



Online Safety Newsletter

February 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

As part of Children's Mental Health Week next week, we will be celebrating **Safer Internet Day** (8th February).

The theme for this Safer Internet Day is 'All fun and games? Exploring respect and relationships online'. We will be exploring how the children can shape their interactive entertainment space into the safest space possible.

Although there are age ratings on all games, apps and social media platforms, it is clear from speaking to the children, and understanding the world around them, that it is not uncommon for them to be exposed to a wide range of online activity.

Safe and Secure Internet

There are several steps that can be taken to ensure that these platforms (if used by you child) are accessed in the safest possible way:

- **Privacy Settings**

We frequently discuss the use of safe passwords to protect online accounts and develop understanding of personal and private information. To ensure your children only have 'friends' who are real friends, you can follow the useful guides accessed below:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/checklists/>



- **Broadband controls**

Most broadband providers include parental controls for free as part of their broadband package, which means that any device that connects to your Wi-Fi will be protected by any controls you set up. Find out how to set yours up here:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parental-controls-offered-by-your-home-internet-provider>

- **Filter settings**

Within school we have a smoothwall system to filter and block any potentially harmful content. You can also do this at home through parental controls and filter options. Click here to explore how to test your filtering at home <http://testfiltering.com/personal/>

- **Monitoring and screen time**

It's very easy for children to come quickly wrapped up in their online worlds and creating an online presence. It's also easy for inappropriate content to 'pop up' on platforms such as Steam and TikTok based on what is trending at the time. Taking the above steps can ensure that they are accessing age appropriate content.

Respect and Responsibility Online

As part of our 5Rs, respect and responsibility are weaved within our curriculum to promote positive attitudes amongst the children. This is also mirrored in the way we teach online safety. We often think 'would you act like that in the real world?' If your child is online (this includes any games with a chat feature), then it's important that we talk to them about being kind online, for example only posting positive comments, don't say anything they wouldn't say in real life and treat others as they would expect to be treated.



Your child also needs to be aware that what they see online isn't always the full picture. People only share what they want you to see and images are often filtered; upper key stage two cover this as part of their PSHE.



It is also important that your child knows how to block and report any inappropriate behaviour when they see it.

BBC Own It have curated a collection of videos, quizzes, and tips to help make the web a kinder place: <https://www.bbc.com/ownit/curations/being-kind-online>

Digital Well-Being

Maintaining digital well-being is a balancing act, weighing up the risks and the rewards that the online world can offer. The internet has played a greater role in our lives than ever before, particularly over the last two years, which heightens the importance to support our digital well-being accordingly.

Please click the link below for a great article about Digital Well-being

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/digital-wellbeing-balancing-act-report-voicebox>

Please visit the websites below for more information keeping your child safe online.

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk>



<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/guides>

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/>



<https://www.parents.parentzone.org.uk/>



You can also sign up to a free newsletter via the ParentZone website for advice, articles and activities for the family.

As always, in school we are here to help.

If you would like further advice or have any questions, please feel free to contact school and Miss Connolly can support you with ways to keep your child safe online. If you have any concerns they can be passed to Mrs Bradley (DSL). Alternatively, if your child has an online concern or query they can also be encouraged to discuss this with their teacher or Miss Connolly (Online Safety Lead).