



Academies Trust



Co-op Academies Becoming Friendly WiFi Certified

Introduction

In an era where digital literacy is paramount, Co-op Academies Trust has taken a proactive step to ensure the safety of its students online by achieving Friendly WiFi certification across all its schools. This strategic decision underscores the Trust's commitment to providing a safe digital environment for its students while adhering to the latest regulations set forth in the "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023" document.

Background

Co-op Academies Trust oversees a network of schools dedicated to providing high-quality education and fostering a safe learning environment. Recognising the integral role of technology in modern education, the Trust decided to enhance its digital infrastructure by ensuring all schools under its management are Friendly WiFi certified.

The Importance of WiFi in Schools

WiFi in schools has become essential for several reasons:

Enhanced Learning Opportunities: High-speed internet access allows students to access a wealth of online resources, engage in interactive learning activities, and participate in virtual classrooms.

Collaboration and Communication: Reliable WiFi facilitates collaboration among students and teachers through digital platforms and communication tools.

Access to Educational Resources: With robust WiFi, students can access e-books, online research databases, and educational videos that enrich their learning experience.

Technological Proficiency: Regular use of internet-enabled devices prepares students for a tech-centric world, ensuring they are proficient in using digital tools and resources.

Significance of Friendly WiFi Certification

Friendly WiFi certification is crucial for educational institutions for several reasons:



Safety Assurance: The certification ensures that the WiFi provided filters inappropriate content, protecting students from exposure to harmful material such as indecent images and advertisements.

Compliance with Regulations: The certification aligns with the latest government regulations, including those outlined in "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023," which emphasises the need for robust online safeguarding measures.

Reputation and Trust: Achieving this certification demonstrates the school's commitment to student safety, thereby building trust among parents, students, and the wider community.

Implementation at Co-op Academies

Co-op Academies Trust initiated the certification process across all its schools to ensure a uniform standard of digital safety. The process involved:

Assessment and Upgrades: Conducting thorough assessments of the existing WiFi infrastructure and making necessary upgrades to meet the Friendly WiFi standards.

Ongoing Monitoring: Establishing protocols for continuous monitoring and maintenance to ensure the WiFi remains compliant with Friendly WiFi standards and it clearly shows that the schools are adhering to the standards set out in the "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023,".

Benefits Realised

Since achieving Friendly WiFi certification, Co-op Academies Trust has experienced several benefits:

Enhanced Safety: Students now have a safer online experience, with recommended filters blocking inappropriate content.

Regulatory Compliance: The Trust meets all the requirements set forth by the "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023" guidelines, ensuring compliance and upkeep.

Parental Assurance: Parents have greater confidence in the school's commitment to safeguarding their children online.

Improved Learning Environment: With reliable and secure internet access, the overall learning environment has improved, supporting both academic and extracurricular activities.



Conclusion

Co-op Academies Trust's decision to become Friendly WiFi certified across all its schools exemplifies a proactive approach to digital safety in education. This certification not only aligns with regulatory requirements but also enhances the overall educational experience by providing a safe online environment. As a result, the Trust continues to uphold its commitment to high standards of student safety and educational excellence.

