



# 10 key facts

**you must understand about the  
'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance  
from the Department for Education**

by Mark Donkersley, CEO, eSafe

# The facts regarding the guidance from the Department for Education

The Department for Education (DfE) guidance, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Sept 2016), states that school and college leaders should be doing “all that they reasonably can to limit children’s exposure to the risks” from the establishment’s ICT system, while putting in place early intervention strategies to help to stop safeguarding risks escalating.

In order to help you better understand both your statutory duty and what the guidance means to your school or college, eSafe has put together 10 key facts. Accompanying each fact is details of how our unique, outsourced monitoring solution takes the strain out of keeping children and young people safe in education, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

## Online safety: Three broad areas of responsibility

**Content:** limiting children’s exposure to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material

**Contact:** protecting children from being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users

**Conduct:** monitoring personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes harm

## eSafe: leading the way in the early detection of safeguarding risks



### Intelligent detection software

eSafe detection software goes way beyond other solutions to intercept safeguarding risks, monitoring words and phrases in any language plus still and moving images.



### Expert behaviour analysis

Highly skilled Behaviour Analysts are trained to detect even the most subtle warning signs of inappropriate or illegal behaviour. They review all incidents to determine whether or not they are genuine.



### Dynamic threat libraries

Working closely with specialist agencies, eSafe’s Insightlab team works tirelessly to ensure our Threat Libraries are continuously up to date with emerging behaviour trends to ensure no threat goes undetected.



“As schools and colleges increasingly work online it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. As such, governing bodies and proprietors should ensure appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place”

(DfE, Sept 2016)

# 1

## Filtering is still really important – but nowhere near enough

When it comes to online safety, traditional filtering solutions play a significant role in achieving a safe environment. Yet, with over 1 billion sites on the web today, the DfE recognises that it's pretty much impossible to filter out all the illegal, inappropriate and potentially harmful content.

Add to this the responsibility to avoid 'over blocking' to ensure our children's learning opportunities aren't stifled, and it becomes imperative that, in addition to filtering solutions, effective monitoring systems are also in place.

Self-administered solutions – like filtering software that offers a degree of key word detection, and traditional monitoring software – have shortcomings with respect to this aspect of the guidance. This is down to the fact that both solutions rely heavily on having a dedicated and trained team of behaviour experts in place – to review materials and determine whether incidents are benign or a genuine indicator of safeguarding risk.

This can be both costly in terms of time and money, and a real drain on valuable teaching resources.

### eSafe: a complete monitoring solution

When you choose eSafe as your safeguarding partner, your establishment benefits from a unique service comprising intelligent detection software, a team of highly skilled Behaviour Analysts and up-to-the minute dynamic threat libraries – providing highly effective forensic monitoring, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

# 2

## The markers of harmful and inappropriate behaviours are often incredibly subtle

The DfE guidance states that you must have early visibility of markers of harmful and inappropriate behaviours, so that intervention strategies can be put in place to stop the risk from escalating.

The problem is, the markers associated with the range of safeguarding risks can often be incredibly subtle. And the dynamic nature of human behaviour means that it's difficult, even for Artificial Intelligence, to keep up.

Rarely is it single stream behaviour that registers intent, but more likely an overall pattern of seemingly isolated incidents over time. The identification of a pattern, or a single incident that does require intervention, requires specialism and experience.

Self-administered solutions place an increasing burden on a school's resources if the required level of safeguarding is to be attained. Even with accurate detection technology, high volumes of false positives are produced and every incident must be checked – in context with historic activity.

The word 'suicide' is a classic example. Applying weighting to 'suicide' creates vast volumes of false positive incidents due to project work, music lyrics, etc. The resulting pages of incidents presented are numerous and, to make matters worse, the risk of suicide, and other extreme behaviours, is rarely indicated by a user typing the actual word 'suicide' or a known variant.



### eSafe: focused on finding the early signs of genuine risks

The Behaviour Analysts at eSafe have the time and necessary skills to assess the severity of incidents and – importantly – to distinguish between the genuine issues (requiring intervention) and the false positives. This not only removes the burden other systems place on non-specialists, it ensures the very serious incidents are not lost under a blanket of false positive and less serious data.

# 3 'Poor practice' is failing to react to the early warning signs of safeguarding risks

The DfE guidance states that not only must you have visibility of the behaviour markers for safeguarding risk, you must also react as early as possible, putting in place an effective intervention strategy that's designed to prevent that risk from escalating.

While traditional, self-administered, software based solutions ensure that the necessary monitoring is in place, it relies on specialists to interpret the high volume stream of information – in a timely manner.

Failure to do this, to spot the early warning signs, can damage reputations – of the leadership team and of the establishment – as the Inspectorate will always report on whether or not arrangements for safeguarding children and young people are effective.

## eSafe: safeguarding your reputation

The team at eSafe is highly experienced and dedicated to identifying the early warning indicators of inappropriate or potentially harmful behaviour. Not just during education hours, but 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Serious risks are escalated in real time, directly by phone, and give you continuous visibility of the safeguarding risk – ensuring interventions can be made in a timely manner, and the effectiveness of these interventions can be measured.

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“Our work with eSafe was commended in our recent Ofsted inspection with examples of fast and effective interventions demonstrating impact on our learners and their safety and well-being. The implementation of the system was simple and on a day-to-day basis the Safeguarding team have absorbed the reporting seamlessly into their safeguarding arrangements. Investing in the expertise of eSafe has provided an additional layer of safeguarding for learners and enabled the college to meet its new Prevent duties.”

New College Nottingham.

# 4 The effectiveness of interventions must be measured and reported on

The DfE and the Inspectorate require that when intervention plans are put in place, the effectiveness is measured and used to refine future intervention strategy.

The reporting element of the monitoring solution that's in place is important for providing a baseline of behaviours for this measurement: helping to illustrate the effectiveness of interventions as the baseline changes over time.

The trouble with the reports typically provided by traditional software-based monitoring solutions is the significant volume of false positives that are included in the data, as they cloud the genuine underlying incident baseline.

## eSafe: accurate baseline measurement, easy assessment of intervention strategies

The monthly, termly and annual reports and analysis provided by eSafe only reflect incidents that have been reviewed by our specialist team and require intervention. Meaning the baseline of behaviour and safeguarding risk is accurate, enabling the leadership team to correctly assess the effectiveness of their interventions and plan future intervention strategies accordingly.

# 5 Behaviour trends evolve all the time: you need to keep your finger on the pulse and update threat libraries continuously to maintain detection accuracy

Threat libraries need to evolve and adapt to detect emerging behaviour trends at an international, national and local level in order to maintain detection accuracy across the range of threats.

At eSafe, new markers of threats are sourced from continuous research by our team of experts, as well as through ongoing collaboration with external specialist agencies and schools. For example, the intelligence gathered from our sex offender

monitoring work, on behalf of UK Police Forces, is used to ensure the grooming and paedophile threat library is always up to date and new markers, that identify the latest trends in behaviour, are created.

Part of the eSafe service also includes creating and maintaining bespoke threat libraries for individual schools to cope with the local issues, such as drug culture, that would otherwise be missed with a 'one size fits all' approach.



## eSafe: bespoke, up-to-the-minute threat libraries

At eSafe, our team in the Insightlab works tirelessly to ensure our diverse and comprehensive threat libraries are updated on a daily basis – to reflect emerging behavioural trends from a broad, worldwide perspective, right down to local level.

# 6 If you adopt a 'top 10' approach to your threat libraries, you could lose visibility of serious threats

The high volume of false-positives associated with traditional software monitoring solutions often forces schools to adopt a 'top 10' approach, focusing on incidents by volume. In an attempt to manage the volume of activity that comes through markers can be removed. It is vital that experienced and trained specialists make these decisions based on a robust volume of evidence.



## eSafe: all incidents reviewed by experts

At eSafe we recognise that the digital environment is a rich source of behaviour markers and believe, therefore, it is important that all incidents are reviewed. Typically, the more serious behaviours do not occur in volume and a 'top 10' approach or the removal of a marker can easily result in the complete loss of visibility of a serious safeguarding risk. Large volumes of benign incidents easily mask the single subtle marker of life threatening behaviour, or illegal activity, and at eSafe all incidents are reviewed by our highly trained Behaviour Analysts.

# 7

## For over one million 5–18 year olds in education in England, English is a second language

Recent figures from the DfE show that the number of pupils, aged five and upwards, speaking other languages has doubled in the past decade, reaching a record high of just over a million. You need to understand the languages and cultural references of the children and young people in your care to ensure that risks, irrespective of the language or cultural context, are identified.

**Safeguarding risk may be wholly or partly written in a foreign language script, a foreign language written using an English keyboard (Romanised), include slang or text-speak variants, or reflect a cultural meaning which doesn't translate to English. All of this must be detected to ensure safeguarding risks are visible.**

### **eSafe: multi-lingual, multi-cultural safeguarding**

With highly intelligent detection software and honed threat libraries (that include 1000s of markers across multiple languages) eSafe has a unique ability to detect risks in any language, in any text. Importantly, eSafe's Behaviour Analysts are multi-lingual with a rich knowledge of different cultures – vital skills for interpreting and assessing the true meaning of words, phrases, slang and text speak in different languages.

# 8

## Almost 1/3 of incidents happen offline – often outside of education hours

Most traditional monitoring software solutions, and all filtering solutions that offer a degree of keyword detection, are focused on online activity, usually on site during teaching hours. This means that the significant volume of incidents that happen out of education hours – when pupils are on school owned devices in the evenings, weekends and during holidays – are invisible to the safeguarding team.

Therefore, in order to be truly effective, monitoring of school owned devices can't be confined to school premises in during education, as incidents are happening off site, offline and out of hours. What is needed is monitoring 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

### **Is your monitoring solution working in the evenings, at the weekend and over the holiday periods?**



### **eSafe: working when you aren't**

The advanced eSafe monitoring agent ensures that activity on school owned devices is monitored constantly, even when offline. Incidents that happen out of hours are reviewed 24/7, 365 days a year – and those requiring immediate intervention are escalated in real-time, directly by telephone, to ensure effective intervention, protection and support for the individual, and minimal reputation risk for the school.

# 9 The markers of the more serious threats are much more likely to be imagery based

While digital content must be monitored for words and phrases in any language, extreme behaviour markers are often detected through imagery, typically moving imagery, on webcam, chat roulette and

encrypted applications like Skype. It's vital that the detection technology doesn't only rely on text or meta data to detect these areas, it must have the capability to monitor static and moving images in isolation.



Did you know that

# 95%

of child abuse imagery has no accompanying text?

## eSafe: sophisticated Pure Image Detection Technology

With unique Pure Image Detection Technology, eSafe searches static and moving activity – which is not accompanied by text or meta data – and determines whether it is pornographic or indicative of illegal behaviour such as abuse.

# 10 Senior schools have one serious safeguarding incident per week that requires immediate intervention

Intelligence sourced from monitoring over the last four years tells us that senior schools should be identifying and dealing with one serious safeguarding risk each week. Serious risks cover illegal and life threatening activity, including threats of violence, radicalisation, terrorism, substance abuse, grooming and child abuse, and pornography. If you aren't seeing this level of risk in your establishment, it's probable that your traditional software-based monitoring solution isn't successful in making this visible.

## eSafe: making the invisible, visible

Our unique, comprehensive outsourced monitoring solution for schools and colleges, provides three vital components for detecting the serious safeguarding risks traditional software-based monitoring solutions may miss. Intelligent detection software with the capability to monitor both text and images, moving and static; multi-lingual Behaviour Analysts, monitoring content behind the scenes; plus dynamic threat libraries updated on a daily basis.

# Triple-lock protection



**eSafe is the only monitoring system to combine intelligent detection software, expert human behaviour analysis and dynamic threat libraries to identify threats others can't.**



## Intelligent detection software

eSafe's innovative software surpasses other solutions by detecting the widest range of safeguarding risks with forensic accuracy. Using the principles of Artificial Intelligence (AI), eSafe has learned from multiple examples of genuine and benign incidents over its 9 year history to pinpoint risk markers in their earliest stages and can:

- Detect threats in any language
- Interpret slang and dialect
- Search static and moving images



## Expert behaviour analysis

Artificial Intelligence currently needs multiple examples of genuine and benign safeguarding incidents to be able to identify patterns and learn, by which time it may be too late. That's why eSafe's highly-skilled Behaviour Analysts are trained to detect the earliest signs of inappropriate or harmful behaviour, reviewing all incidents flagged by our detection software to determine whether they are genuine.

- Multi-lingual expertise – language not a barrier
- Threat levels accurately assessed and graded
- Genuine risks distinguished from false positives



## Dynamic threat libraries

Threat libraries are intended to catalogue all the markers of risk. But sometimes, as soon as that list of terms and phrases is compiled, it can already be out of date. That's why the team in our InsightLab works tirelessly to keep our Threat Libraries as accurate and up to date as possible.

They do this by:

- Researching and collaborating with our own clients as well as specialist agencies to identify local, national and international behaviour trends
- Exploring emerging markers and safeguarding threats
- Adding new terms and phrases daily and removing redundant terms and phrases frequently
- Automatically updating our software, so you don't need to wait for upgrades or software releases

Get in touch: visit [esafeglobal.com](https://esafeglobal.com)  
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