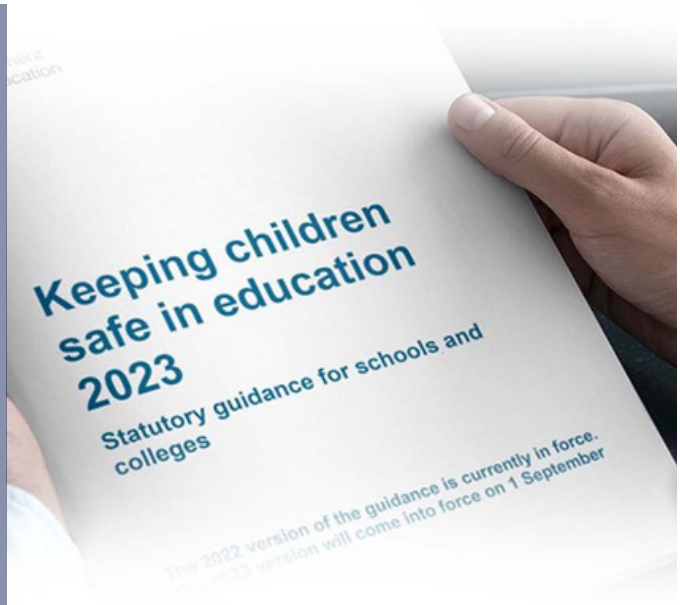
Smoothwall filtering and monitoring

How does our product meet the KCSIE Requirements?



What's new in KCSIE 2023?

The DFE have published a new version of the KCSIE document that will come into effect on 1st September 2023. The new guidelines put a far greater emphasis on web filtering and monitoring, obligating schools to be able to report on the data gathered by their firewall.

What does this mean for you?

The updated guidance makes it clear that all staff should understand the expectations, applicable roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring.

"The designated safeguarding lead should take lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. Information on school child protection policies should include information on appropriate filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks."

"The guidance signposts the Department for Education's new filtering and monitoring standards (DfE, 2023b), which support schools to have effective systems in place."

Source: CASPAR briefing on key updates to statutory guidance for schools in England made in 2022 and 2023

How can we support you?

Shropshire ICT (the external IT service provider referenced in the DFE document) currently offers Smoothwall as its main filtering and monitoring product. However, we also offer an advanced monitoring product that goes one step further, allowing staff to see what their pupils are doing in real-time whilst also capturing details on both intent and anything they have actually tried to access that is within their defined categories. For more information on either of these products, please contact us via the details below.

CONTACT US

ict.support@shropshire.gov.uk

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Changes outlined in the new DfE document

You should assign clear roles and responsibilities to manage your filtering and monitoring systems.

Customers, who take our web filtering service, will have user-based Internet access checked against a threat database, and policies specifically created for your school that allow or block defined categories depending on the schools' requirements. **Amendments to policies should be done by submitting a support request to our service desk (ict.support@shropshire.gov.uk).**

Shropshire ICT are responsible for the ongoing maintenance and checks of these products including updates and any amendments required so that they stay effective. Historical web filter reports covering school wide or individual users can be emailed to specific school representatives.
The web filtering service also has a basic safeguarding feature enabled for your school and this provides an email alert to a specific school email address so it can be actioned by the DSL. If you would like the email address changed that these are sent to, please email ICT.Support@Shropshire.gov.uk.

- Email alerts will come from **noreply@smoothwall.com** and can be send to a specific address
- Email alerts for critical categories (suicide, self-harm) will be prioritised.
- Emails are sent following a violation for websites and searches only
- Email alerts raise potential issues and contain a report stating if it has been blocked (true) or not blocked (false)
- The school is responsible for acting on the alerts.
- The safeguarding feature is enabled for everyone at your school as standard (staff & pupils) unless you have advised us otherwise.
- Safeguarding alerts are only available to users on the local school network. Any remote working (off school site) currently does not get monitored. Our team are working towards enabling this feature.
- Detailed reports can be generated through a request (ict.support@shropshire.gov.uk).
- Periodic testing of the web filter and monitoring should be the school's responsibility.

You should review your filtering and monitoring at least annually.

The school should review filtering and monitoring arrangements on a regular basis (at least annually or following an incident) to ensure the technologies in place meet the schools' safeguarding requirements. You should evaluate if the technologies are working at the correct level for your needs and review any issues if required. Viewing regular filtering reports for example, can help get a view to what content is being blocked or allowed. If rules are needing to be amended to better suit the individual user, year group or age, then this can be done through our service desk (ict.support@shropshire.gov.uk).

A school needs to review and decide what safeguarding technologies are required and best fits their needs. Shropshire ICT can collaborate with your school to get the required technology implemented for your needs. Any changes to working practices such fresh staff, pupils or technology should prompt another safeguarding review to be completed by the school.

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Our filtering system should block harmful and inappropriate content, without limiting teaching and learning.

All web filtering and monitoring solutions are not 100% effective and have limitations. Schools need to be aware of this and as mentioned earlier, ensure regular reviews and testing is done. Any changes to requirements of your staff, pupils or technology need to be reviewed by the school and Shropshire ICT as your IT service provider can help with any changes that are required.

Your web filtering is currently provided by Smoothwall on your main school internet feed and protects all school owned devices including laptops, iPads, PC's and Chromebook as long as they are connected to your main school network. Please be aware that should you join your devices to any other network at the school or another location, then they will **not** be monitored by Smoothwall. As a minimum, the device, time, date and search or website detail are identified in all web based activity. Safe search is enabled for your school on supported browsers (Chrome & Edge).

Smoothwall are a member of Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) signed up to Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit list (CTIRU) and are blocking access to illegal content including child sexual abuse material (CSAM). The UK safer internet centre have a report to verify the requirements of the DfE - smoothwalls-appropriate-filtering-for-education-settings-filtering-provider-response-june-2021.pdf (d1xsi6mgo67kia.cloudfront.net)

Our web filtering solution provides a combined blocklist which includes words in a wide variety of languages, focussed on those spoken in UK and US schools. This also includes Polish and Spanish as well as other languages such as Urdu and Russian.

Schools that use guest wireless internet access have a basic policy in place to protect against adult content, unlawful terrorism and child sexual abuse content. **Pupils should not use these internet connections and therefore all school devices should not use the guest network.**

You should have effective monitoring strategies that meet the safeguarding needs of your school or college.

Shropshire ICT has a basic safeguarding solution included with your web filtering product. As mentioned above this does come with a basic safeguarding feature. However, schools need to be mindful that this can only report on the information available. For example, if pupils are using generic logins then it will **not** be able to identify the individual user. To improve on this, we would advise your pupils use individual logins. (We are aware that this can cause issues for some pupils when trying to login and we do offer a product to our SMS Schools - ClassLink - that can support with this by allowing pupils to login using a QR Code. For more information on this, please get in touch.)
Additionally, we offer an advanced safeguarding monitoring solution that can monitor user activity on individual school owned devices and alert selected staff to any breaches according to a monitoring policy. This product offers additional benefits over the basic safeguarding feature you have included with web filtering.
These include: -

- Real-time monitoring and alerts to a teacher console for any events discovered.
- Ability to view user screens in real-time and review historical events.
- Identification of the user logged on and captures evidence of the violation.
- The ability to prevent access to the Internet for a time.
- Staff can access reports immediately from their console.
- Works with most devices such as Windows, Chromebook & iPad (using dedicated app).

Please let us know if you would like more information on this product.

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