

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This week, as part of Safer Internet Day (February 9th), children have been taking part in discussions on e-safety. As well as this, we wanted to share some advice and tips with parents which you may find useful.

Mr Hawker (Computing/E-Safety Lead)

Parents Online safety within the home

1. **Set fair and consistent rules** in relation to your child's internet use at home. As they get older, try to agree the rules with them so that they have some control over their digital world.
2. **Teach your child to think critically** about what they see, read or hear online. For young children encourage them to ask "what would mom or dad say about that"? As they get older they need to be able to assess for themselves whether they are in a risky online place and whether the information they are receiving is reliable and helpful to them.
3. It's much harder for people to empathise with each other when their communications are digital. It's why trolls find it easy to post horrible messages. Helping young people to understand that and pause and think about the impact of things posted online, will help them cope with some difficult behaviour they will come across and avoid getting caught up in it.
4. Maintain a **positive** outlook on your child's use of the internet. Whatever you think to the stuff they watch or the hours they spend on Instagram or Youtube, if you constantly criticise the apps or games they love, they are not going to want to talk to you about their online life. **Remember if something happens online at home don't get mad, get curious.**
5. Young people who can recover from an online mistake can learn and avoid making the same mistake again. You can help by making it easy for them to talk to you about their mishaps. **Try and keep calm and carry on! Think carefully about blocking apps or websites.** This can exacerbate the problem. Making sure they know where to go for help if they need it, and recognising if they are not recovering well so you can step in and help. Don't forget parents can also talk to their child's school about online safety. Also check out Childnet International and their hot topic section.
6. **Allow young people to explore and take charge of their online life.** Having some control over any given situation is an important part of resilience – and such an important part of digital resilience. It's essential in helping them understand and develop their own sense of what's right and wrong online.

Setting up and implementing the 4 D's at home is vital

- Digital free zones – keep technology downstairs
- Digital role models – parents lead by example online and with digital usage
- Digital sunset – young people need to come away from technology before they go to sleep
- Digital detox – As a family try a gadget free day or hour

3 great apps to download:

- **Netware** aimed at parents highlighting different apps and games young people use.
- **Internet Matters (tablet only)** is a fun interactive online safety quiz that can be used at home with children.
- **Youtube for kid's app** aimed at young children



Online Safety Guide for Parents & Carers Social Media

- Research the age restrictions of apps – don't refer to the information given in app stores as it is not always correct.
- Remind young people to set social media accounts to **'private'** – **apps are set to 'public' by default once downloaded.**
- Do your children understand what is **'safe and unsafe'** to post online?
- Educate young people on **how** they can report their concerns online, and **who** can help.
- Parents ideally need to sit, discuss and walk through social media platforms and instant messenger apps with their children – i.e. you can set up **'family safety mode'** within certain apps.
- Support young people in making safe connections online, and building healthy relationships.
- **Please don't assume all children use the internet and apps the same the same way.** Ask young people regularly where they are going online, and how they are using it.
- **Be careful sharing your location.** Ideally children and young people should have their location services switched off on their phones, or only share their location with selected family and friends only.
- Support children and young people to have a **positive** presence online, and remind them that once something is posted online it stays posted.
- Have a conversation about who your children are following, speaking to and/or engaging with online. Ask how these people make your children feel? E.g. does this person you follow make you feel good or bad about yourself?
- Agree on a realistic time limit as a family, for gadgets and use of social media. Encourage young people to come away from technology an hour before bedtime.

Great websites to look at



Great apps to explore if children have mobile phones



SafeToNet

