



Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December

Dear Parent/Carers,

As we approach Christmas, many children may receive new electronic devices such as tablets, iPads, smartphones or games consoles. As a school, we fully support new technology and the benefits it can have in supporting children academically and socially.

Within school, children are taught about how to stay safe online, however, as much as we can equip our children with the skills to stay safe, unfortunately incidents can take place online and we want to work with parents to ensure our children stay safe in whatever setting; whether it be in school or at home.

We would like to send a polite reminder about the ways in which children can stay safe online. The recommended ages by CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) for popular websites and apps are as follows:

Website	Age
Facebook	13 years of age
Instagram	13 years of age
Twitter	13 years of age
Snapchat	13 years of age
Whatsapp	16 years of age

These age restrictions are for a variety of reasons, however we would draw attention to the fact that children are not emotionally ready to deal with an event should one occur and therefore we would discourage children being allowed access to these sites. If you feel as a parent that you would like your child(ren) to access any of the above, or similar, we strongly recommend setting up the accounts with your own email address to allow you to monitor your child's online activity.

There are several websites that offer advice and support for parents/carers. Two useful ones are:

<https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers>

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

As a school, we would also like to support you to ensure that all children are safe online, both at home and in school. Therefore after the Christmas holidays, we will be holding a drop-in session where parents will be invited to come into school to see Mr Pearson and Mr Dixon to check and set-up privacy settings if needed. The date for this will be announced after the holidays.



## Hints and tips

- Make sure that you use the parental controls and settings menu to stop your child accessing inappropriate information. A good site to support you with setting controls is <http://www.internetmatters.org/> - they have lots of useful tips, especially with changing the settings on devices.
- Set up the account for the device in your name, so you can see what your child is downloading. This is important if you want to download any additional content called 'in app purchases' (IAP).
- If you are buying a smartphone for your child, talk to the mobile provider about parental controls. These might not be automatically switched on, so you may need to look at the provider's website for support.
- Whilst we know that children will be excited to use their new presents, discuss with them the importance of having a balance and incorporate 'non-screen time'.
- Games consoles such as the Xbox and Playstation are very popular with primary aged children. Video games have an age classification. Many of the most popular games are rated '16' or '18' which means that you have to be this age to play them as they contain bad language, violence and inappropriate content. Major releases before Christmas such as Call of Duty: Black Ops III (rated 16), Fallout 4 (rated 18), Star Wars – Battlefront (rated 16) all have 16+ ratings – **this means children at primary school should not be playing on these games.** If you want to find more information about games that are released, then go to: <http://gamesratingauthority.org/GRA/>
- Make sure that you talk to your children about being online – especially about using cameras and video chat facilities. If someone acts inappropriately, then make sure that they tell you immediately. Also try to ensure that they use these features sensibly and don't take unsuitable images and share them with people they don't know.

If you have any concerns or queries regarding internet safety, please feel free to contact staff at school. The Designated Safeguarding Officers are Mrs Sennett, Mr Elliott, Mrs Jackson and Mrs Rashid.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Sennett  
Headteacher