



The End of Good Enough

Web Filtering and Device Management Expectations for Modern Schools.

A Checklist of Key Considerations.

As an IT director, your responsibility is to balance student safety and protect the digital learning environment while maintaining operational simplicity for your team. Not all solutions provide equal protection, so it's important to have clear expectations for your digital learning environment.

Developed by former IT Directors and education specialists, this guide cuts through the noise of choosing a web filtering, safeguarding, and classroom management solution. Use this checklist to evaluate options with confidence and identify the solution that goes beyond "good enough" to truly deliver across every critical area.





Device Visibility Beyond the Open Tab

What it Means:

This is the capability that ensures a teacher can see everything happening on a student's screen, not just the active browser tab, across iOS, Chrome, macOS, and Windows.

Why it Matters:

Research shows that effective classroom management depends on a teacher's ability to observe complete student behavior in real time. Partial visibility limits detection of disengagement and risk, leading to delayed or missed intervention.

What to Look for in a Leading Solution:

- Visibility into what happens when the student navigates away from the browser
- Full range of capabilities across all the devices in your schools including Chrome, iOS, Windows, and MacOS



Cross-Device Client Consistency

What it Means:

The Solution handles OS limitations in a way that delivers uniform policies, visibility, and tools across iOS, Chrome, MacOS, and Windows.

Why it Matters:

Studies on classroom management consistently find that when rules are applied inconsistently, students are more likely to disengage or exploit gaps. Consistent enforcement across devices is essential to effective web filter and device management.

What to Look for in a Leading Solution:

- Consistent behavior across iPads, Chromebooks, Windows, and MacOS
- Access to key classroom tools in a mixed device environment



Real-Time Reporting & Timely Alerts

What it Means:

Administrator, teachers and safeguarding staff can see student activity as it happens and receive immediate notifications of risk.

Why it Matters:

Delays limit the ability for teachers and staff to respond, weakening both safeguarding and classroom control.*

What to Look for in a Leading Solution:

- Student activity data is visible in real time
- There is no significant delay between student action and an alert being sent

* Immediate feedback and timely intervention are critical to effective classroom management (Pianta, Hamre & Allen, Handbook of Classroom Management)



Safeguarding Built Throughout the System

What it Means:

Student safety signals are captured across both filtering and classroom management in one unified system, giving safeguarding leads full access to the context and data they need.

Why it Matters:

The strategic guidelines for safeguarding children in the UK, Working Together to Safeguard Children, and FERPA best aligned best practices from the US Department of Education, both emphasize the need for integrated systems, shared visibility, and timely alerts to support effective safeguarding and appropriate information sharing.

What to Look for in a Leading Solution:

- Alerts and notifications are triggered automatically rather than manual intervention
- Safeguarding reports include filtering and classroom data in one place
- Alerts can be scoped by user, staff role, and/or school
- Beware of solutions that approach Safeguarding as a feature or a separate tool



Application Control that Supports Learning

What it Means:

The solution allows schools to manage which applications students can access across their devices allowing approved educational apps while blocking or restricting distracting, unsafe, or non-compliant ones.

Why it Matters:

Application control reduces distractions and prevents access to unsafe or non-educational tools.

What to Look for in a Leading Solution:

- Application policies are easily configurable alongside web filtering rules
- Reporting data allows visibility into which applications students are using



Integrated Classroom Management

What it Means:

Integrated means web filtering, safeguarding, and classroom management work together in one platform, with settings that keep students on task, reduce teacher burden, and minimize IT overhead.

Why it Matters:

Research shows that reducing access to distracting technologies improves student focus and academic outcomes, as off-task digital activity is strongly linked to decreased performance (OECD, Students, Computers and Learning, 2015).

What to Look for in a Leading Solution:

- Teachers view all student screens in real time from a single interface, regardless of devices being used
- Filter settings that work seamlessly with classroom management tools supporting teachers in real time without adding complexity or increasing unblock requests for IT
- Teachers can customize their digital sessions without impacting others, working seamlessly alongside existing filtering policies



Granular Web Control at the Feature Level

What it Means:

Granular web control ensures that schools are able to access insight at the feature level within modern websites so students can use educational content while blocking distractions or harmful interactions.

Why it Matters:

UK guidance such as Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) requires schools to have “appropriate filtering and monitoring systems” that allow access to educational content while minimizing exposure to harmful material. Granular website control is essential to balance safety and learning.

What to Look for in a Leading Solution:

- Ability to control specific features within sites (e.g., YouTube videos vs. comments, playlists, recommendations)
- Settings allow educational content while blocking non-educational content on the same platform



Non-Managed Device Filtering

What it Means:

Ability to apply web filtering and safeguarding policies to any device on the school network, like BYOD or guest devices, ensuring consistent protection.

Why it Matters:

If filtering doesn't cover every device on the network, students can bypass protections creating clear safeguarding and compliance gaps.

What to Look for in a Leading Solution:

- Filtering automatically applies to any device on the network without an agent
- Traffic from non-managed devices is visible in logs and reporting

How to use this checklist:

Use this checklist as a practical framework to evaluate Device Management and Content Filtering solutions against the real demands of today's classrooms and safeguarding responsibilities.

Bring questions into every demo, pilot, and vendor conversation. Don't just look for features, look for proof of how those features perform in real environments across devices, users, and scenarios. The right solution should clearly demonstrate consistency, visibility, and control without adding complexity to your team.

If a provider can't confidently show you how their platform meets these standards, it's a strong indicator that gaps will exist that can impact student safety, teacher effectiveness, and your ability to maintain a secure, well-managed digital learning environment. Digital safety can't be “good enough” because your students deserve the right protection and it's your responsibility to ensure you provide the best solution to keep them safe.

To learn more, please request information through our website if you would like a product demo or even a preview of StudentKeeper with your own data. One platform for all of your classroom management, filtering, and safeguarding needs.



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