15th April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

During these unfamiliar times of social distancing and learning from home, the internet has become a valuable tool to allow adults and children the opportunity to remain connected with each other and work remotely. However, during this period, the increasing challenge for parents and carers is to remain aware and understand how keeping children safe when they may be spending more time than usual on the internet and related technologies. Some of the information below is for slightly older children but is still relevant for all parents to read.

Whilst we utilise the learning opportunities online for our children we also have to be mindful of the variety of apps and websites they will be browsing independently. Therefore, please can I ask all parents to **monitor the use of technology** with your child. You will be aware that during these uncertain times there are always individuals who will look to take advantage and with most young people in the country working from home, it is even more important that you check who they are 'talking to' online.

To support you in doing this, below are some answers for common questions you may have around internet safety and how to manage this at home.

How can I supervise what my child is doing on their device?
Choosing a central location for family computers where adults can supervise what children are doing online is a useful way of monitoring what your child is accessing. A common charging station in the home can also serve as a 'parking lot' for devices when taking a break from screen time during meals or overnight.

Setting up separate accounts for each user on shared home computers and setting up screen locks on phones/iPads can help adults to monitor access. Making sure that on these devices there are controls in place to restrict certain web pages and ensuring children do not have 'administrator' privileges helps to prevent any inappropriate material being accessed.

How can I monitor what my child is accessing on the internet?
Family agreements can be a good tool to help make decisions about what devices can be used at home and for how long. Discussions around which apps or programs are allowed to be used and having conversations about what information should be private, what can be shared, by who, and how, might also form part of the family agreement. This website provides useful advice on these agreements.
https://www.childnet.com/resources/family-agreement

Once these have been agreed upon it can be helpful to write them down and have all members of the family sign.

How do I know which apps or websites are suitable for my child?
There are many websites that can advise parents and carers on which apps or programs are suitable for different aged children. There is also information available about appropriate screen names and passwords that minimise the chance of a child being identified online. This website provides a wealth of information about these topics.
https://www.commonsensemedia.org/

What do I do if I am concerned about what my child is accessing on the internet?
It is important to stay up to date with advice and support about children's safety online. Please use the following sites to ensure you have controls in place at home. It is important that you are aware of who to contact if you wish to report harmful content and how to talk to your children about staying safe online. In school we have numerous controls in place, however children are still told to always report any content they find distressing to an adult immediately and we would encourage you to follow the same message at home.

- Childline - for general support
- UK Safer Internet Centre - to report and remove harmful online content
- CEOP - for advice on making a report about online abuse
- Internet matters - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- London Grid for Learning - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Net-aware - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC
- Parent info - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online
- Thinkuknow - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- UK Safer Internet Centre - advice for parents and carers

Please also take the time to view our Summer 2020 E-Safety Newsletter on the school website which gives important National updates on keeping children under five safe online and the use of an Xbox, Playstation and Tik Tok.

As you will already be aware, each Key Stage has an email address that can be used by parents and carers. Please use this email communication if you need any further guidance on supporting your child online at home.

Best wishes,

Anna Greetham

Headteacher