



Evaluation of the ProjectEVOLVE Database

**Understanding Online Safety Delivery
and Assessment in Schools**

Assessment conducted by
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PROJECT
EVOLVE



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Executive Summary

In 2017, the UK Council for Internet Safety established the Education for a Connected World Framework (EfCW) to equip educators with the tools necessary to prepare students for a rapidly evolving digital landscape. SWGfL, a prominent member of the Council, developed ProjectEVOLVE to operationalize this framework within schools and colleges, thereby addressing a critical need to translate statutory duties into practical, effective education.

ProjectEVOLVE provides a comprehensive suite of 600 age-appropriate resources divided into eight key strands:

- Copyright and Ownership
- Health Wellbeing & Lifestyle
- Managing Online Information
- Online Bullying
- Online Relationships
- Online Reputation
- Privacy and Security
- Self-Image & Identity

These resources are complemented by Knowledge Maps, an assessment tool based on the adapted Burch Competence model, which evaluates students' understanding of online safety and digital literacy concepts.

As of May 2024, ProjectEVOLVE has been adopted by over 15,000 schools in the UK, involving more than 70,000 unique users, with an estimated reach of nearly two million students. The platform's international footprint includes significant usage in the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and several European countries.

In total, resources (teaching resources) have been accessed 1,032,867 times. The analysis of resource usage reveals:

- **High Engagement with Popular Strands:** The most accessed strands include Online Relationships (239,384 views), Self-Image & Identity (181,981 views), and Managing Online Information (143,458 views). These topics resonate strongly with educators, reflecting their importance in fostering a safe and positive online presence among students.
- **Primary School Focus:** The majority of resource views (over 90%) occur in primary schools, particularly within Key Stages 1 and 2. Key Stage 2 alone accounts for 60.9% of all views.
- **Detailed Resource Engagement:** On average, each user has accessed 29.6 resources, with 2,460 users accessing more than 100 resources, and 122 users accessing over 500 resources. This high level of engagement indicates the platform's effectiveness and utility in delivering comprehensive digital literacy education.

Knowledge Maps have been delivered 1,453,903 times, demonstrating extensive use of this assessment tool across schools. Key findings include:

- **Primary School Dominance:** The majority of Knowledge Maps (67.6%) are used in Key Stage 2, followed by Key Stage 1 (25.54%), indicating a strong focus on assessing digital literacy in primary education.
- **Strand Engagement:** The highest use of Knowledge Maps is seen in Online Relationships (23.0%), Managing Online Information (16.37%), and Online Bullying (13.46%).
- **Average Scores:** The overall average score across all Knowledge Maps is 3.6 out of 5, suggesting a good general understanding among students.
- **Knowledge Gaps:** Despite the overall positive scores, there are notable areas where students' knowledge is weaker, particularly in Privacy and Security, and Online Reputation.

ProjectEVOLVE has made substantial strides in integrating digital literacy education into the UK curriculum, with widespread usage and the data collected by the platform allows us to see a complex picture of its use across the country. The data underscores a clear focus on primary education, with a need for increased engagement in secondary schools, especially on more technical and complex topics.



Introduction

In 2017, the UK government, through the UK Council for Internet Safety, launched the Education for a Connected World Framework (EfCW). This framework was designed to assist educators in preparing students for a digitally connected world by outlining the knowledge and skills necessary for navigating the online environment safely and effectively. Recognizing the importance of this initiative, SWGfL, a key member of the UK Council for Internet Safety, played a significant role in implementing the EfCW and developed ProjectEVOLVE to facilitate the framework's integration into schools and colleges.

ProjectEVOLVE offers a comprehensive resource bank consisting of over 600 age-appropriate materials, categorized into eight strands: Copyright and Ownership, Health Wellbeing & Lifestyle, Managing Online Information, Online Bullying, Online Relationships, Online Reputation, Privacy and Security, and Self-Image & Identity. In addition to these resources, ProjectEVOLVE includes an assessment component known as Knowledge Maps. These maps utilize an adapted Burch Competence model to evaluate students' understanding of various online safety and literacy concepts.

As an entirely online system, ProjectEVOLVE records every interaction with its resources and knowledge maps, providing a detailed picture

of digital literacy education in schools. This data not only reveals when and at what level digital competencies are being taught but also highlights the topics that educators are confident in delivering.

The following report presents an in-depth analysis of the data collected from ProjectEVOLVE up to May 2024. It includes insights into resource usage and assessment data, demonstrating the scale and scope of digital literacy education in schools across the UK. With over 15,000 schools and 70,000 unique users, the platform's impact is substantial, reaching nearly two million young people.

Furthermore, the tool's international use is noted, with significant engagement in countries such as the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and several European nations.

This analysis aims to move beyond assumptions to provide clear evidence of digital literacy education's current state, focusing on the types of resources accessed, the distribution of knowledge maps, and the levels of understanding demonstrated by students. The findings highlight the areas where educators feel most comfortable and the topics that may require additional focus and support to ensure comprehensive digital literacy education for all students.

ProjectEVOLVE



In 2017 the government, via the UK Council for Internet Safety¹, established the Education for a Connected World Framework (EfCW)². This is a framework developed to support educators in preparing students for life in an increasingly digital world. The framework outlines the knowledge and skills children and young people need to navigate the online environment safely and effectively. The framework is broken down into several different strands:

- 1. Self-Image and Identity: Exploring how online interactions can affect self-image and identity, and encouraging a positive self-concept.**
- 2. Online Relationships: Understanding how to build and maintain healthy online relationships and recognizing inappropriate or harmful behaviour.**
- 3. Managing Online Information: Learning how to search for information online, evaluate its accuracy, and manage digital footprints.**
- 4. Privacy and Security: Teaching about personal data protection, creating strong passwords, and understanding privacy settings.**
- 5. Copyright and Ownership: Educating about intellectual property, copyright laws, and respecting the creative rights of others.**
- 6. Digital Footprint and Reputation: Understanding how online actions can affect one's digital footprint and long-term reputation.**
- 7. Online Bullying: Understanding bullying and other online aggression and how technology impacts those issues.**
- 8. Health, Wellbeing and Lifestyle: Exploring the impact that technology has on health, well-being and lifestyle.**

These aspects were updated by UKCIS in 2020 to add additional statements to strands as the online landscape developed.

The ProjectEVOLVE resources are based around these eight strands (number of "aspects", or resources, in each strand in parentheses):

- Copyright and Ownership (33);
- Health, Wellbeing & Lifestyle (40);
- Managing Online Information (73);
- Online Bullying (37);
- Online Relationships (55);
- Online Reputation (30);
- Privacy and Security (58);
- Self Image & Identity (41)

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-council-for-internet-safety>

² Education for a Connected World - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

However, as well as providing a resource bank that implemented the framework, the project also developed an assessment component to ProjectEVOLVE, referred to as Knowledge Maps, which allowed the assessment of student’s knowledge about a given aspect of online safety/literacy in a user/ classroom friendly approach.

Knowledge maps implement assessment tasks based upon an adapted Burch Competence model¹:

	Competency	Description
1	Unconscious Incompetence	The user lacks understanding of the concept but expresses confidence in discussing it.
2	Conscious Incompetence	The user is aware that they don't understand the concept and recognizes the gap in their knowledge.
3	Conscious Competence	The user has some experience with the concept, reflecting broad, generic, and unsophisticated aspects in their response.
4	Unconscious Competence	The user has a deeper understanding of the concept and can confidently apply it to a narrow range of scenarios.
5	Reflective Unconscious Competence	The user has a deep, unconscious understanding of the concept and can apply it to a wide range of complex scenarios.

The learner is presented with a concept cartoon generated by the system with a central scenario that reflects the underlying concept of the EfCW statement. Around this scenario are a set of potential responses that are mapped to each of the stages of the Burch Maturity Model.

The learner selects the response that best reflects their understanding of how to respond to the scenario. This data is captured anonymously by the system to build up an overall “knowledge map” of the class learning needs which in turn allows educators to choose resources that best meet those needs.

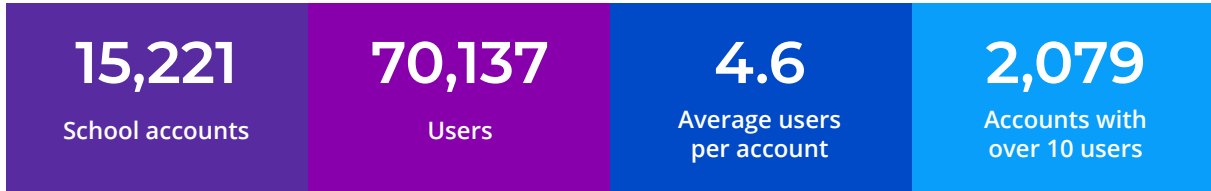


As a fully online system, ProjectEVOLVE records every interaction with its resource banks and knowledge maps by its users. This, in turn, provides a very detailed picture of the nature of digital literacy education in schools, when and at what level it is delivered, and the knowledge of those making use of the assessment engine. While not explicitly doing so, it also allows us to review the sort of topics that teachers are confident to deliver, and those less so.

¹ <https://www.innovationtraining.org/the-four-stages-of-competence-model/>

The following presents an analysis of data collected within the ProjectEVOLVE database, focussing upon aspects (resources) accessed and knowledge maps (assessments) conducted. This analysis draws upon the data as collected up to May 2024.

The volume of data is such that we can provide a robust analysis of the delivery and assessment of online competencies on a scale impossible to conduct with surveys or case studies. As with the analysis of the 360 Degree Safe¹ data, the volume and quality of this data means we are moving from “we think” we know what goes on in the classroom to “we know” what happens.



School Engagement

Any school in the country can sign up for an account to use ProjectEVOLVE. Currently there are over 15000 schools using it and that number continues to grow – currently well over half of the schools in England use the tool. A school can have more than one “user”, representing the platform being used by multiple staff across the institution – i.e. being used by different classroom teachers in the school. As can be seen above, over 70000 unique users are enrolled on the platform, a 118% increase on last year’s evaluation. On average, each account has 4.6 users, meaning that between four and five staff are using the platform. However, a lot of schools use the platform far more, with over 2000 accounts having more than ten users.

Official UK government estimates show that average class size in the UK is 27.9². Therefore, we can make a rough approximation that almost 2,000,000 young people are reached using the EVOLVE platform.

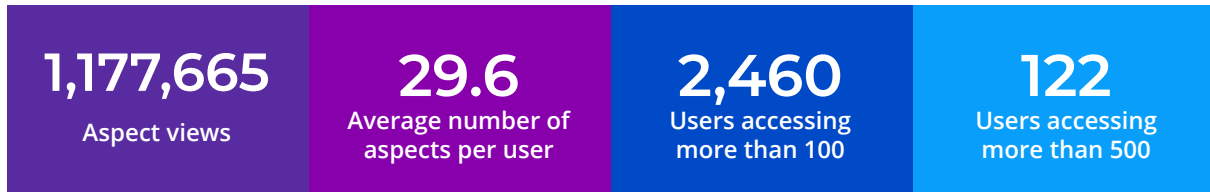
Whilst this report will focus on exclusively UK data sources, the tool is not geofenced and is also used in many countries across the globe. Over the last 12 months the top ten countries using the tool are:

Country	Users	New users	Engaged sessions	Engagement rate	Engaged sessions per user
United Kingdom	158933	149731	318171	74.99%	2.00
Jersey	764	727	1272	81.75%	1.66
United Arab Emirates	712	668	1363	75.81%	1.91
Guernsey	416	335	1331	69.18%	3.20
United States	277	274	194	69.78%	0.70
Spain	177	167	427	70.93%	2.41
Oman	137	134	165	85.94%	1.20
France	123	96	170	68.27%	1.38
Cyprus	91	82	198	75.57%	2.18
India	87	50	50	83.33%	0.57

¹ Online Safety Self-Review Tool for Schools | 360safe

² <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>

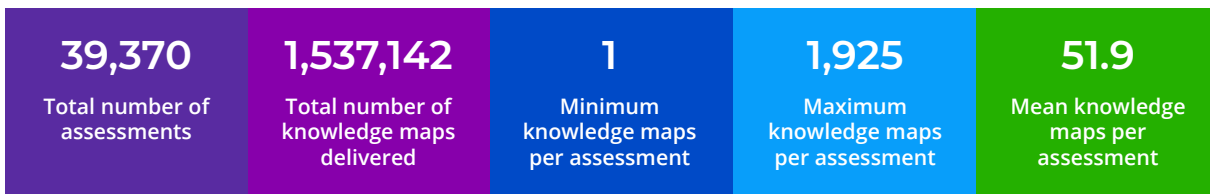
Returning to the UK statistics, if we explore at a very basic level, aspect views, we can see that the platform is used a great deal. This is illustrated further if we look at the Aspects viewed across the platform:



We can broadly analogise an aspect to a teaching resource. While this does not specifically mean that the aspect was used to deliver a specific classroom lesson, it gives us a clear indication of the sort of topics teachers are interested in and planning to teach (and we gain even more clarity with delivery in the classroom when exploring assessment data).

As can be seen from the above statistics, there have been a lot of aspects accessed across the platform, in total well over 1000000 views now. On average, almost 30 aspects have been accessed per account (school). However, some make far greater use of the platform, with almost 2500 schools accessing more than 100 and 122 accessing aspects over 500 times. A more detailed analysis of the sort of aspects access, and by whom, is provided in the following section.

In terms of Knowledge Map use, we can also see significant use:



A class teacher can set up an assessment which usually incorporates a theme or number of themes from EfCW for a year group. Knowledge maps will cover a short assessment for a particular aspect. We will explore student knowledge as a result of their responses to knowledge maps in a later section of this analysis.

Analysis of Aspect Usage

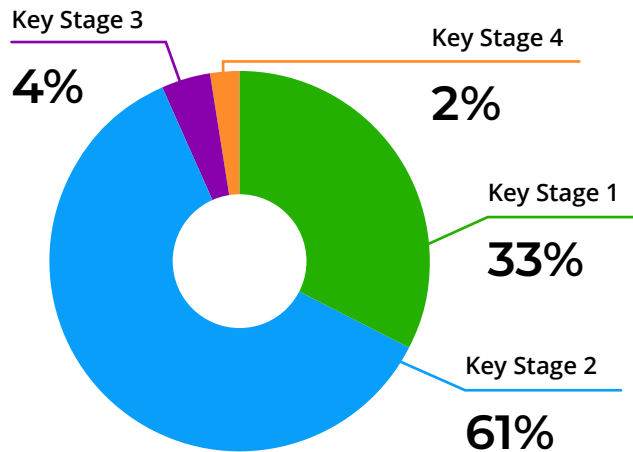
As discussed above, each aspect in the platform is categorised against an EfCW strand that relates to online safety and wider digital literacy. In total there have been 1032867 resource accesses on the platform. Below we can see how many times a resource related to a specific strand has been accessed which, in turn, tells us the sort of digital safety/literacy lessons that have been delivered in schools.

Online Relationships (relating to how to build and maintain healthy online relationships and recognizing inappropriate or harmful behaviour) is by far the most popular strand, with Self-Image and Identity (how online interactions can affect self-image and identity) and Managing Online Information (Learning how to search for information online, evaluate its accuracy, and manage digital footprints) being also widely used. We can see that there is a lot of use across all strands, but these three that relate to personal issues and core digital literacy are far more popular than some others.

Online Relationships	Self-Image and Identity	Managing Online Information	Privacy and Security	Online Bullying	Health, Well-being and Lifestyle	Online Reputation	Copyright and Ownership
239384	181981	143458	118110	116854	97027	84385	51668

Figure 3 – Number of aspect views per strand

Aspects, being classroom resources, are also categorised against Key Stages, which allows us to examine where at what age range lessons related to online safety and digital competencies are delivered. From the summary below, we can see that there is a very clear focus on delivery in key stages 1 and 2, where far more resources are accessed than in secondary schools:



We can see that the majority of teaching with ProjectEVOLVE happens in primary schools, with by far the biggest proportion being in Key Stage 2. There is a significant tail off around aspect use in secondary schools.

Of course, the data above cannot show us that there is no teaching of online safety and digital competencies in secondary schools, because there are other resources that might be being used in those settings. However, it does show very clearly that ProjectEVOLVE is used far more in Key Stages 1 and 2 with over 90% of delivery happening here. This does, once again, show that while all schools have a statutory duty to deliver “online safety” education, there is evidence here to suggest that far more is delivered in primary settings. Given that the online risks associated with adolescence and young adulthood are very different, and often more complex, than those face by primary aged children, this is certainly a concern that policy makers should note.

In exploring the focus on aspect use across phases, we can break down strand types in different phases, tabulated below:

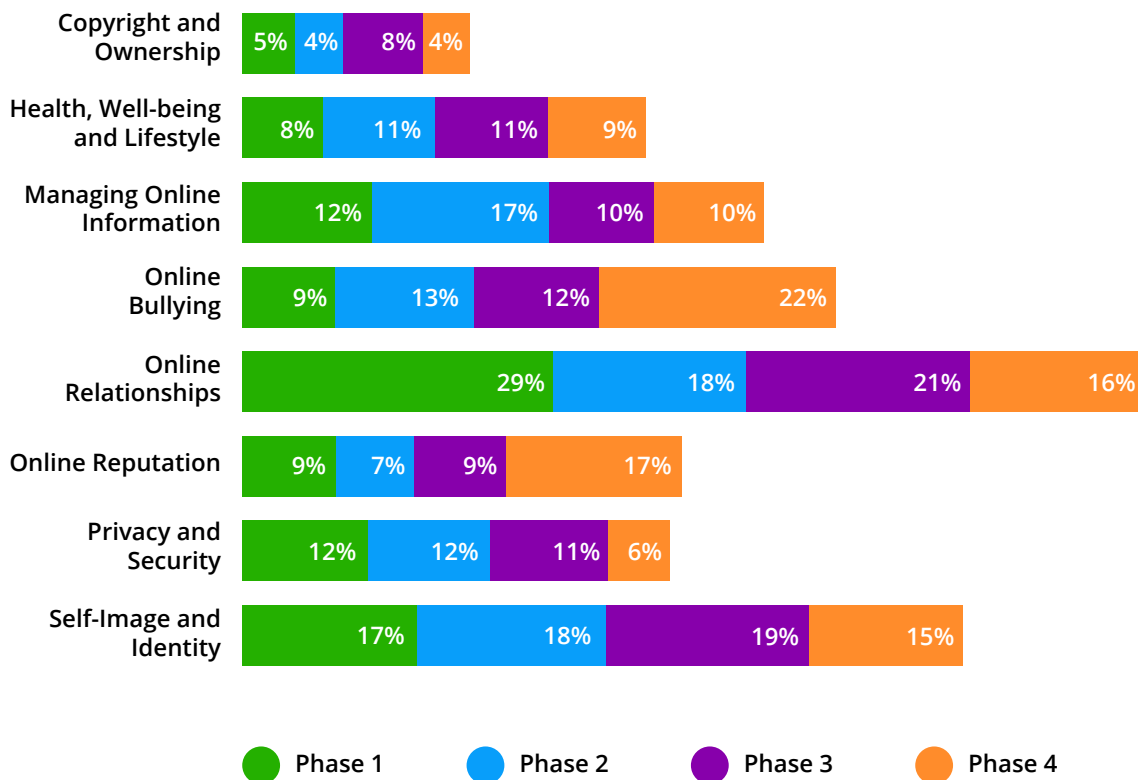


Figure 5 - Aspect strands per phase

While it is impossible to conduct a like for like comparison, given the difference in volume of delivery in secondary schools compared to primaries, we can proportionally explore the nature of the topics delivered in each key stage and can see that there is some variation, with Online Relationships and Managing Online Relationships coverage reducing across the key stages, whereas Self-image and Identity increases slightly. We can also see more about Online Reputation being delivered in later key stages, and a slight increase in the consideration of the more technical Copyright and ownership. However,

there are only a few percentage points different in most cases, the pattern of the data remains consistent aside from Online Relationships.

Finally, when considering the findings from the analysis of aspect views and how we might interpret them, these are things the classroom teacher chooses to deliver because they either see it as important or it is a topic with which they are comfortable delivering. Given the focus on Online relationships and Self-image and identity illustrated above, it is no surprise that the “top ten” most viewed aspects all relate to these areas:

I can give examples of how someone might use technology to communicate with others they don't also know offline and explain why this might be risky. (e.g. email, online gaming, a pen-pal in another school / country).	38545
I can recognise, online or offline, that anyone can say 'no' - 'please stop' - 'I'll tell' - 'I'll ask' to somebody who makes them feel sad, uncomfortable, embarrassed or upset.	15864
I can explain how identity online can be copied, modified or altered.	14662
I can explain what is meant by the term 'identity'.	14271
I can recognise that there may be people online who could make someone feel sad, embarrassed or upset.	14187
I can explain how my online identity can be different to my offline identity.	13129
I can give examples of when I should ask permission to do something online and explain why this is important.	11412
I can explain how other people may look and act differently online and offline.	11343
I can identify and critically evaluate online content relating to gender, race, religion, disability, culture and other groups, and explain why it is important to challenge and reject inappropriate representations online.	10461
I can describe strategies for safe and fun experiences in a range of online social environments (e.g. livestreaming, gaming platforms)	10214

Once again, we can see a clear focus here around identity and relationships – eight of these aspects are from the Self-Image and Identity strand and two are from Online Relationships. Given the proportion of delivery that takes place in primary school, we should perhaps not be too surprised by this. It is particularly of note that the aspect that is delivered far more than any other is the very traditional (and perhaps outdated) “stranger

danger” message. While there are many other aspects views that would suggest in some schools other more progressive education is also delivered, it is interesting to see this significant difference in delivery with this one aspect.

If we consider those that have been accessed the fewest times:

I can explain the term ‘whistleblowing’ and evaluate when such action may be appropriate or inappropriate.	56
I can assess how those laws can vary depending on country and can give examples of some of the differences and issues that may raise.	65
I can describe anonymous access services (e.g. TOR, Guerilla Mail, DuckDuckGo) and can give examples of how they may be used in both positive and negative contexts.	72
I can explain the value of regular data backup in system recovery, and can give examples of and demonstrate effective practice in how this might be achieved (e.g. removable media, cloud).	73
I can evaluate whether current measures for preventing and responding to copyright theft are fit for purpose, e.g. with current social media use, private profiles etc.	75
I can analyse online material to identify when this is happening and who might benefit.	76
I can describe how and why individuals, or organisations or states may saturate online media with selective information and disinformation to deliberately confuse or divide populations.	81
I can identify and assess when data needs to be transferred securely and can describe strategies to achieve this (e.g. encryption, secure services).	82
I can describe how and where to report a data breach.	84
I can assess and comment on the benefits and effectiveness of these.	84

We can see that these tend to be more technical in nature (six from the Privacy and Security strand, two from Managing Online Information and one from Copyright and Ownership), and cover more complex topics such as disinformation, whistleblowing and other legal issues. We can also see that a number relate to technical measures an individual can take to manage their privacy. It is also not a surprise to note that many of these aspects sit at secondary level, and as we have seen above, there is a significant drop off in use of the platform in secondary schools.

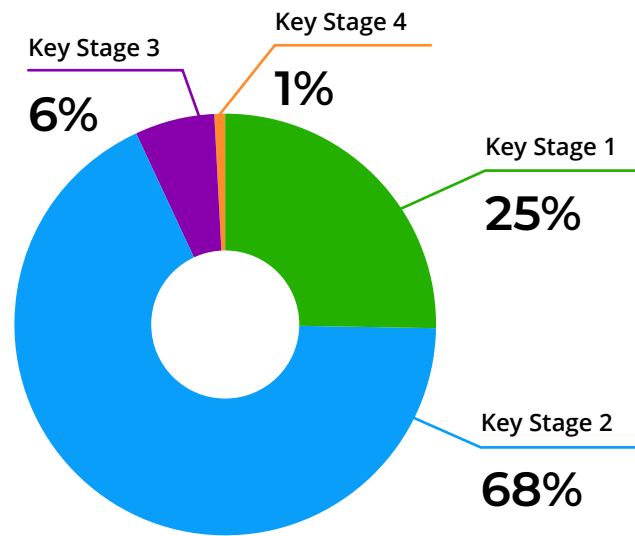
As discussed above when considering the 360 Degree Safe analysis, an individual with good technical knowledge of how to manage their online identities and lives is more likely to be resilient and manage risk more effectively when it comes to threats and online harms. However, we can see very clearly that these are not areas of priority in classrooms in England. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to note that all aspects have been accessed to some degree – there is no learning resource in the ProjectEVOLVE platform that has never been used.

Assessment/Knowledge Maps

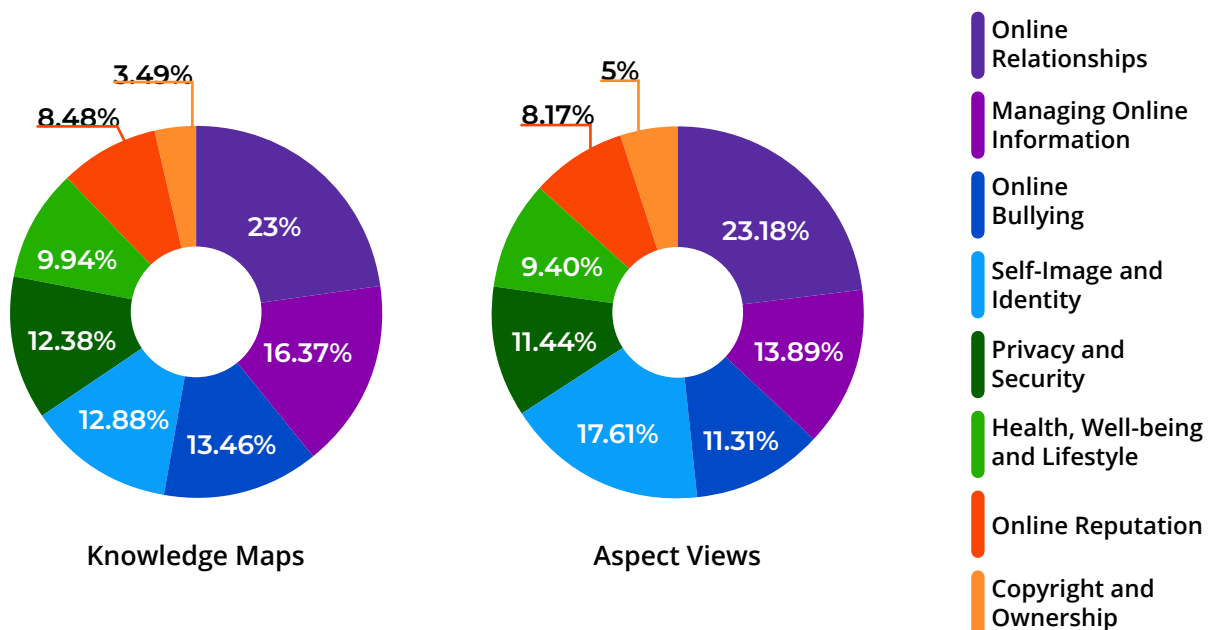
The second part of the data analysis centres upon the knowledge maps – where they are delivered, what topics are covered, and the average knowledge scores in each map. The volume of data related to knowledge maps is significant, which allows us to have a very confident interpretation of the results to clearly show the “state of the nation” for knowledge around topics assessed. It should be stressed that, as with aspects above, the data collected can only ever be based upon topics the class teacher has chosen to either deliver or assess. Therefore, there is as much to interpret in terms of teaching priorities than comprehensive knowledge evaluation – we cannot assess what teachers choose not to assess.

For any given knowledge map, a pupil is given five choices, varying in appropriateness of response and scored between 1 (the worst) and 5 (the best). This allows us to gain a good understanding of knowledge levels in classes. And, by considering statistics based upon, it is an excellent indicator of what is being assessed across the online safety subject, and what the levels of understanding of these topics are.

In total, knowledge maps have been delivered 1,453,903 times across the schools using ProjectEVOLVE, which is considerable activity. As with aspect views, by far the largest use of knowledge maps is in Key Stage 2, which is the second half of primary education with pupils aged between 8 and 11.



And assessment strands shows some parity with aspect volumes described in the section above:

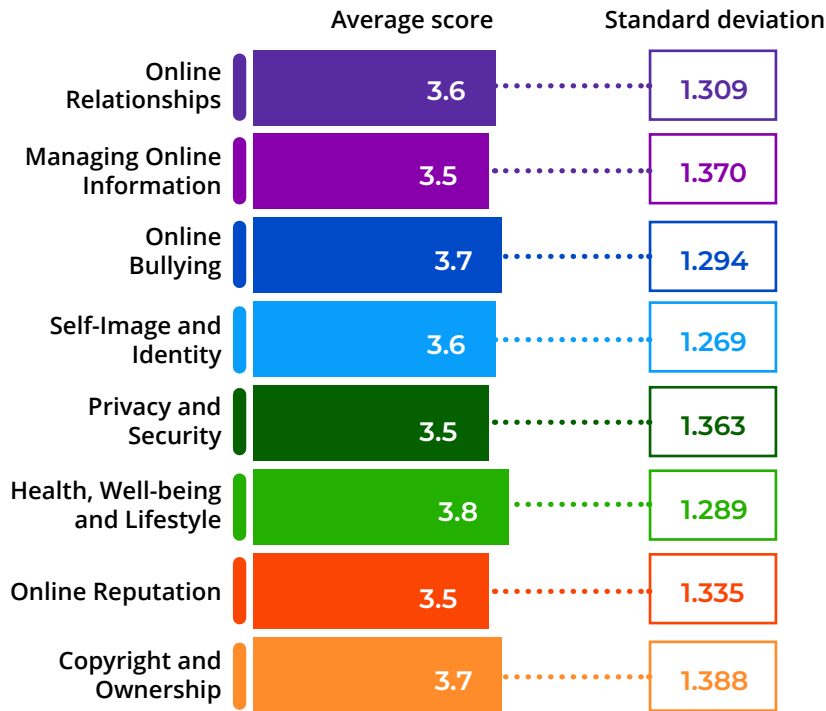


However, it is more likely that students will be assessed on online bullying or self-image.

As stated above, for each knowledge map there are five answers, scored between 1 (worst response) and 5 (best response). By averaging scores across different knowledge maps and across the database, we can assess the knowledge of those who have conducted the assessments.

Across all knowledge maps carried out in the database (1453903 knowledge maps), the average score is 3.6, showing a good level of knowledge across the topics.

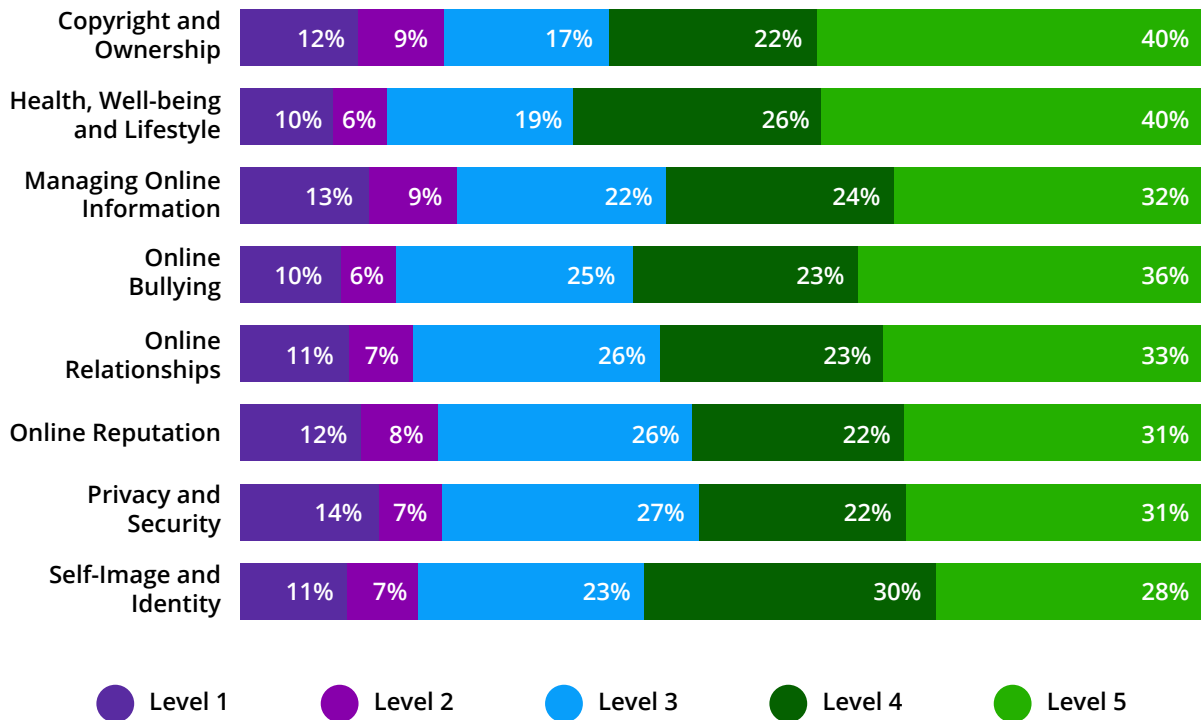
If we break this down per strand, we can see that there is some variation:



With knowledge around Health and Wellbeing, Copyright and Online Bullying being strongest and Privacy and Security the weakest strand. We can also consider the standard deviation across knowledge maps per strand to determine the variation away from the mean in each strand. So while Privacy and Security might have the weakest average, it also has one of the larger variations of response. We can also see that the highest scoring strand, Health and Wellbeing, continues to have one of the narrowest standard deviations, along with Self-image and identity – showing the knowledge is consistently strong with the strand.

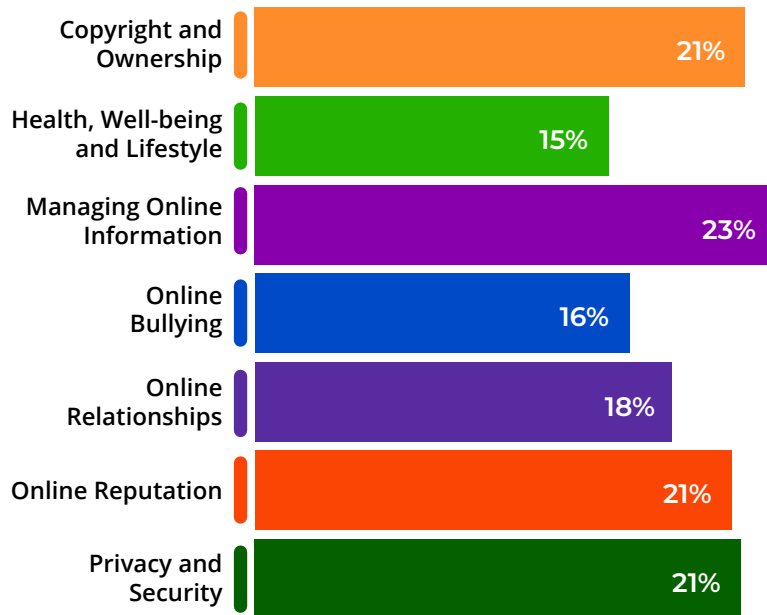


We can also break down the proportion of responses per level per strand (i.e. the number of answers at level 1, 2, etc.):



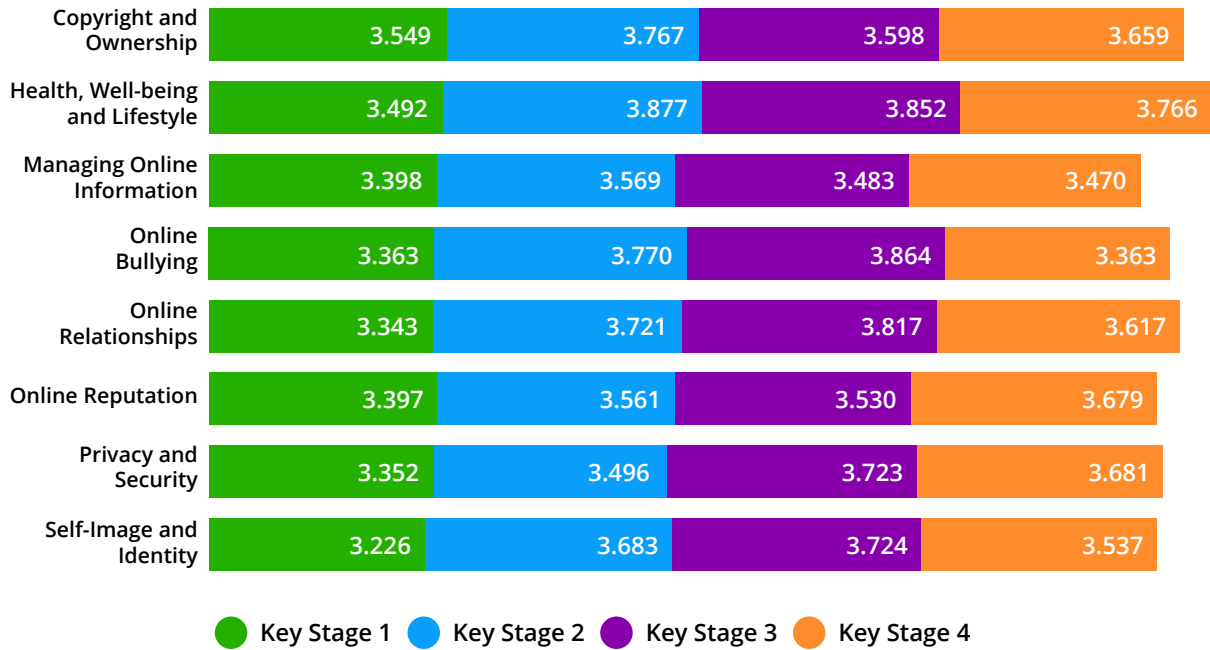
Which shows that while generally knowledge levels are good, there is still a significant number of responses that are in the lower categories with scope for improvement of knowledge. If we reflect back against the Burch Competence model, we can determine the proportion of respondents whose knowledge resides at either Unconscious Incompetence or Conscious Incompetence. This aligns significantly close with the recent 2024 Ofcom report¹ which found similar results relating to confidence against ability.

While the overall averages against strands show reasonable understanding, this illustrates significant proportions of those undertaking the knowledge maps who do not understand concepts well.

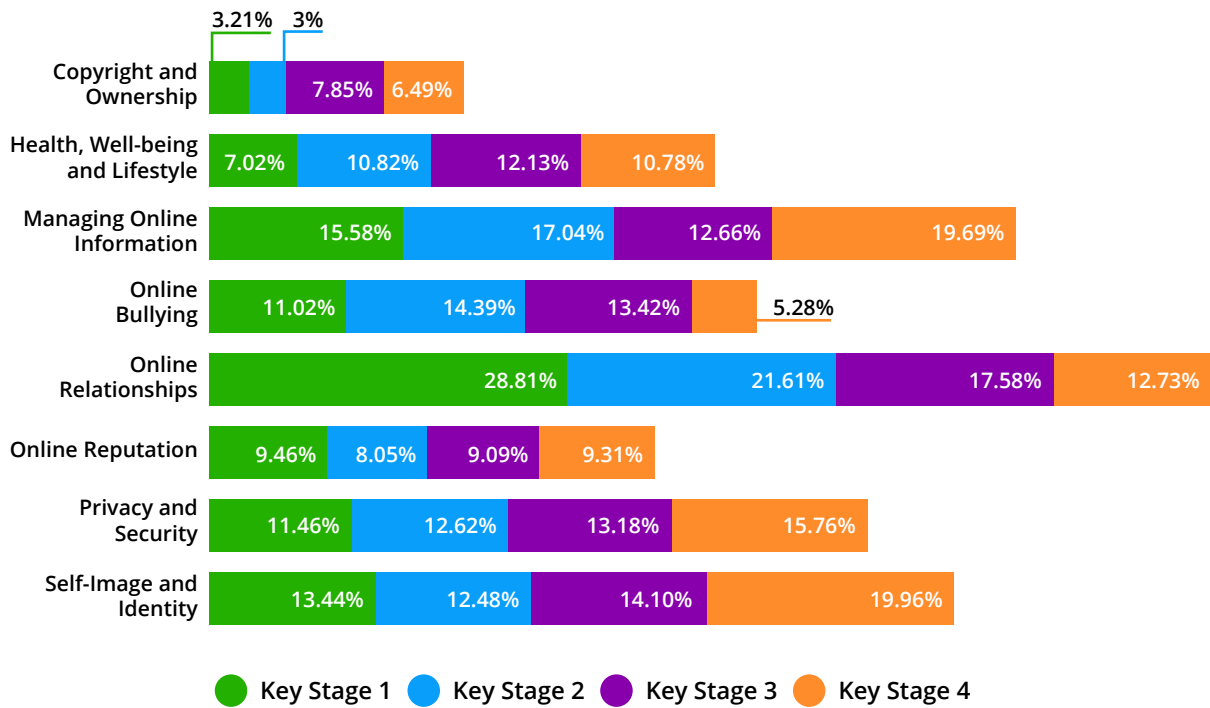


If we consider knowledge averages across key stages, we expect to see an increase in knowledge as young people get older. And while we would not present this data as definitive, given we are comparing significantly more data in key stages 1 and 2, we can see that in a lot of cases there is not consistent growth in knowledge. Which further raises concerns about the lack of coverage of this subject in later school stages.

¹ Ofcom Media Use and Attitudes Report 2024 page 36: Critical evaluation of online content.



We can also see more difference in the types of assessment at different key stages:



With Online Relationships assessed far more in primary school, and a large growth in Self-Image and Privacy and Security in later key stages, as well as a significant reduction in online bullying coverage in key stage 4.



In focussing on specific knowledge maps to see the “popularity” of different topics, we can determine how often a specific knowledge map has been chosen for assessment. Again, as with our analysis of aspects, this shows both the most popular knowledge maps but also those a teacher is more likely to choose to assess. Again, it is no surprise to see these assessments in Online relationships and Self-image and identity overall, and this marries up with the more popular aspects being delivered in general.

I can describe how things shared privately online can have unintended consequences for others. e.g. screen-grabs.	19426
I can describe how to be kind and show respect for others online including the importance of respecting boundaries regarding what is shared about them online and how to support them if others do not.	19255
I can explain that taking or sharing inappropriate images of someone (e.g. embarrassing images), even if they say it is okay, may have an impact for the sharer and others; and who can help if someone is worried about this.	19083
I can explain how sharing something online may have an impact either positively or negatively	18786
I can explain how content shared online may feel unimportant to one person but may be important to other people’s thoughts feelings and beliefs.	17417
I can describe strategies for safe and fun experiences in a range of online social environments (e.g. livestreaming, gaming platforms)	17383
I can give examples of how to be respectful to others online and describe how to recognise healthy and unhealthy online behaviours.	17264
I can give examples of technology-specific forms of communication (e.g. emojis, memes and GIFs).	16635
I can demonstrate how to support others (including those who are having difficulties) online.	16438
I can explain how someone can get help if they are having problems and identify when to tell a trusted adult.	16385

As with “unpopular” aspects, we can also see knowledge maps used the least relate to technical areas, law and copyright issues. Again, this is not surprising given that these are some of the least used aspects that are delivered in the classroom.

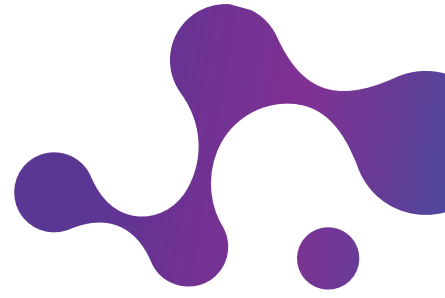
I can identify devices I could use to access information on the internet.	1
I can give examples of how I (might) use technology to communicate with people I know	1
I can describe why other people’s work belongs to them	6
I can say why it belongs to me (e.g. ‘I designed it’ or ‘I filmed it’).	8
I can say how those rules / guides can help anyone accessing online technologies	18
I can give some simple examples of content which I must not use without permission from the owner, e.g. videos, music, images.	48
I can evaluate digital content and can explain how to make choices about what is trustworthy e.g. differentiating between adverts and search results.	52
I can give examples of content that is permitted to be reused and know how this content can be found online.	76
I can differentiate between ethical and legal issues (e.g. libel, slander, racism, homophobia, injunction, trolling).	78
I can use my own media research to give relevant examples.	78





In considering average scores per aspect, there is a great deal of variation, with some very close to 5, showing a very high proportion of responses being strongest, to those where averages are far lower, showing a far greater variation of response. However, in some cases these high scoring aspects are being assessed a lot, but for the majority of the highest rated knowledge maps, there are far fewer assessments being made. For example, an aspect such as “I can analyse well-being issues experienced by others in the wider news from my own online research and construct strategies that may have assisted with those cases I have identified.” has a high average, but it has only been used a few times (83), compared to some others which have been delivered many thousands of times. It is far more encouraging, for example, to see the level of confidence in making use of evidence capture of bullying content in disclosure.

I can give examples of how the internet and social media can be used for positive self-promotion.	4.6066	1609
I can describe how to capture bullying content as evidence (e.g. screen-grab, URL, profile) to share with others who can help me.	4.588	13933
I can assess and action different strategies to limit the impact of technology on health (e.g. night-shift mode, regular breaks, correct posture, sleep, diet and exercise).	4.4358	10082
I can analyse well-being issues experienced by others in the wider news from my own online research and construct strategies that may have assisted with those cases I have identified.	4.3735	83
I can describe how messages online portraying ‘identity ideals’ can inhibit someone from being themselves online or sharing things openly.	4.3198	1007
I can identify, flag and report inappropriate content.	4.2905	5160
I can describe common systems that regulate age-related content (e.g. PEGI, BBFC, parental warnings) and describe their purpose.	4.2762	10526
I can describe how and why people should keep their software and apps up to date, e.g. auto updates.	4.2504	8493
I can identify online role models who manage a positive identity and give examples from my own research / experience to support my understanding.	4.25	116
I can identify some of the key laws governing online behaviour and reputation and the potential criminal implications of breaking them.	4.2308	715



Whereas the weakest aspects centre generally on more complex topics but are also some which have been used a great deal.

I can give examples of how I (might) use technology to communicate with people I know	2	1
I can say why it belongs to me (e.g. 'I designed it' or 'I filmed it').	2.375	8
I can assess the benefits and limitations of online commerce	2.4066	937
I understand Creative Commons Licensing protocols.	2.5609	353
I can describe ways people who have similar likes and interests can get together online.	2.6582	10396
I can describe why other people's work belongs to them	2.6667	6
I can explain what app permissions are and can give some examples.	2.6673	10314
I can describe strategies for keeping personal information private, depending on context.	2.7495	10198
I can assess how those laws can vary depending on country and can give examples of some of the differences and issues that may raise.	2.7937	126
I can recognise that devices can collect and share data about users with or without their knowledge or awareness, e.g. device usage including microphone, camera and geolocation.	2.8087	622



Positive Change: What do ProjectEVOLVE users have to say?



During April and May 2024 we conducted a series of interviews with teachers and with young people to understand their experiences of ProjectEVOLVE and to evaluate the impact it had on their teaching and learning. For this evaluation, we interviewed 5 teachers/professionals and 8 young people from four primary schools across the country. Some of the key findings from professionals were:

Programme implementation

There were two common threads in the implementation of ProjectEVOLVE by the teachers we interviewed:

1. They all mapped ProjectEVOLVE against a curriculum (either the PSHE or Computing curriculum), while being aware of the wider Education for a Connected World Framework that ProjectEVOLVE is based on.
2. They all recognised the advantage of using Knowledge Maps to baseline current knowledge, identify gaps and plan learning accordingly. Some teachers mentioned that even across classes in the same year, the gaps could be different, and they focused what they taught based on those gaps. In one school these knowledge maps were created and shared across not only the school but all the schools in the MAT as well as the mapping of the ProjectEVOLVE strands across the school curriculum. This philosophy of identifying need and teaching based on that rather than adhering to a fixed curriculum is the ethos and philosophy we had when creating ProjectEVOLVE so it is wonderful to see this approach being adopted in schools.

Teachers liked that ProjectEVOLVE is flexible in its structure and approach and can support their knowledge of digital literacy.

Opportunities to teach the content from ProjectEVOLVE and how it was integrated within the rest of the teaching varied. While in one school there was a dedicated online safety curriculum and a topic and resources were taught each week during the terms, in another school, teachers identified opportunities to weave ProjectEVOLVE lessons amongst other subjects in the curriculum.

Programme quality – content and platform

ProjectEVOLVE offers a comprehensive approach that integrates well into the broader curriculum and other curriculum areas. It makes it easier to address complex topics by offering ready-to-use resources and a clear framework for discussions and lessons. Children like the variety - quizzes, questions and they find the resources relatable.

Usefulness of the programme

In terms of usefulness, teachers talked about how useful the tool is for those of them who have less knowledge of online safety. They find it easy to integrate into the curriculum and helpful that the tool breaks things down and provides consistency and comprehensiveness of all assets needed for them to teach as well as a variety of assets including slides, quizzes, scenario-based activities and so on. Knowledge maps are particularly useful in starting discussions and engaging students. The tool is useful and relevant to children's experiences online which makes the lessons relatable.



I think the only thing I want to kind of say is just thank you. It [ProjectEVOLVE] helps teachers to know what they don't know and sometimes they're the hardest things to teach. What your tool does is provides kind of examples and it enables people to teach something they might not actually have experience of."

A computing lead teacher, primary school in Leicestershire

Programme impact

The impact that ProjectEVOLVE has had can be viewed in two ways – that on the professionals working with the tool and that on the children and young people using the tool.

Our interviewees shared that the impact on them as professionals has been:

- An improved knowledge and understanding of online safety and digital literacy
- Ability to start conversations with children about their online experiences
- The tool has helped them embed this learning into the curriculum they teach
- Has helped their approach to online safety in their roles and become aware of how this should be prioritised
- Has supported an approach towards embedding and integrating proactive online safety education within the curriculum



Without ProjectEVOLVE as an offering for schools, online safety education in the UK would look very different. The majority of schools we work with will be dipping into it in some form because they need to have something they can rely on produced by the right people."

A professional working for a Managed Service Provider in England



Without ProjectEVOLVE I don't know what we would be able to provide to schools that is meaningful and supportive and can have that impact on the online safety curriculum within those schools. So I think it is really a really vital tool and platform for educators to have access to."

A professional working for a Managed Service Provider in England

When it comes to feedback from young people:

The young people interviewed said that ProjectEVOLVE is helping them be safe when going online. It helps them by providing examples or scenarios they might encounter. It also supports them to know how to search for the right thing and be aware they can come across things that are not appropriate for them. One of the children spoke about knowing how to identify if a website is trustworthy or secure.

In terms of learning, young people spoke about being aware there are things online that can be hurtful or not appropriate for them or fake. They learned to tell a trusted adult if they were not comfortable with anything. Young people described ProjectEVOLVE as fun, engaging, and educational. They enjoyed the Knowledge Maps and activities, which helped them understand online safety and make informed choices. The programme also promoted peer support and intergenerational learning, enhancing their self-awareness and decision-making regarding online activities.



I have learned that you always have a say when somebody is asking for something, you can always say no."



It teaches me how to be healthy, but have a little bit of screen time."



Learned how to know what's trusted."



They teach me how to adjust my avatar without sharing personal information."

Young people from primary schools we interviewed

Overall, ProjectEVOLVE positively impacted both educators and students by enhancing knowledge of online safety and digital literacy, facilitating proactive online safety education, and providing relevant, engaging content. The programme's comprehensive resources and integration into school curricula make it a vital tool for fostering digital literacy and online safety in education.

Conclusions

The implementation and analysis of ProjectEVOLVE underscore the critical importance of digital literacy and online safety education in today's increasingly digital world. Since its inception in 2017, ProjectEVOLVE has effectively operationalized the Education for a Connected World Framework (EfCW), providing educators with resources and assessment tools to support their efforts in preparing students for the complexities of the online environment.

- **Widespread Adoption:** With over 15,000 schools and more than 70,000 unique users in the UK, ProjectEVOLVE has achieved significant reach, engaging nearly two million students. Its international use further highlights its global relevance and adaptability.
- **Resource Engagement:** The high engagement with resources (1,032,867 downloads), particularly in the strands of Online Relationships, Self-Image & Identity, and Managing Online Information, reflects educators' prioritization of these critical areas. The platform's extensive use in primary schools emphasizes the focus on building foundational digital literacy skills from an early age.
- **Knowledge Map Utilization:** The substantial use of Knowledge Maps (1,453,903 delivered) demonstrates the tool's effectiveness in assessing students' understanding of digital literacy concepts. The data reveals generally good knowledge levels, though it also highlights areas for improvement, particularly in Privacy and Security, and Online Reputation.
- **Primary Focus:** The predominant use of ProjectEVOLVE in Key Stages 1 and 2 indicates a strong emphasis on digital literacy in primary education. However, the significant drop-off in secondary schools suggests a need for increased focus and resources to address the more complex online risks faced by adolescents.

ProjectEVOLVE has significantly contributed to, and enhanced, the state of digital literacy education, moving from a theoretical framework to practical, data-driven insights that provide a clear picture of what is happening in classrooms. The platform's ability to track and analyse resource use and knowledge assessments offers valuable information that can inform future policy and practice.

As digital technologies continue to evolve, so too must our approaches to education and online safety. ProjectEVOLVE stands as a robust tool, free to use by educators. By addressing the identified gaps and building on the platform's successes, we can continue to move toward an education environment where all students are well-prepared to navigate the digital world safely, responsibly, and effectively.

