the NSPCC to host a new bilingual version of NSPCC’s Net Aware resources.

42 The update of the Welsh Government’s counselling toolkit will include a chapter on online counselling, giving guidance on providing a safe online service.

### Training and development

43 The Welsh Government will continue to deliver a comprehensive online safety training programme, focusing on specific areas of online safety.

44 The Welsh Government will continue to promote the Keeping learners safe – Online safety module.

45 The Welsh Government will ensure online safety remains a key part of all digital inclusion related activity.

46 The Welsh Government will continue to work with key stakeholders to provide training material and support on matters relating to counter-terrorism.
Actions

Advice and support

1. In recognition of the important role parents and carers play in keeping their children safe online, the Welsh Government will continue to provide bilingual guidance on various online safety issues to support them in keeping their families safe online.

Parents and carers play an integral role in ensuring their children are suitably confident and equipped to stay safe online. As part of the online safety project, the Welsh Government will develop a parent and carer's guide to provide an understanding of what their children are exploring in school.

During 2017–18, the Welsh Government funded SWGfL to develop and create bilingual online safety guidance on various online safety issues specifically to support parents and carers in keeping their families safe online. This included a series of ‘A parent and carer’s guide to … ’ and a playlist covering the following topics.

- A parent and carer’s guide to age ratings of apps and games.
- A parent and carer’s guide to Google SafeSearch and YouTube Safety Mode.
- A parent and carer’s guide to talking to your child about staying safe online.
- A parent and carer’s guide to using safety features built into Smart TVs and on demand streaming services.
- A parent and carer’s guide to sharing information and images online.
- Fact or fiction: Don’t be fooled online (parents and carers).

To build upon the success of the series, the Welsh Government will fund a further year of the series, with topics identified by parents and carers at online safety focus groups which took place across Wales in early 2017.

Topics for 2018–19 will include the following.

- A parent and carer’s guide to the benefits and risks of online gaming.
- A parent and carer’s guide to new apps, connected toys and platforms.
- A parent and carer’s guide to the potential impact of the internet on their children’s well-being.
- A parent and carer’s guide to talking to your child or teenager about their relationships online.
2. The Welsh Government will continue to periodically share tips and advice with parents and carers about the safe uses of screen time through our ‘Parenting. Give it time’ campaign website and Facebook pages.

Our ‘Parenting. Give it time’ campaign was launched in November 2015. The campaign promotes positive parenting messages in a number of different ways, including through social and print media and digital advertising. A dedicated website and Facebook page provide parenting tips, information and advice, and signpost parents/carers to sources of further support. A booklet and a series of information advice sheets on handling common parenting concerns is also provided to parents/carers.

In an informal survey of 1,490 parents of under-fives in Wales in March 2016, more than a quarter listed their child’s use of technology, such as smart phones, computers, tablets and similar devices, as one of their top three parenting concerns.

Screen time, refers to time spent in front of a screen watching television, playing on a computer, tablet or smartphone. Current parenting recommendations are to limit the amount of screen time children have, especially for those aged five and under.

Some of the negative effects of screen use can be offset by parents/carers sharing screen time with their children. Advice for parents/carers provided through the campaign website focuses on how they can integrate digital media into their family life. Specific tips are provided around online safety, age appropriate content, setting limits, and role modelling how and when technology is used.

3. The Welsh Government will develop and provide bilingual online safety guidance and resources for school governors to promote further understanding of online safety issues and to help them in their responsibility to keep learners in their school safe online.

In recognition of the key role governors play in safeguarding within a school and listening to feedback from stakeholders during 2017–18, the Welsh Government funded the development of resources aimed at governors through our specialist contractor SWGfL to develop bilingual online safety guidance and resources for governors.

The resources for governors mirrored the topics created for learners, parents and carers, and education practitioners and professionals. During 2018–19, the Welsh Government will continue to fund the creation of a further six resources for governors covering key areas of online safety.
4. **The Welsh Government will host the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Command on Hwb to promote the National Crime Agency’s button for children and young people, parents and carers, education practitioners and professionals and governors to report any concerns about online sexual abuse.**

The Click CEOP button is an asset of the National Crime Agency’s CEOP Command. The CEOP Command works to protect children and young people from the harm of sexual abuse and exploitation both online and offline.

The button has been developed to offer children and young people, parents and carers, education practitioners and professionals, and governors working with these groups with a simple and convenient mechanism for gaining access to trusted online safety advice, help and support. It also provides access to an online mechanism for reporting known or suspected child sexual exploitation or child sexual abuse directly to CEOP. This is offered as a convenient and potentially less intimidating method of reporting these sensitive types of crime, alternative to face-to-face and telephone reporting to local police forces.

Reports can be made to CEOP by children and young people, parents or carers, education practitioners or professionals, or governors working with these groups. CEOP operates a 24/7 service for the receipt of reports. All reports to CEOP are treated as reports of crime and as such anonymous reports cannot be accepted.

**Collaboration**

5. **The Welsh Government will continue to build and support the National Online Safety Network, drawing together expertise from the local authorities and regional consortia to share good practice and to build a sustainable, consistent and rigorous approach to online safety across Wales.**

The National Online Safety Network (NOSN) is the network of professionals from educational settings, local authorities, regional consortia and other organisations across Wales which contributes to the development of effective online safety practice.

This practitioners’ network was established in November 2017 to facilitate a dialogue across Wales to support the development of robust arrangements of online safety in the country.

The NOSN meets three times a year and their primary focus is to identify and develop arrangements to support practitioners to deliver a shared objective to help keep children and young people safe online.

The NOSN discuss issues which impact on online safety matters and provide expert advice and views to the Welsh Government to steer the online safety programme, which is part of the wider Learning in Digital Wales programme.
6. The Welsh Government will work with UK Safer Internet Centre to support the delivery of online safety events including the annual Safer Internet Day, stakeholder preparation sessions and Online Safety Live briefings.

As part of its outreach work for the UK Safer Internet Centre programme of ‘Online Safety Briefings’, SWGfL, as partner in the UK Safer Internet Centre, will deliver 15 two-hour briefing sessions across Wales. The sessions give up-to-date information on the latest online safety, trends, technologies, issues and research, as well as signposting delegates to resources and advice. The events are designed specifically for any professional working with children and young people including school staff, safeguarding professionals, youth workers, police, social workers and health professionals.

The Safer Internet Day stakeholder event will bring together key stakeholders to discuss the collaborative plans for Safer Internet Day 2019.


The Welsh Government is engaging with the UK Government and contributing to the development of the UK Internet Safety Strategy.

8. The Welsh Government will continue to participate in the Executive Board of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) to ensure Wales is represented at a UK level.

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) is a group of more than 200 organisations drawn from across government, industry, law, academia and charity sectors that work in partnership to help keep children and young people safe online. The council was established in 2010 following a review by Professor Tanya Byron discussing, and taking action, on topical issues concerning children’s use of the internet.

9. The Welsh Government will continue to support the National Safeguarding in Education Group, to draw together local authority leads and other partners to share good practice and complete project work in safeguarding. Officials from Welsh Government will attend to represent the Hwb online safety programme of work.

The Safeguarding in Education Group (SEG) comprises of safeguarding leads across all local authorities in Wales, as well as other interested bodies such as Estyn and Association of Directors of Education in Wales (ADEW). The group meets three times a year to share best practice and deliver an agreed programme of work. The SEG group also act as informal consultants for Welsh Government policies and projects.
10. The Welsh Government will continue to engage with the Personal and Social Education (PSE) Advisory Group, considering online safety issues, as appropriate. The PSE Advisory Group will continue to act as a quality assurance for PSE-type lessons when required.

The PSE Advisory Group has been established to provide a forum for discussing possible ways to support schools to deliver high-quality sessions relating to the PSE framework.

The purpose of the PSE Advisory Group is to provide advice guidance and highlight opportunities to support schools in delivering high-quality PSE.

As recognised specialists in their areas, members of the group provide advice on the impact of curriculum reform in Wales relating to the delivery of PSE and the links to the Health and well-being Area of Learning and Experience of the new curriculum.

Members of the group also provide quality assurance on learning and teaching resources before they are published and hosted on Hwb, the digital learning platform for Wales. This is to ensure high-quality consistent teaching support is hosted in one place for easy access for practitioners.

11. Online safety will play a key role in the future of relationships and sexuality education following the recommendations put forward by the Sex and Relationships Education Expert Panel in March 2017.

Online safety was a key area within the recommendations submitted by the Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Expert Panel in December 2017. The Cabinet Secretary for Education accepted those recommendations in principle in May 2018. Online safety will play a key role in the future of relationships and sexuality education (RSE) the new updated name for SRE. New guidance will be provided in 2019.

12. The Welsh Government will promote the use of the Digital Competence Framework, by continuing to work with schools to embed the necessary digital skills, knowledge and attitudes across the whole curriculum to protect learners online.

The Digital Competence Framework (DCF) which was made available in September 2016 supports learners to protect themselves online by embedding the digital skills, knowledge and attitudes across the whole curriculum that enable the confident, creative and critical use of technologies and systems.

The DCF has four strands of equal importance (Citizenship, Interacting and collaborating, Producing, and Data and computational thinking).

The focus of the Citizenship strand is on learners developing the skills and behaviours to contribute positively to the digital world around them which includes protecting themselves online. The Interacting and collaborating strand also allows learners to explore both formal and informal methods of communication including social media and instant messaging. Learners will not only look at how to store data,
but will consider the implications of data laws and how to share information appropriately.

The Welsh Government wants to provide all teachers with confidence when integrating digital competence into their lessons. The Digital Pioneer Schools are now actively helping other schools with the implementation of the DCF and the Welsh Government want to maintain this momentum to ensure that they, together with the regional consortia, are supporting schools with the necessary expertise. The Digital Pioneer Schools are also continuing to develop materials which will be hosted on Hwb for all schools to access. The Digital Pioneers are also working alongside the curriculum pioneers on the development of the new Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) to ensure that digital competence is effectively embedded across the new curriculum.

13. The Welsh Government will continue to provide funding through the Regional School Improvement Grant to enable the regional consortia to actively promote digital citizenship and the safe and responsible use of digital technology.

Previously known as the Learning in Digital Wales (LiDW) Grant (Phase 2), a continuation of the three-year programme which began in January 2014, a further £1.5m of grant funding has been agreed which will provide continued support for the LiDW programme to regional consortia for three years from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2019.

Activities focus on:

- providing support to practitioners in schools to develop their confidence and competence in using the range of digital resources and tools available through the LiDW programme
- providing capacity for expert ‘Digital Leader’ support which will coordinate support for schools across the regional consortium in adopting and exploiting the LiDW tools and activities
- actively promoting digital citizenship in relation to the safe and responsible use of the tools and resources available through the LiDW programme and in relation to digital technology more widely
- supporting practitioners in developing their own leadership and digital literacy skills in line with the development and implementation of Digital Competency Framework and the new curriculum for Wales
- supporting the ongoing development of the LiDW programme by supporting the Welsh Government’s Digital Learning Unit in gathering feedback from education practitioners to inform the future direction of the programme.
The Welsh Internet Safety Partnership (WISP) was founded by BT Wales and WISE KIDS in May 2007. It is an informal partnership of representative member organisations in Wales (or whose remit covers Wales), which have an interest in promoting digital literacy for children and young people in Wales. The aim of WISP is to promote digital literacy for children and young people in Wales, through the sharing of information, knowledge, ideas, resources and good practice among members. Their broader aim is to engage children and young people more effectively to enable them to:

- better understand the digital world
- be effective users of online technologies
- assess online risk and manage their personal safety and digital identities.

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) (Wales) Act 2015 and local authorities’ duties in relation to education provision.

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act received Royal Assent on 29 April 2015 and is intended to ensure a focus across the public sector on the prevention of these issues, the protection of victims and the support for those affected by such issues.

The overarching purpose is to improve the public sector response to gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence and to provide a strategic focus on these issues and ensure consistent consideration of preventative, protective and support mechanisms in the delivery of services.

Objective 2 of the National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence 2016–2021 relates to this area:

*Increased awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong.*

To support the education-related provisions in the Act and the objective in the strategy, the Welsh Government are progressing a comprehensive wider package of measures, which link to the Department for Education and Skills’ safeguarding in schools agenda and to implementation of the curriculum review.

In 2015–16 the Welsh Government produced awareness raising materials for school governors and published a Good Practice Guide: A Whole Education Approach to Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence in Wales. The Welsh Government also commissioned Welsh Women’s Aid in partnership with Against Violence and Abuse (AVA) to research and compile a package of best practice materials in relation to these matters, for use in education settings across Wales.
16. The Welsh Government will explore how to strengthen online safety provision in education other than at school (EOTAS) settings, including pupil referral units (PRUs).

In December 2017, the Welsh Government published the *Education otherwise than at school (EOTAS) Framework for Action* – the culmination of two years of sector engagement and discussion by the cross-sector EOTAS Task and Finish Group. The overarching aim of the framework is to increase the equality of opportunity for learners accessing EOTAS provision, to better enable them to fulfil their potential.

The EOTAS Delivery Group, which includes representatives from EOTAS provision, local authorities and mainstream schools, has been established to oversee the implementation of the framework. In implementing the 34 proposals within the framework, the EOTAS Delivery Group will be exploring how access to pastoral services such as careers advice, counselling and Hwb can be improved for EOTAS learners.

17. The Welsh Government’s Health and Education portfolios will jointly fund a pilot to test approaches to the provision of mental health in-reach support to schools from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

The Welsh Government’s mental health in-reach to schools pilot aims to help and support teachers to respond to children and young people who are experiencing difficulties such as anxiety, low mood, and compulsive, self-harm or conduct disorders. Mental health issues may, in some cases, be due to or exacerbated by, digital technology.

The funded pilot activity will cover two full academic years, concluding in the summer of 2020. There will be a specific focus on early identification and intervention. The pilot will run in three areas – Betsi Cadwalader University Local Health Board for north east Wales (Wrexham and Denbighshire); Aneurin Bevan Local Health Board for south east Wales (Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and south Powys); and Hywel Dda Health Board in west Wales (Ceredigion).

Funding also includes provision to evaluate the pilots, and the evaluation will inform future policy direction.

18. The Welsh Government will continue to work with Pioneer Schools through the relevant Areas of Learning and Experience, including Health and well-being, to ensure online safety issues inform the development of the new curriculum framework.

The new curriculum for Wales is being developed by teachers and practitioners through a network of Pioneer Schools in partnership with Welsh Government, regional consortia, Estyn, Qualifications Wales, Higher Education, business and other key partners.

The new curriculum is structured around six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs), one of which is Health and well-being. Through this AoLE, learners will gain knowledge and understanding of how their environment, including the online
environment, mind and physical state affects their health, well-being and readiness to learn throughout their lives.

**Communication and promotion**

19. **The Welsh Government will continue to support education stakeholder engagement events which include a focus on online safety.**

There are a range of digital stakeholder events that take place across Wales. These include:

- the annual National Digital Learning Event which is a national flagship event, aimed at teachers and those working in education in Wales, to raise the profile of digital learning, with a view to identifying and sharing exemplars of good practice and expertise in digital learning
- **HwbMeets** are face-to-face teacher networking sessions that facilitate the sharing of best practice and enable teachers to learn from others; these are delivered in conjunction with regional consortia
- SWGfL, as part of the UK Safer Internet Centre, will deliver online safety briefing sessions in Wales.

20. **The Welsh Government will continue to provide a dynamic Online Safety Zone on Hwb, for sources of online safety news, events and resources for children, young people, education professionals, governors, parents and carers.**

Hwb, the digital learning platform for Wales, provides education stakeholders with access to a wide range of centrally-funded bilingual digital tools and resources to support the transformation of education practices.

The Online Safety Zone was launched on Hwb on Safer Internet Day 6 February 2017. The zone is the dedicated area on Hwb designed and developed to support exemplary online safety practice in education across Wales.

The Online Safety Zone hosts a range of teaching resources on various online safety topics to help keep learners safe online. It provides access to sources of guidance and advice to learners, education practitioners, education professionals, governors, parents and carers, schools and further expert support. The zone also hosts a training events calendar to enable practitioners to sign up to online safety training sessions.
21. The Welsh Government will support Safer Internet Day in Wales annually to raise the profile and importance of online safety across Wales.

Safer Internet Day (SID) is celebrated globally in February each year to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology for children and young people and inspire a national conversation. The Welsh Government will continue to support this day annually. SID 2019 is to be held on 5 February.

Coordinated in the UK by the UK Safer Internet Centre the celebration sees hundreds of organisations unite to raise awareness of online safety issues and run events and activities right across the UK.

22. The Welsh Government will use social media platforms to communicate and raise awareness of the extensive range of online safety activities taking place across Wales.

The Welsh Government’s @HwbNews twitter feed is extensively used to promote online safety activities. This includes information about upcoming online safety events and details of resources that have been published via the Online Safety Zone.

Additionally, the education newsletter Dysg is also extensively used to promote online safety activities.

23. The Welsh Government will continue to work with SWGfL to provide a monthly bilingual online safety newsletter.

On a monthly basis SWGfL will continue to provide a bilingual online safety newsletter which is published by the Welsh Government on Hwb.

Guidance

24. The Welsh Government will revise and update the statutory safeguarding guidance *Keeping learners safe*, which will include an update on online safety.

The Welsh Government has published statutory guidance – *Keeping learners safe* – to help support education services in delivering its statutory responsibilities to maintain a safe learning environment, and identify and respond to well-being concerns with other agencies, where necessary.

This guidance is due to be refreshed to take consideration of developments in legislation and policy, including online safety, including online bullying and sexting as appropriate.
25. The Welsh Government will ensure the issues of online grooming and child sexual exploitation are considered when updating the statutory guidance *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation*. The *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation* guidance document aims to help teachers, health professionals, social workers, the police and other key practitioners in Wales to tackle sexual exploitation. The guidance also helps to identify children at risk, equip them to protect these vulnerable children and to take action against the perpetrators.

26. A multi-agency task and finish group will develop all Wales practice guidance on safeguarding children at risk of online abuse. This will be consulted on and issued by Cardiff and the Vale Safeguarding Board on behalf of the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Cymru and the Safeguarding Boards in Wales. The National Protection Procedures and supporting practice guidance are intended to be issued in early 2019.

A multi-agency task and finish group has been convened to develop refreshed statutory safeguarding guidance on child sexual exploitation. The guidance will be issued for formal consultation in autumn 2018 and will include information on online grooming and child sexual exploitation. The Welsh Government has provided funding to enable Cardiff and the Vale Safeguarding Board to review and develop National Protection Procedures. The Welsh Government is working with task and finish groups to develop practice guidance to be used in conjunction with National Protection Procedures. This will include updating the All Wales Protocol on The Protection of Children from Abuse via Information Technology.

27. The Welsh Government will maintain the recommended web filtering standards for schools in Wales.

The web filtering standards are a common set of agreed standards for internet access that provides schools with the tools to make informed choices about appropriate filtered internet provision, whether delivered by the local authority or another provider. The standards support schools to be fit for twenty-first century learning and teaching while still safeguarding children and young people.

The standards also include the prerequisites for Hwb tools, which outline the digital requirements for schools to get the most from the digital learning platform toolset.

28. The Welsh Government will review and revise the non-statutory anti-bullying guidance *Respecting others*, which includes advice on tackling cyberbullying in schools.

In 2003, the Welsh Government published non-statutory guidance to help tackle bullying in schools in Wales – *Respecting others: anti-bullying guidance*. In 2011, the guidance was updated and expanded to address five key areas of bullying. One of these key areas is cyberbullying. Working with key stakeholders we are currently reviewing *Respecting others* to ensure the guidance continues to provide effective
support to local authorities, schools, parents, carers and learners. The revised guidance will be published for consultation in 2018.

29. **The Welsh Government will review the anti-bullying resources that are currently available for schools and assess any needs to better support education practitioners to tackle bullying in education settings.**

In addition to revising *Respecting others* guidance, we are also working with key stakeholders to look at what strategies and resources are needed to support delivery of the anti-bullying message in education settings. A review of the materials that are currently available is underway and based on the findings of that review we will consider developing further resources to support education practitioners to address bullying.

30. **The Welsh Government will maintain *Respect and resilience* guidance for schools.**

The *Respect and resilience* guidance for schools aims to support the development of community cohesion and preventing violent extremism in all secondary, pupil referral units, special schools and other educational settings.

**Research**

31. **The Welsh Government will explore current screen time usage by young children in Wales to inform policy development in this area.**

From built-in digital media players in cars to smart phones and tablets, children and young people have more access to electronic media than ever before. Technology is constantly changing but the role of parents and carers in providing safe, caring limits remains unchanged over time. While there are a number of surveys which report on children’s screen time, electronic device usage and internet use, they do not include children age seven or under. There is very little data which is specific to Wales or that investigates the extent to which parents and carers engage with their children during screen time use.

The National Survey for Wales (NSW) is a study of a representative sample of over 10,000 people across Wales. The results are used by the Welsh Government to help make Wales a better place to live. The survey covers a range of topics with a focus on well-being and people’s views on public services. In the National Survey for Wales 2017–18, the Welsh Government addressed questions about screen time use to respondents who are parents and carers with children under seven. Results from this survey for parents and carers with children in the age group 3–7 will be available in summer 2018. These questions will also be included in the NSW for 2018–19 to cover parents and carers with children aged between one and five, and the results will be available in summer 2019.

Exploring current usage in Wales is the first step in shaping our policy in this area, which may include the development of advice and guidance to the family support workforce and parents/carers directly.
32. The Welsh Government will work with SWGfL to promote and provide access to 360 degree safe Cymru, a bilingual online safety self-assessment tool that is available to all maintained schools in Wales through single sign-on (SSO) with Hwb. The content of the tool, in addition to the associated policy templates will be updated once every two years.

360 degree safe Cymru is a bilingual online safety self-assessment tool which has been designed to allow all maintained schools, local authorities and other education settings in Wales to assess and review their online safety policy and practice. The tool guides schools through 28 aspects of online safety, helping them to collaborate, report, and progress their online safety provision.

The 360 degree safe Cymru self-assessment tool provides:

- information that can influence the production or review of online safety policies and develop good practice
- a process for identifying strengths and areas for improvement
- opportunities for commitment and involvement from the whole school
- a continuum for schools to discuss how they might move from a basic level provision for online safety to practice that is aspirational and innovative.

The content of the tool and associated policy templates was updated in January 2017.

33. The Welsh Government will develop bilingual online safety resources for primary and secondary children on a range of specific online safety issues.

The Welsh Government recognises the importance of providing reliable information on the broad range of online safety issues to provide support and guidance for children and young people. It also recognises the importance of these resources being engaging, age appropriate and pitched to the appropriate age group.

There are many good quality, online safety resources created by various experts across the sector, however most are available in English only. To help address this, the Welsh Government has contracted a specialist provider SWGfL until 2019 to develop a range of high-quality, bilingual online safety resources for primary and secondary learners.
34. The Welsh Government will explore what online safety resources are available and how they can be tailored for home-educating parents and carers.

The Hwb Online Safety Zone provides education stakeholders with access to a wide range of online safety resources. Content on the zone is regularly reviewed and gaps in provision identified and prioritised for future development.

The numbers of home-educated children continue to increase and many parents/carers will rely on the internet and online resources and tools to support home educating their children. We want to ensure we raise awareness of the potential risks with parents/carers as well as how to mitigate against these risks.

35. The Welsh Government will continue to develop a range of bilingual online safety materials for education practitioners, including classroom resources and teachers guides.

The Welsh Government will ensure practitioners have access to a range of high-quality bilingual resources to support the delivery of online safety education in schools.

During 2017–18, the Welsh Government piloted a new series ‘A teacher’s guide to …’. Each guide in the series covers a different topical issue in the current online safety landscape and includes useful hints and tips for education practitioners. The guides also signpost to other sources for further reading and provide a range of practical suggestions and ideas.

Having received positive feedback on the series, the Welsh Government will fund another series of these guides during 2018–19, covering relevant topics that stakeholders have identified as current and necessary.

36. The Welsh Government will continue to provide new materials to enable education practitioners to host online safety sessions for parents and carers.

The role of parents and carers in keeping learners safe online is significant. To support schools to engage with parents and carers to help them to develop their online skills and safety awareness, the Welsh Government will continue to fund SWGfL to develop new materials for education practitioners to host online safety sessions for parents and carers.

37. The Welsh Government will continue to work with Common Sense Media and SWGfL to develop and publish over 50 bilingual lesson plans and associated resources on a range of online safety issues.

Common Sense Media and SWGfL are specialists in providing guidance and resources to support online safety and digital literacy. The Welsh Government will continue to work with these organisations to ensure education stakeholders in Wales have access to the latest online safety and digital literacy resources.
38. **The Welsh Government will continue to review, update and publish the Online Safety Resource for Wales on Hwb.**

The Online Safety Resource for Wales is a set of lesson plans that schools can use to teach online safety and digital literacy to all year groups, from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 5. They are based on Common Sense Media’s free online safety resource, which empowers learners to think critically, behave safely, and participate responsibly in our digital world.

39. **The Welsh Government will part-fund the development of a Year 6 child sexual exploitation resource.**

In December 2015, the Welsh Government launched a new educational resource pack *Hidden* – an educational resource on child sexual exploitation (CSE) – which was developed with Barnardo’s Cymru. This resource was aimed at education practitioners to help them to tackle the difficult issue of child sexual exploitation, in the classroom.

In light of feedback from stakeholders following training on the *Hidden* resource, there was concern that children younger than 14 were at risk of child sexual exploitation, but the resource would not be appropriate to use with this age group.

The Welsh Government has commissioned the development of an additional CSE resource for Year 6 learners. This resource is part-funded by the Welsh Government and the four police regions across Wales.

40. **The Welsh Government will develop and roll out a safeguarding audit tool and guidance for schools to use to assess their safeguarding provision.**

The Welsh Government has commissioned the development of a safeguarding assessment and audit tool. The audit tool will support education settings to develop their safeguarding processes and promote national consistency in exercising duties in line with the *Keeping learners safe* guidance. The audit tool will be rolled out in 2018–19 and the Welsh Government will commission an evaluation of the tool at the end of the first year. The long term-intention, following this evaluation, is to embed the toolkit into the *Keeping learners safe* guidance.

41. **The Welsh Government will work with the NSPCC to host a new bilingual version of NSPCC’s *Net Aware* resources.**

The NSPCC *Net Aware* resources are guides for parents and carers about social networks; these are currently available in English only. The Welsh Government will work with the NSPCC to host a new bilingual version of these resources.
The update of the Welsh Government’s counselling toolkit will include a chapter on online counselling, giving guidance on providing a safe online service.

Local authorities in Wales are required to make reasonable provision of counselling services for children and young people aged between 11 and 18 in their area and learners in Year 6 of primary school. Some local authorities also choose to offer online counselling to complement their face-to-face counselling service.

The Welsh Government is working with stakeholders to update the Counselling toolkit, which is aimed at counsellors, managers of counselling services, local authorities and schools. The revised toolkit will include advice on online counselling services, making it clear that when online counselling is offered it takes into account:

- the need to operate on a safe and secure platform
- child protection and safeguarding requirements
- the client’s suitability for the requested platform and their age, including Gillick competency (a term that is used to decide whether a child is able to consent to his or her own medical treatment, without the need for parental permission or knowledge), and in-depth understanding of issues around consent and confidentiality
- protocols and technical mechanisms for supporting clients in an emergency
- use of social media.

Training

The Welsh Government will continue to deliver a comprehensive online safety training programme, focusing on specific areas of online safety.

A programme of training events was delivered between April 2017 and March 2018 and included 36 bilingual half-day events across Wales covering the following topics.

- Safe use of social media and online abuse of teachers.
- Online safety for designated senior persons for child protection.
- Understanding and effectively tackling online bullying and online hate.

Through a contract with SWGfL, the Welsh Government will continue to develop and deliver an online safety training programme. The 2018–19 programme will include 36 half-day themed bilingual training sessions on the following.

- The internet and mental health.
- Harmful content online.
- GDPR and implications for schools.
44. The Welsh Government will continue to promote the *Keeping learners safe* – Online safety module.

To help embed this guidance, the Welsh Government published two e-learning modules and a case studies module, examining specific safeguarding situations which align closely with the content and the format of the *Keeping learners safe* guidance. The modules were launched on Hwb during Safeguarding Week, in November 2016. The modules are for all staff within an educational setting and comprise of:

- an introductory module, which outlines what safeguarding is, laws, policies and the importance of creating a safe environment as well as busting some common myths
- a module to help all staff members understand how to safeguard learners, common processes and the role of the designated senior person (DSP)
- an interactive module to assess their learning through case studies – designed to be completed alone, the case studies can also be taken out of the module and used during INSET days for a group of practitioners to discuss.

Two new modules have been added to the *Keeping learners safe* suite, with a specific focus on online safety. Like the previous modules, these are publicly available on Hwb through a playlist. The new modules have been developed to empower all education practitioners and governors with a sound introduction to online safety and how this impacts on safeguarding learners.

They provide a background to the safeguarding issues that can occur online and detail some of the apps and services young people use. Each playlist also contains a range of links to useful and relevant documents and guidance.

45. The Welsh Government will ensure online safety remains a key part of all digital inclusion related activity.

The Welsh Government’s digital inclusion policy focuses predominately on adults aged 16 and over, specifically the following four priority groups:

- older people
- disabled people
- those living in social housing
- the economically inactive and unemployed.

Digital Communities Wales (DCW) is the Welsh Government’s dedicated digital inclusion programme, run by the Wales Co-operative Centre. DCW trains and supports organisations to engage digitally excluded people with technologies, and encourages recruitment of volunteers to act as digital champions.
The Welsh Government will ensure online safety is included as a key topic in all digital inclusion training material for staff and volunteers, for example:

- front line staff training
- Welsh Baccalaureate Digital Inclusion community challenge
- digital heroes intergenerational digital inclusion volunteering training, e.g. police cadets
- corporate staff volunteering training
- Girl Guides and Scouts Digital Inclusion badges, currently in development.

46. The Welsh Government will continue to work with key stakeholders to provide training material and support on matters relating to counter-terrorism.

The Welsh Government will continue to work with the Welsh Extremism and Counter Terrorism Unit (WECTU), headteachers and safeguarding leads to provide appropriate training on matters relating to counter-terrorism and ensure schools have and are familiar with procedures and processes in place. A key feature of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 is a duty on schools and colleges to ‘have due regard, in the exercise of their functions, to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’ the UK Government published the Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales for specified bodies including education providers.

As part of Prevent there is a duty on schools to ensure that staff are trained to identify those at risk of radicalisation.

To support the implementation of Prevent the Welsh Government has:

- published and updated the version of our guidance document Respect and resilience – developing community cohesion and this includes an associated self-assessment toolkit; the guidance ensures that schools in Wales have information to help them meet the legal requirements of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- published Trust me Cymru – a bilingual version classroom resource created by Childnet as part of the UK Safer Internet Centre that tackles online bias and propaganda.

The Cabinet Secretary for Education has recently written to local authorities seeking assurances that schools have appropriate procedures in place.
Conclusion

Our use of the internet and digital technology is constantly evolving and has become an increasingly integral part of everyday life for children and young people. As the internet and its usage evolves so does the opportunity for misuse and potential risk of harm to its users.

The actions set out in this document illustrate the Welsh Government’s commitment and proactive approach to helping to protect children and young people from illegal and harmful content on the internet and to promote safe, responsible and considerate behaviour online.

The Welsh Government will review progress against these actions and publish an update to the action plan within 12 months of its publication.