



20th February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

There is no doubt that this generation of children, more than any other, have had to embrace online technology. At school, all online use includes an element of learning about online safety. By accepting technology and incorporating it into your family life, you too can teach your children how to use it responsibly and keep them safe online. To support parents and carers in this, the Government have recently released an updated document entitled 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): support for parents and carers to keep children safe online'.

We have uploaded this document on the school's website for your reference. The document includes useful information and links to other guidance documents regarding keeping children safe online.

What harms might my child experience online?

You may have concerns about specific harms which children can experience online. There are resources to help you understand and protect your child from different harms online, including:

Child sexual abuse

If your child has been a victim of child sexual abuse – online or offline – and you believe they are in immediate danger, you should call 999 and ask for the police. The police will continue to respond to emergency calls.

If you are concerned that your child has been a victim of online sexual abuse or you are worried about the way someone has been communicating with your child online, you can report it to [NCA-CEOP](#).

Exposure to radicalising content

If you are concerned that any family member, friend or loved one is being radicalised, you can call the police or 101 to get advice or make a Prevent referral, so that they can get safeguarding support. Support is tailored to the individual's needs and works in a similar way to safeguarding processes designed to protect people from gangs, drug abuse and physical and sexual exploitation.

Youth-produced sexual imagery ('sexting')

If you are worried about your child sending nude images or videos (sometimes referred to as 'youth-produced sexual imagery' or sexting), [NSPCC](#) provides advice to help you understand the risks and support your child.

If your child has shared nude images, [Thinkuknow](#) by NCA-CEOP provides advice on talking to your child and where to get help.

Cyberbullying

Parents and carers have a challenging job. They need to know what their children are doing online and also help them to do it in a safe way. With technology changing on a day-to-day basis, the best way to stay informed is for parents to be involved. Thinkuknow provides helpful tips on letting your child teach you.

If you are worried about your child's mental health, the government has published guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. If you are worried that someone you know is suicidal, including your child, Samaritans provides advice on how you can support others.

Keeping under-fives safe online

This includes 8 top tips:

Enjoy going online together

Supervise your child's use

Consider the quality and quantity of online activities

Make use of parental tools

Start the conversation of online safety early

Choose age-appropriate apps and games

Know where to report

[Guidance for parents and carers](#) on beginning a conversation about online safety

Age-inappropriate content and parental controls

If you have downloaded new apps or bought new technology to help stay connected at this time, remember to review and adjust privacy and safety settings if you or your child is signing up to a new online service.

Internet Matters has provided step-by-step guides on how to set up parental controls so that you can control what content your child can access online.

The UK Safer Internet Centre has developed guidance on how to switch on family-friendly filters to prevent age-inappropriate content being accessed on devices in your home. The NSPCC provides more information for parents or carers with concerns about their child seeking inappropriate or explicit content online.

Apps to help children stay safe online

The BBC have a website and app called Own It. The website has a lot of content for children to help them navigate their online lives, and the free smartphone app comes with a special keyboard which can intervene with help and support in the moments that children need it the most.

Support for children

If your child is worried or needs support, they can receive advice and support from Childline (0800 1111) or download the 'For Me' app.

Having a conversation about online safety can begin as soon as your child is engaging with technology. Use these conversation starters to help get the conversation started:

- What is your favourite thing to do on the iPad/tablet/my phone etc?
- What is your favourite game/app and why do you like it?
- Where do we use the iPad/tablet/games console and when can we use it?
- What can you do if something online upsets you?

- Who can help you with your favourite games and apps?
- If a message appears on the screen, what should you do?
- Who can go online? Do we know everyone online?

Our curriculum is flexible and can respond to any immediate online safety issues and risks as they emerge.

It is necessary for pupils to develop skills of critical awareness, digital resilience and good online citizenship to enable them to use internet, mobile and digital technologies safely and responsibly. Pupils are taught to recognise the creative, collaborative, cultural, economic and educational opportunities provided by the internet, mobile and digital technologies. Curriculum work will also include areas such as:

- Understanding how to use the internet and how to develop a positive online reputation and enhance future opportunities e.g. in relationships and employment
- Developing critical thinking skills and the confidence to challenge and question what they see and read in relation to online content e.g. recognising fake news and extremism, understanding commercial manipulation, maintaining an authentic sense of self that is resilient to online pressure, learning how easy it is to lie online (i.e. users may not be who they say they are and may have ulterior motives)
- Learning to recognise how technology is used for persuasion.
- Learning how to identify online risks.
- Understanding the dangers of giving out personal details online (e.g. full name, address, mobile/home phone numbers, school details, IM/email address) and the importance of maintaining maximum privacy online
- Thinking carefully before placing images online and considering their appropriateness and understanding the importance of gaining consent before posting photographs of others
- Understanding the permanency of all online postings and conversations
- Understanding relevant legislation, including copyright, and the importance of respecting other people's information, reputation and images
- Understanding the importance of online respect and what constitutes cyberbullying, how to avoid it, the impact it has and how to access help.
- How the law can help protect against online risks and abuse

At school, we advise children to notify an adult straight away if they view or hear something online that upsets them. Hertfordshire has incredibly strong support for children's helping hand. Who can we turn to at home and at school. It is useful if you reinforce the same message at home.