



Keeping Safe Online

Dear Parents,

During these challenging times, it is extremely important that we are keeping ourselves and our children safe online. As we all follow advice to stay at home, it may be that your children will be spending more time on the internet. Whilst most people's intentions will be honourable and most websites completely safe to use, we must remember that the internet can pose significant risks.

The internet can be such an engaging, entertaining and exciting place for your child to explore. They can connect and communicate with others on a range of devices and at such a speed to. Sometimes it is hard to keep up with which APP the children are using and what advice to give when it comes to staying safe online. Many useful APPs, websites and online resources can help your children to learn. We have recommended many of these on our own website in the Parents section under "**Home Learning**". The link below will take you straight to those recommended sites and we will continue to suggest useful and safe online resources too:

<https://www.stannessolihull.co.uk/home-learning/>

These 4 Golden Rules (The 4Cs) should help you to guide, advise and protect your children online:

1. Conduct

- It is important to remember that children must use the internet appropriately themselves too.
- Children can put themselves at risk by the way they act and behave online. We call this a "**digital footprint**".
- We must always encourage the children to be aware of keeping personal information safe and not sharing information with strangers.

2.

Content

- Some online content is not suitable for children. It may be hurtful or harmful to your child. This can include online content on any device and across any source, including social media platforms, online games, blogs and websites.
- It is important for you to consider the reliability of any internet or web-based source and the potential dangers of each.

3.

Contact

- Children can be contacted by their friends online, but also potentially by bullies or people who seek to cause a child harm or “groom” young people online.
- 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, they may be sharing 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 is 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.
- We must always encourage the children to be aware of keeping personal information safe and not sharing information with strangers.

4.

Commercialism

- Young people can be unaware of hidden costs and advertising in APPs, games and websites.
- Children’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 games and particular APPs
- Encourage your children to keep their personal information private, learn how to block “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.

Keeping safe online – useful guidance

As mentioned at the start of this letter, our school website has lots of useful guidance and recommended websites for you and your children to use. Here are some more useful websites that may help you and your family to keep safe online:

- The **National Online Safety** Facebook and Twitter page offers some excellent guidance on how to protect your children online. It gives you very simple ideas on how to understand particular APPs, websites and games.
- **NSPCC's** Net Aware provides simple guides for parents to the most popular social networks, apps and games. Simply type in the app you wish to review in the search bar and the website will provide you with useful information to help parents make an informed decision.
<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>
- Parental Controls
Internet Matters.org have produced excellent resources on setting up parental controls in a step by-step format. Simply click on the links below to explore ways in which parents can set up parental controls on digital devices and popular social media apps. Each circular icon that is loaded represents a guide and can be accessed by simply clicking on the icon.
- Parental controls on; Smartphones and other devices
<https://www.internetmatters.org/blog/parental-controls/smartphones-and-other-devices/>
- Parental controls on; Entertainment and search engines
<https://www.internetmatters.org/blog/parental-controls/entertainment-search-engines/>
- Parental controls on; Broadband and mobile networks
<https://www.internetmatters.org/blog/parental-controls/broadband-mobile/>
- Parental controls on; Social media
<https://www.internetmatters.org/blog/parental-controls/social-media/>
- Parental controls on; Gaming console
<https://www.internetmatters.org/blog/parental-controls/gaming-consoles/>
- General Information
There is also a good attachment from CEOP – this link is appropriate for primary aged pupils
<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/globalassets/thinkuknow/documents/thinkuknow/parents/pdf/thinkuknow-parents>

There are also many sources of help and advice available for you in the links below:

- <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers>

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>
- <https://www.getsafeonline.org/safeguarding-children/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers-whose-children-are-using-social-media>
- <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/keeping-children-happy-and-safe-online-during-covid-19>

We hope that this guidance helps you to continue to keep your child safe online, particularly during this challenging period of time where your child may be online more so than usual.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Linehan
(Deputy Head-teacher)