

Dear Parents

The internet is an amazing resource where children and young people can learn new things, get help with homework, express themselves creatively and connect with friends and family. There are also risks, but by understanding and talking about the dangers you can help keep your child safe online. E-safety is something we teach and talk about constantly in school but we are all able to access it much more freely than was once the case. We are putting some updated links on Facebook and the school website to help you, but we wanted to make sure you had a checklist to hand. Please don't feel out of your depth – if you need advice or support give us a ring or pop into the office.

Best wishes from the team.

Taken from NSPCC – Keeping Children Safe Online links on Facebook and website

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/#tab-64c5d2b7-8c18b466>

What children do online and through social networking

Children and young people go online to connect with friends, and make new ones, to browse the internet for information, chat with others and play games. They may:

- search for information or content on search engines like [Google](#) and [Bing](#)
- share images and watch videos through websites or mobile apps like [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#), [Vine](#) and [YouTube](#)
- use social networking websites like [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)
- write or reply to messages on forums and message boards
- play games alone or with others through websites, apps or game consoles
- chat with other people through online games, [BBM \(Blackberry Messenger\)](#), games consoles, webcams, social networks and tools like [Whatsapp](#)

Here are some of the main risks.

Exposure to inappropriate content

Children and young people may see illegal or inappropriate content online. Some websites may contain illegal materials. Others may be legal, but have unregulated advice or are meant for adults only. Children may access inappropriate content accidentally, or intentionally through curiosity. They may also be enticed by promises of special offers or prizes. Although it's difficult to estimate how much content is unsuitable for children, recent figures suggest that there are large amounts of inappropriate content available:

- [9500 web pages were removed](#) by the Internet Watch Foundation worldwide in 2013
- [70,000 indecent images of children](#) were reported to CEOP in 2012

Ignoring age restrictions

- Some websites and games use age restrictions and checks to ensure that children don't see unsuitable content.
- Children must be at least 13 to register on most social networking websites. However, there are often few barriers to prevent them from joining at a younger age.
- The age limit is an important safety measure and you shouldn't feel pressurised into letting younger children join these websites.

Friending or communicating with people they don't know

- Children and young people may chat or become 'friends' with people they don't know or have never met, on social networks or online games.
- The percentage of online friends that children did not know outside of being online was 12% for 8-11 years olds in 2012.
- This makes children vulnerable to bullying, grooming and sharing personal information.
- Making online friends
- This video by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre describes what an online 'friend' is and how children are using social networking to communicate.

Sharing personal information

- Privacy controls can limit who can see your details, although making 'friends' will give someone access to your information.
- Some 'free' games may also require an extensive profile which game owners could then illegally use to rent or sell the child's data.
- Switch off or adjust settings using GPS or location tracking
- Many apps and social networking sites use software to locate where the user is. Children and young people can also reveal their location by tagging photos, such as in Instagram, or checking in on Facebook or Foursquare.
- If these apps are not used carefully, it can make a young person vulnerable to people know as they'll know where they live, socialise work or study.

10 TIPS TO KEEP YOUR CHILD SAFE ONLINE

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/#tab-64c5d2b7-8c18b466>

1. Have the conversation early and often

Children and young people spend an average of 12 hours a week online. You should start talking to your child about keeping safe online at an early age.

2. Ask your child what they do online

3. Let your child teach you how to use social networks and games

4. Ask your child to help you

You could ask your child to:

- Give tips on how they would tell friends or other children to stay safe online
- Help you set up a profile on one of their favourite websites
- Tell you about a friend or family member that they are 'friends' with through social networking
- Play a game with you online

5. Know who your child is talking to online

Children don't think of people they've met online through social networking and online games as strangers, they are just online friends.

6. Set rules and agree boundaries

Establish and explain what the rules are for your child being online.

7. Make sure that content is age-appropriate

8. Use parental controls to filter, restrict, monitor or report content

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

9. Make sure your child's privacy is protected

Check the privacy settings on any online accounts your child has, for example on Facebook or games, and remind your child to keep their personal information private.

Make sure that there are appropriate security settings in place on any websites that use your child's personal details.

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Google+
- Club Penguin
- Moshi Monsters

10. Check your child knows how to use reporting tools

Explain to your child what to do if they see content or are contacted by someone that worries or upsets them. Ensure they know how to use tools to report abuse:

- Facebook (there's a separate page if you don't have an account)
- Twitter
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Skype
- Send an email to Tumblr