

Safer Internet Use

Tips for encouraging open discussion about digital life

Make your interest clear

Ask to see your child's favourite games and apps which will help you spot issues

Be open, honest, and appropriate to their age

When answering questions about puberty, relationships, etc.

Remind your child they can always talk to you

Even when they view harmful content, talking about it openly will help

Discuss that not everything we see online is real

Use examples from your own online world, like posts that show perfect houses

Try to remain calm

Your initial reaction could stop a child from speaking openly about what they've seen

Create a family agreement

About device use including when to use devices, parental controls and why it's good to talk

Keep talking

Online Safety Newsletter

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Safe Browsing

The internet is a vast space full of useful tools and information, but as we all know there is a dark side as well. One way for children to come across unsafe or illegal material is by using a search engine (either deliberately or accidentally) to link them to websites you would rather they weren't accessing. This issue covers what you need to know about safe browsing:



Top Tips:

Child-Friendly Search Engines

Particularly useful for primary-age students both Kiddle and Swiggle are child-friendly search engines that filter out the majority of inappropriate content. For secondary-age students ensure that Google safe-search is installed if your child uses this search engine.

Remind them not to click!

Teach your child not to click on links or pop-ups when browsing websites. This reduces the chances of them being taken to a website that may show inappropriate content, or them falling victim to a scam or cyberattack.

Remind them about not sharing personal details online:

Please see February's newsletter for further information about scams. It is really important that your child does not input their full name, home address, telephone number or any other personal details without checking with you first that the website is safe to use. This also includes personal details shared in error e.g. pictures of them in school uniform with the academy crest visible or pictures that are tagged with their location showing can allow strangers to work out where they live and place your child at risk.

Staying safe online
Advice to share with your child

Tell a trusted adult if something upsets you

Take breaks from being online

Don't chat with strangers

Ask permission before downloading anything

Avoid sharing private photos

Don't give away personal information

Double check your news sources

Take notice of age restrictions

Stick to trusted apps

Be suspicious of new information

Show respect to others

Be honest with parents and carers

Reporting Harm

Often the best way to deal with the risk of online harm is to give your child the tools to keep them safe and prevent them from accessing harmful content in the first place. Even then, your child may come across harmful content whether unkind comments and cyberbullying, inappropriate content, or fraudulent links. It is worth knowing how these can be reported.

Where to report concerns

CEOP

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) is a website where suspected grooming can be reported e.g. someone asking your child for inappropriate images or talking to them in an age-inappropriate manner.

Concerns can be reported here: [CEOP Safety Centre](#)

Report Harmful Content

The report harmful content website ([Submit a Report of Harmful Content](#)) allows you to report a range of harmful content from threats to impersonation. It also contains links to where to report sexual content or suspected terrorist content.

Social Media Platforms

All have their own reporting mechanisms. InternetMatters has collated them here: [How to report online harms and issues | Internet Matters](#)

Gaming Platforms

Increasingly the sites where your child is likely to interact with the most harmful content – particularly cyberbullying, abuse and grooming – are through online games. Please don't discount the risk from online gaming – we would always recommend that your child plays in a downstairs communal space at home to allow you to monitor conversations that are taking place. Again, each game has their own reporting mechanism and once again InternetMatters has collated them for your reference here: [How to report online harms and issues | Internet Matters](#)

Starting a conversation about life online

Be positive and open-minded about the internet

Talk early and often
Make conversations about the internet part of your daily routine

Create a safe space for conversations

Talking face to face can sometimes be difficult, so talking while walking alongside or while in a car might be easier. Make sure there are no distractions

Keep it relevant

The way your child uses the internet will change as they grow older. So, ask open-ended questions to let your child lead the conversations you have to get a feel of the challenges and experiences they face online

Be proactive

Create an agreement together on how the internet will be used, including time spend online, who your child can communicate with, appropriate apps and games and safety tools to report and block harmful content

How can I educate my child?

- Please find some videos here on how to ensure that your child has a positive image online and is a good digital citizen: [Online reputation advice hub: Tips and guidance | Internet Matters](#)
- Please find a game here that you can play as a family e.g. parents against children to see if you can spot fake news online: [Find the Fake quiz - Can you find the fake online? | Internet Matters](#)
- Please find resources here to help you to discuss with your child how harmful stereotypes can be shared online and how to spot this and avoid sharing these with others: [The Online Together Project created by Samsung and Internet Matters](#)

How can I educate myself?

- As a parent/carer it can be a real challenge to keep up with the ever-changing online landscape. There is always a new app or game, and existing games and apps are updated all of the time. This can make it seem impossible to keep up! We sometimes feel the same as teachers as well!
- We would highly recommend this site ([Apps and platforms safety hub | Expert online safety advice - Internet Matters](#)) that is updated constantly with the latest information about a range of apps and games. For example you can click on the Minecraft link and find out more about what it is, how it works, what the risks are and how as a parent/carer you can safeguard your child.

When should I contact the academy?

- We are always here to talk to you about your online safety concerns and experiences. You should particularly reach out if you need advice on something, if there has been an incident of online bullying (cyberbullying) involving other children at the academy, if another child from the academy has shared harmful or inappropriate content or anything that suggests that they might be at risk, or if your child has sent or been sent inappropriate images.
- Please note that as with any safeguarding matter we have a legal duty to report certain matters to the police and/or social services. We will always keep you informed and please rest assured that the police have no desire to criminalise young people who are engaging in age-appropriate exploration. Please ask if you require any further information on this.