

Filtering System Review

Details

Filtering Provider:

.....

System Name:

.....

Date Procured:

.....

Date of Last Review:

.....

Previous Review:

Date:

Review Conducted By:

Include names of the senior leadership team (SLT) member responsible for filtering and monitoring, the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), IT support, and the responsible governor.

The review should be informed by:

- Student risk profiles: number and age range of your students, device access and frequency, SEND, EAL, digital resilience. etc.
- Relevant safeguarding reports or serious incidents
- Teaching requirements, such as RHSE or PSHE
- How your setting uses technology, e.g. BYOD or generative AI tools
- Related safeguarding or technology policies
- Technical set-up recommendations to make sure the system works effectively
- The structure of your organisation and IT & safeguarding teams

Filtering checklist:

Tick each statement that reflects your current filtering provision.

- ☐ Our filtering provider is a member of the IWF and signed up to CTIRU, regularly updating blocklists based on their information; these blocklists are implemented and cannot be disabled, overridden or altered by any user, including system administrators.
.....
- ☐ Filtering is active and enforced for all users, devices and connections, including guest networks and BYOD.
.....
- ☐ We use differentiated filtering profiles for different user types (e.g. staff and students), rather than a single blanket profile for everyone.
.....
- ☐ Our filter is appropriate for the age and ability of our users, and suitable for an educational setting.
.....
- ☐ Our filter identifies multilingual content, images, and common misspellings or abbreviations used to bypass filtering.
.....
- ☐ Our filter blocks technologies and techniques used to circumvent filtering, such as VPNs, proxy services and end-to-end encryption.
.....
- ☐ Our networks and devices (firewalls, browsers, operating systems and other software) are configured appropriately to support effective filtering.
.....
- ☐ Unmanaged and BYOD devices sit on a separate virtual network from school or college-managed devices.
.....
- ☐ Our filter can identify individual students, recording as a minimum the device name or ID, IP address, individual (where possible), time and date of attempted access, and the search term or content blocked.

Filtering checklist:

Tick each statement that reflects your current filtering provision.

- ☐ Our filter covers students wherever they are, identifying and appropriately filtering all internet feeds, including devices that leave the school site, backup connections and portable wifi devices.
.....
- ☐ Our filter alerts us to content across the four areas of risk outlined in KCSIE: content, contact, conduct and commerce.
.....
- ☐ We hold testfiltering.com (or equivalent) reports from a representative range of devices, taken at intervals throughout the period since our last review, confirming filtering is active and effective across our estate.
.....
- ☐ Safe Search is enforced across all search engines in use and cannot be disabled by students or staff.
.....
- ☐ Our filter can identify personalised or session-generated content, including material only produced for that specific interaction (e.g. generative AI outputs).
.....
- ☐ Our DSL(s) and IT support receive training on the management of our filtering system to ensure their knowledge is current.
.....
- ☐ Our filtering procedures and systems are reflected in our acceptable use policy (AUP).
.....
- ☐ All staff know how to report a site that should be blocked or unblocked, and understand the importance of not over-blocking.
.....
- ☐ We have conducted a data protection impact assessment (DPIA) and review the privacy notices of third-party providers.
.....
- ☐ [If filtering is procured as part of a broadband service] We've checked with our provider how this meets the DfE filtering and monitoring standards.

Reflective questions

Question	Answer
Does your filter “block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning”?	
Are all stakeholders aware of the filtering policy and how it applies to them?	
Do technical and safeguarding teams work together to deliver effective filtering?	
Is your filter accredited by UKSIC? If not, why, and how have you assessed equivalent protection?	
Who deals with filter alerts? How are alerts, responses and results recorded in existing reporting systems?	
What are the technical limitations of your filtering system, including with real-time, dynamic, personalised or AI-generated content?	
What was over-blocked this period? Was this due to a new category needing to be allowed, or sites being miscategorised, and was this reported to your vendor?	
What was missed this period (under-blocking)? Was this reported to your vendor, and has performance improved since?	
Are you still happy with your filtering policy, or does what you’ve had to add or remove this period suggest it needs to change?	

Filtering System Checks

Record every check carried out across the year (not just at review time) so this log can be shown to anyone entitled to inspect it.

Note: Reviews “should include checks that filtering is working appropriately on all internet-connected devices in all relevant locations.” Keeping children safe in education, 2026

Date checked: Conducted By:

[illegible]

Filtering System Review Outcomes

Reflections on results/outcomes/planned improvements

Date of next review:

Note: This template is a general guide and may not cover every step your filtering review should include. What's required will depend on your setting's specific configuration, needs and risk profile, so it should be adapted and used alongside your own judgement, that of your DSL, IT support and governing body, and the full [KCSIE 2026 guidance](#) and [filtering and monitoring standards](#). It is not a guarantee of compliance.

Smoothwall Filter can help you firmly establish an effective filtering strategy in your school, college or MAT. To learn more or book a demo, contact enquiries@smoothwall.com.

We're ready to help.