



22nd December 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Christmas Safety

The Christmas period is upon us and we just wanted to offer some support and advice to you about how to support your children online.

Christmas is a time when lots of young people may spend longer on devices or receive devices that are able to access online platforms including social media such as tablets, smartphones, games consoles and laptops.

Devices that are new are often not secure or pre-set within the settings sufficiently for children and teenagers. This can unfortunately put them at risk. There are programmes and applications they can access such as YouTube, Netflix and Amazon/Prime along with other individual and less well known web platforms, where they can watch video content, programmes or access images that are often not age appropriate and not suitable for them to view.

Equally games consoles are often played by young people where games are a classified certificate above their age. Please ensure you check the settings of devices and monitor what children are watching and who they are talking to through online platforms. The most valuable strategy is to talk often and ultimately have oversight and an interest in what children are engaging with.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk is a brilliant website that can help and support you as a family stay safe online. There are also many 'think you know videos' you can watch on YouTube that will show you how to manage settings and secure your child's online world, so any risk is reduced and, where possible eliminated. We have also attached several documents that can support you to monitor the online behaviour of children and young people and we hope you find these useful. If you believe you have an issue over the festive period with online safety, please call 101 and speak to Police for advice. Have a wonderful Christmas with your family and friends.

As a school we continue to cover online safety as part of our curriculum and as always our online safety web page provides video and written guidance: <https://www.queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk/parents/online-safety/>

Our safeguarding booklet is also available through the website where links related to online safety can be found as well as sign posting to other services should you or people you know need help and support over the Christmas break: <https://www.queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2023/07/Safeguarding-Booklet-JULY-2023-Final.pdf>

Finally Derbyshire local authority also provide advice and guidance on how to stay safe and well over the winter and festive periods and this can be found at the link here: <https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing/your-health/staying-well-in-winter/staying-well-in-winter.aspx>

Best wishes for the festive season.

Yours faithfully

Mr Amps
Deputy Head Teacher - Designated Safeguarding Lead

Supporting young people online

Information and advice for parents and carers



The internet – an inspiring and positive place

The internet is an amazing resource which enables children and young people to connect, communicate and be creative in a number of different ways, on a range of devices. However, the internet is always changing, and being able to keep up to date with your children's use of technology can be a challenge. You may sometimes feel that your children have better technical skills than you do, however children and young people still need advice and protection when it comes to managing their lives online.

Issues that your child may encounter on the internet will vary depending on their age and online activities. We have grouped potential online risks into these 4 categories.



Conduct:

Children need to be aware of the impact that their online activity can have on both themselves and other people, and the digital footprint that they create on the internet. It's easy to feel anonymous online and it's important that children are aware of who is able to view, and potentially share, the information that they may have posted. When using the internet, it's important to keep personal information safe and not share it with strangers. Discuss with your child the importance of reporting inappropriate conversations, messages, images and behaviours and how this can be done.



Content:

Some online content is not suitable for children and may be hurtful or harmful. This is true for content accessed and viewed via social networks, online games, blogs and websites. It's important for children to consider the reliability of online material and be aware that it might not be true or written with a bias. Children may need your help as they begin to assess content in this way. There can be legal consequences for using or downloading copyrighted content, without seeking the author's permission.



Contact:

It is important for children to realise that new friends made online may not be who they say they are and that once a friend is added to an online account, you may be sharing your personal information with them. Regularly reviewing friends lists and removing unwanted contacts is a useful step. Privacy settings online may also allow you to customise the information that each friend is able to access. If you have concerns that your child is, or has been, the subject of inappropriate sexual contact or approach by another person, it's vital that you report it to the police via the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (www.ceop.police.uk). If your child is the victim of cyberbullying, this can also be reported online and offline. Reinforce with your child the importance of telling a trusted adult straight away if someone is bullying them or making them feel uncomfortable, or if one of their friends is being bullied online.



Commercialism:

Young people's privacy and enjoyment online can sometimes be affected by advertising and marketing schemes, which can also mean inadvertently spending money online, for example within applications. Encourage your children to keep their personal information private, learn how to block both pop ups and spam emails, turn off in-app purchasing on devices where possible, and use a family email address when filling in online forms.

There are real advantages in maintaining an open dialogue with your child about their internet use. Not sure where to begin? These conversation starter suggestions can help.

1 Ask your children to tell you about the websites and apps they like to use and what they enjoy doing online.

2 Ask them about how they stay safe online. What tips do they have for you, and where did they learn them? What is OK and not OK to share?

3 Ask them if they know where to go for help, where to find the safety advice, privacy settings and how to report or block on the services they use.

4 Encourage them to help someone! Perhaps they can show you how to do something better online or they might have a friend who would benefit from their help and support.

5 Think about how you each use the internet. What more could you do to use the internet together? Are there activities that you could enjoy as a family?

What can I do right now?

- Maintain an open dialogue with your child and encourage them to talk to you about their internet use: for example who they're talking to, services they're using, and any issues they may be experiencing.
- Create a family agreement to establish your children's boundaries, and your expectations, when on the internet.
- Give your child strategies to deal with any online content that they are not comfortable with – such as turning off the screen, telling an adult they trust and using online reporting facilities.
- Consider using filtering software to block unwanted content. In addition to filtering, remember that discussion with your child, and involvement in their internet use, are both effective ways to educate them about the internet.
- Encourage your children to 'think before you post.' Online actions can impact not only yourself but the lives of others. Content posted privately online can be publicly shared by others, and may remain online forever.
- Understand the law. Some online behaviour may break the law, for example when downloading or sharing content with others. Be able to recommend legal services.
- Familiarise yourself with the privacy settings and reporting features available on popular sites and services.
- If your child is being bullied online, save all available evidence and know where to report the incident, for example to the school, service provider, or the police if the law has been broken.
- Familiarise yourself with the age ratings for games and apps which can help to indicate the level and suitability of the content. Also see if online reviews are available from other parents as these may be helpful.
- Set up a family email address that your children can use when signing up to new games and websites online.
- Encourage your children to use nicknames (where possible) instead of their full name online, to protect their personal information, and create strong passwords for every account.
- Set up a PIN or password on devices to help protect personal information.

Sign up to our Childnet newsletter at www.childnet.com.

Help make sure that your children know how to stay safe online, by using our SMART Rules for primary aged children, or 5 Tips for Teens.

5 SMART Rules for primary aged children:

S Safe: Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when you're chatting or posting online. Personal information includes your email address, phone number and password.

M Meet: Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present. Remember online friends are still strangers even if you have been talking to them for a long time.

A Accepting: Accepting emails, messages, or opening files, images or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages!

R Reliable: Someone online might lie about who they are and information on the internet may not be true. Always check information by looking at other websites, in books, or with someone who knows. If you like chatting online it's best to only chat to your real world friends and family.

T Tell: Tell a parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone, or something, makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

5 Tips for Teens:

1 Protect your online reputation: use the tools provided by online services to manage your digital footprints and 'think before you post.' Content posted online can last forever and could be shared publicly by anyone.

2 Know where to find help: understand how to report to service providers and use blocking and deleting tools. If something happens that upsets you online, it's never too late to tell someone.

3 Don't give in to pressure: if you lose your inhibitions you've lost control; once you've pressed send you can't take it back.

4 Respect the law: use reliable services and know how to legally access the music, film and TV you want.

5 Acknowledge your sources: use trustworthy content and remember to give credit when using other people's work/ideas.

Further advice and resources:



1. CHILDNET RESOURCES AND WEBSITES



Childnet: Childnet International is a non-profit organisation working in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children. The Childnet website hosts all the online resources detailed below, as well as a number of recommended resources for young people, parents, carers and teachers. www.childnet.com



Childnet resources: On our website you can access resources on a range of topics, including our previously branded Know IT All for Parents interactive guide. The **Parents and Carers** area also contains key advice, information on reporting and detailed information on a range of e-safety topics in the **Hot topics** section. www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers



UK Safer Internet Centre: Childnet is part of the European Commission appointed UK Safer Internet Centre. Together with partners the **Internet Watch Foundation** and the **South West Grid for Learning**, we raise awareness about internet safety, develop information materials and resources and organise high profile events such as Safer Internet Day. You can access a range of resources from across the UK, Europe and wider afield at www.saferinternet.org.uk/parents.



Digizen: A website providing information and advice to encourage responsible digital citizenship. It shares advice and guidance on preventing and responding to cyberbullying, including the film **'Let's Fight It Together'** and specific information on social networking. www.digizen.org



KidSMART: This Childnet website is for children, teachers, parents and carers and offers fun activities for children alongside practical internet safety advice. Don't forget to check out our Early Surfers' Zone for 3-7 year olds where you can read the online stories **'The Adventures of Smartie the Penguin'** and **'Digiduck's Big Decision'**, which is also available as a free app for iPads and Android tablets. www.kidsmart.org.uk



2. INFORMATION AND TOOLS FOR PARENTS & CARERS



Supporting Young People Online: A free guide created by Childnet providing information and advice for parents and carers on supporting young people online. The advice is also available in 12 additional languages including Arabic, Hindi, Polish, Spanish, Urdu and Welsh. www.childnet.com/resources/supporting-young-people-online



A Parents' Guide to Technology: The UK Safer Internet Centre has created this guide to answer commonly asked questions and introduce some of the most popular devices used by children, highlighting the safety tools available and empowering parents with the knowledge they need to support their children to use these technologies safely and responsibly. www.saferinternet.org.uk/parent-tech



Internet Parental Controls: The four big internet providers - BT, Sky, Talk Talk and Virgin Media - provide their customers with free parental controls that can be activated at any time. Video tutorials on how to download and use these controls are available on the UK Safer Internet Centre website. www.saferinternet.org.uk/parental-controls



Safety Tools on Social Networks and Other Online Services: Information and advice on the safety tools, age requirements and terms and conditions for a variety of online services popular with young people. www.saferinternet.org.uk/safety-tools

3. SOCIAL NETWORKING



Young People & Social Networking Sites: Aims to help parents understand the positive and creative ways young people are using social networking spaces (e.g. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). It also points out the potential risks of using these sites and ways to minimise these risks. www.childnet.com/ens



Facebook Checklist: A free guide produced by the UK Safer Internet Centre that contains detailed instructions and information on privacy and account settings on Facebook. www.childnet.com/facebook-check

4. MOBILE PHONES



PhoneBrain: A site created by PhonepayPlus to educate young people and parents about phone-paid services such as calls and texts to premium rate numbers and in-app purchases. www.phonebrain.org.uk

5. ONLINE GAMING



Online Gaming: Childnet's guide contains helpful advice and information on supporting children and young people playing games online.

www.childnet.com/online-gaming



Ask About Games: Information and advice for parents and gamers about the PEGI age rating system for video games and how to play games responsibly.

www.askaboutgames.com

6. FILE SHARING & DOWNLOADING



Music, Film, TV and the Internet: Childnet has developed this guide with the music, film and television industries to inform parents, teachers and young people about how to stay safe and legal when enjoying entertainment on the internet or via a mobile device. www.childnet.com/downloading



The Content Map: A UK based website created by industry representatives to help teachers, parents and other consumers know which sites are legal for streaming and downloading films, tv, ebooks, music, games and sports broadcasts. www.thecontentmap.com

7. OTHER USEFUL SITES FOR PARENTS & CARERS



Common Sense Media: A US non-profit organisation that provides independent reviews, age ratings and other information about all types of media for families and children. www.common SenseMedia.org



Digital Parenting: The Digital Parenting website and magazines, created by Vodafone and The Parent Zone, offer parents information and advice about the latest digital technologies and the challenges young people might face in their digital world. www.vodafone.com/content/parents



Internet Matters: Launched by the four major UK internet service providers (BT, Sky, TalkTalk and Virgin Media), Internet Matters is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that provides information and advice on online issues and technologies to help parents keep their children safe online.

www.Internetmatters.org

8. WHERE TO GET HELP & ADVICE



Need help? Information about what to do if a child comes to you for help and advice about how to report online concerns such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content or illegal behaviour.

www.childnet.com/parents-help



NSPCC: If you have concerns about the safety of a child then contact the NSPCC helpline on **0808 800 5000** or email help@nspcc.org.uk.

Children can talk to someone for advice and support at any time by contacting

ChildLine on **0800 1111** or chatting to a counsellor online at www.childline.org.uk



Family Lives: A national family support charity providing help and support in all aspects of family life. Useful advice and information is available online at www.familylives.org.uk and they provide a free confidential helpline on **0808 800 2222**.

9. WHERE TO REPORT



Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP): A police agency tackling child abuse on the internet. This website includes a unique facility that enables parents and young people to make reports of actual or attempted abuse online. www.ceop.police.uk

CEOP's **Think U Know** website contains information for children and parents, as well as a link for children to report abuse online. www.thinkuknow.co.uk



Internet Watch Foundation: Part of the UK Safer Internet Centre, the IWF is the UK's hotline for reporting illegal content found on the internet. It deals specifically with child abuse and criminally obscene images hosted in the UK and internationally.

www.iwf.org.uk



ParentPort: A website run by the UK's media regulators, allowing you to report content unsuitable for children found in a programme, advert, film, video game, newspaper/magazine or other forms of media.

www.parentport.org.uk