



Thursday, 10 December 2020

Internet Safety

Dear parents/ carer,

Christmas is coming and we know some of you have already bought your children digital devices which can connect to the internet, such as mobile phones, tablets and game consoles. As a school, we want to promote and encourage safe and appropriate use of the internet because there are many positives of technology. The internet provides children with amazing opportunities for learning, such as, having fun with friends, creating and publishing ideas, sharing pictures and video and enjoying music and media. However, there are also some potential dangers.

Below are some useful strategies to help promote internet safety at home:

1. Discuss as a family how the internet will be used at home. Think about which information should be kept private, such as, personal information & photos of your child in school uniform. Decide rules for making and meeting online friends. A good way to demonstrate this is to check your own social media privacy settings.
2. TikTok is an extremely popular app. TikTok allows you to make your profile and content private but it does not prevent children from viewing content that is inappropriate for their age. If your child has access to TikTok, please be aware of the potential inappropriate content they can access.
3. Ensure your children know the risks of accepting friends' requests from strangers online and make sure you know who your child is talking to.
4. Consider locating your child's digital device in a family area and be aware children cannot always be supervised whilst using the internet. If your child is using your mobile phone, ensure you have checked the privacy settings and the appropriateness of the content.
5. Be especially aware of settings rules relating to your child's use of webcams and any applications or devices which allow voice or video chat. This is especially essential if your child has access to video sharing applications such as Snapchat and TikTok. <https://www.internetmatters.org/schools-esafety/primary/> has some excellent resources for parents with more information regarding this.
6. Use Parental Control functions for digital devices to block unsuitable content or contact from unknown people. Research different parental control which are most suitable to you, your child, and the technology in your home. If you are unsure about how to change your parental control settings, you can contact your internet provider for advice. You can also visit sites like www.internetmatters.org, www.getsafeonline.org, and www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/a-parentsguide, for advice about parental controls and how to report concerns.
7. Before allowing your child to access online material, make sure you read any parental guidance and safety recommendations (including age requirements). Most popular social networking sites including



Facebook, Twitter, TikTok and Snapchat are usually for users aged over 13- visit www.net-aware.org.uk.

8. Always remember that parental control tools are not always 100% effective and unsuitable content can get through so do not rely on them alone to protect your child.
9. Take an active interest in your child's life online. Talk openly with them about the things they do. Ask them to show or even teach you how they use the internet and learn which websites like to use and why. Learning together with your child can often open up opportunities to discuss safer online behaviour.
10. Ensure that your child knows that once a picture, video or comment is posted online then it can be very difficult to remove. Other people can share it without you even knowing. www.childnet.com and www.thinkuknow.co.uk has some useful tips and ideas for parents/carers about starting conversations about online safety.
11. Always ensure your child knows how to report and block people online who may send nasty or inappropriate messages or content. Encourage your child not to reply to cyberbullying and to keep any evidence.
12. Make sure your child knows it is important that they tell an adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel scared or uncomfortable. Remember, the internet is an essential part of young people's lives and provides them with tremendous opportunities.

Websites to visit for more information:

1. www.thinkuknow.co.uk – Visit the “Parent/Carer” Section and use the “Click CEOP” button to seek advice and report online abuse
2. www.childnet.com – Visit the ‘Know It All’ Section for an interactive guide about online safety
3. www.getsafeonline.org – Free up-to-date Security advice including using complex passwords and managing hacked accounts www.internetmatters.org – Information from the four largest internet service providers (BT, Sky, Talk Talk and Virgin)
4. www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety - NSPCC's Share Aware campaign provides information for parents about popular social media sites, apps and games.
5. www.saferinternet.org.uk – Parent guides to safety tools on popular devices and signposts report mechanisms for some websites.
6. <https://www.safeguardingsheffieldchildren.org/sscb/safeguarding-information-and-resources/online-safety>