31st March 2020

Our ref: SHo/0173/KB

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: Internet Safety**

In the current situation we are in, we are aware that our pupils may be having more access to the internet and that you as parents and carers are having to manage the use of technology and help them learn remotely. This can feel overwhelming and potentially could cause safeguarding concerns.

As young people spend more time online there is an increase that they will see something online which is not intended for them. Whether this is fake news, impersonation, mean comments or adult content videos or memes. There are many ways in which these can be reported and together as a family you can help prepare your children and build their critical thinking skills.

reportharmfulcontect.com is a website designed to help you report anything which you believe shouldn’t be online, with guidance about how to report different types of content

NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000 nspcc.org.uk

Childline 0800 111

101

Thinkyouknow.co.uk

Internetmatters.org

getsafeonline.org

**10 tips for keeping your children safe online**

Aside from installing [a trusted antivirus](https://www.avg.com/en/internet-security) on your child’s computer, be sure to follow these basic tips for keeping your child safe online. They’ll go a long way to helping your child avoid the dangers of the internet.

1. **Have a conversation with your children**

Children are getting their first internet-connected gadgets at pretty young ages. So, start talking to them early. Warn them about [malware](https://www.avg.com/en/signal/topic/malware), [dangerous websites](https://www.avg.com/en/signal/website-safety), and sex offenders. Let your children know you’re looking out for them, speak honestly with them, and *listen*. After all, if it’s just you talking, it’s not a conversation. It’s a lecture. And no one likes a lecture.

1. **Keep your computer in a common area of the house**

It's more difficult for sex offenders and online bullies to harass your child when you can see what your child is up to. So, make sure your children aren’t going to bed with their laptops and phones. Keep internet time in the common areas.

1. **Know which other computers your children are using**

Your children are most likely to have access to computers at school or their friends' houses. Ask them where they go online, and talk to their friends’ parents about how they supervise their own children’s’ internet use.

1. **Remind your children, "Don't talk to strangers — or meet them"**

Make it clear that online strangers are not friends. Remind your children that people often lie about their age, and online predators often pretend to be children. Emphasize that your children should never reveal personal information like their name, address, phone number, school name, or even their friends’ names. Knowing any of this could help an online predator find your child in real life. And under no circumstances should your child ever meet up with someone they met online without your permission. If you do agree to a meeting, go with your child and meet in a public place.

1. **Make internet time family time**

You watch movies together. Why not browse the web together? Making it a family event can be fun. You’ll learn more about your children’s interests, and can guide them to websites that are more appropriate to their age.

1. **Know your children's passwords**

If you’ve got a younger child, create an account for them in your own name to avoid exposing your child’s name — and so you’ll have the password. But please respect the age limitations on accounts. If a site says you should be 18 to sign up, then maybe your child should wait. Whatever your choice, though, make sure you get their passwords and warn them that you’ll be checking their accounts from time to time to make sure everything’s kosher. (Spying on your children’s accounts without their knowledge could weaken their trust in you.)

1. **Watch for changes in your children’s behaviour**

Being secretive about what they do online, withdrawing from the family, and other personality changes could be signs that an online sex offender is preying on your child. So, keep an eye out for any behavioural changes.

1. **Pay attention to any gifts anyone gives your children**

Sexual predators may send physical letters, photos, or gifts to children to seduce them. Stay alert, and ask your kids about any new toys they bring home.

1. **Check your children’s browsing history**

Open your child’s web browser and look for “History” to see a list of websites they’ve been to. Also check the recycle bin to see if any files have been deleted. You may be surprised.

1. **Set rules — and stick to them**

As a parent, it’s your job to limit your child’s screen time, set boundaries for inappropriate content, and make sure your children stick to them. So, do it. Talk to your internet service provider about filters you can use to block pornographic or violent websites, or invest in a Wi-Fi router with parental controls.

If you have any further questions regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Seriena Hodder

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