



Internet Safety and Parental Responsibility

30 November 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

The internet is such a big part of children's lives now. Children are increasingly accessing the service whether it is on a laptop, mobile phone or PC. It can create so many educational and social opportunities, along with access to a world of information. We are asking that you help us to ensure that your child and the children in our school are safe online, by acting as you would to protect your child in the 'real' world.

Adults often either underestimate or do not realise how often children and young people come across potentially harmful and inappropriate material. YouTube very rarely has restrictions on the content that a person can view, which leaves children very vulnerable.

There has been a recent report that there have been some inappropriate images on the social media site, Facebook, that children should not have access to. It is important to remember that Facebook holds an age restriction of 13 for membership. It may be that some parents are not aware that their child holds a facebook account. However, if you are aware, as a parent it is your responsibility to monitor your child's interactions on social media sites.

There are a number of ways you can monitor your child's usage and help keep them safe:-

- Know your child's passwords, so that you are able to access their account.
- Talk to your child about the sites they are viewing
- Monitor their friendship lists, remember it is not just the people they are friends with, but also the friends of their friends. If you feel that someone they are friends with on social media, whether this is a child or an adult, uses inappropriate images or language, you have a duty to protect your child from this and should therefore ask them to remove that person from the friendship list.
- If your child is friends with adults on social media sites, whether that is a parent from school, relative, or indeed yourself, be satisfied that the content they can view on the adults profile is something you would be happy for them to view in the 'real' world.
- Do not allow your child extended unsupervised access to the internet.
- Educate your child on the use of instant messaging, chat rooms and images uploaded on the internet. Ensure your child is aware that there is NOT a private place on the internet. They should not post any pictures/videos that they would not want you to see. Remind them that once a picture is posted on the internet, anyone can take that picture and use it. Inappropriate images whether posted by them, or received can lead to a criminal conviction.
- They should NOT make friends with strangers; they need to be aware that sometimes the person they think they are talking is not that person.
- Reassure them that it is never too late to tell someone if something makes them feel uncomfortable.

There is a lot of media cover surrounding 'Keeping Children safe Online', and there are more and more dangers out there for children to access. Please visit our school website to access further information under the 'Parents Tab'.

Should you wish to discuss any of the content in this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Mrs C Kent
Headteacher