



Briefing Note

Filtering & Monitoring

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What an Effective Annual Filtering & Monitoring Review Must Include (2026)

The DfE and KCSIE 2026 expect schools to complete a documented annual review that demonstrates that their school and setting is compliant with regular filtering and monitoring checks that ensure that no child is at risk of harm. The following is an example of what an effective annual filtering and monitoring review should include. Alongside a suggested proforma to use as evidence-based practice.

Governance & Accountability

- Named responsible Governor/Trustee
- SLT lead for filtering & monitoring
- DSL oversight of online safety, reports, and concerns
- IT provider responsibilities clearly defined

Evidence That Systems Are Effective

Schools must show:

- What is blocked/allowed and why
- Logs, audit trails, and retention periods
- How alerts are triaged and acted upon
- How over-blocking is managed
- How systems cover all devices, including BYOD

Risk-Based Decision Making

Review must consider:

- Age range, SEND, EAL, vulnerable groups
- Local contextual risks (county lines, misogyny, HSB, AI harms)
- Curriculum needs (RSHE/PSHE)
- Digital resilience of pupils

AI-Related Risks (New for 2026)

Schools must evidence:

- Controls around generative AI
- Monitoring of AI-generated imagery
- Deepfake risks
- Misinformation/disinformation filtering

Integration With Wider Safeguarding

DfE and LGfL recommend linking the filtering/monitoring review to:

- Section 175 audit (completed by all agencies working with children within their Local Safeguarding Children Partnership)
- Online safety audit
- DSL annual report to Governors

SWGfL Affiliated Schools (South West)

Schools using SWGfL (South West Grid for Learning) filtering/monitoring often have mature review processes because they follow the UKSIC templates. Please access the SWGfL website for further information.

At HH:SM we will continue to work in partnership with the SWGFL to share updates and information that may be useful for schools.