

Walton Priory Middle School receives award for E-Safety

An Assessor from the South West Grid for Learning recently visited Walton Priory Middle School to review the school's e-safety provision. The Assessor met Pupils, school staff, parents and Governors and was pleased to find that the school provides a high level of protection for users of the new technologies.

Following their visit the Assessor reported that Walton Priory is a school that embraces new technologies and media whilst at the same time keeping the safety of their pupils and staff paramount. She said "It was a pleasure to visit and talk to the pupils, staff, parents and governors; I only wish I could have stayed longer, I feel that I could have certainly learned a lot more".

The South West Grid for Learning Trust provides the internet connection and a range of other services to schools across the SW region and is in the forefront of national developments in e-safety. To enhance these services, they have developed a tool to help schools address e-safety issues, not least the changes to Ofsted inspections, which include a stronger focus on safeguarding. The online tool allows schools to evaluate their e-safety policy and practice and then suggests how the school might do more to protect young people and staff.

To apply for the 360 degree safe E-Safety Mark, schools have to reach a series of benchmark levels when they complete the online self review. The evidence is then verified by a visit from experienced Assessors.

The prime benefit of using the review and applying for the E-Safety Mark is that it does not focus on the individual aspects of e-safety such as technological solutions, but instead it integrates e-safety into school policy and the curriculum, challenging teachers and managers in the school to think about their provision and its continual evolution.

Schools are expected to show that they have provided a high standard of e-safety education and awareness for all staff, children and also for parents and carers, to ensure that these users of the new technologies can be safe online – whether they are in school, in their homes or out and about using mobile phones or other handheld devices.

Ron Richards, Lead Assessor for the 360 degree safe E-Safety Mark congratulated the school on its success and commented that it was re-assuring to know that the school had put a lot of thought and effort into improving the on-line safety of the staff and young people, by addressing these important safeguarding issues.