



Social Media, Devices and Internet Safety

See www.bohunthorsham.com for links to all resources referenced here

Social Media



Most social media apps have a minimum age rating of 13. If a social network has set an age limit it means that some of the content may not be suitable for a younger child.

Recommendations if your child is under the minimum age for a social network and they want to join:

- Research the social network, find out what type of content your child may be exposed to. Decide whether they're ready for it.
- Discuss if they're mature enough to handle the type of content they may see on social platforms and if you feel comfortable with them possibly being in contact with adults and strangers.
- We'd strongly advise you to follow the minimum age rating. If you do say yes, use strict privacy settings and either 'friend' your child or ask a family member to. But be reminded that this will not enable you or the family friend to see private messaging on these sites or apps, and this is where the majority of young people's online communication happens.

Device Time and Boundaries



Setting boundaries over devices is vital to keeping your child safe online but also to keeping them physically and emotionally well. A recent study showed the negative impact on young people's sleep and wellbeing from night time device use.

We strongly advocate setting up a family agreement around device use, not just the iPads but other devices too such as mobile phones and gaming consoles. The NSPCC has a useful template for this agreement. For help in how to set up the agreement consider these suggestions:

- Start by talking to your child about the reasons for this agreement – asking them what they think about their current use of devices, what is working well and what isn't, ask them about how they feel about setting boundaries and compare the situation to road safety and curfew type agreements you currently have.
- Make sure your expectations are realistic and achievable.
- Don't forget to include your expectations of online conduct in the contract, for example – don't post anything you wouldn't be happy for Grandma to see/read etc.
- Be specific about images, including those of your child and images of others that they may store or post. There's helpful advice from the NSPCC about this. You may want to consider contributing to this agreement yourself here, promising to get your child's agreement before you post pictures of them is a good way to model the behaviour you are expecting from them.
- Include deadlines for devices to be 'parked' with you, consider varying these at weekends if that works for you.
- Decide whether you want to keep a record of all passcodes for devices (many parents decide to do this, on the basis that actually the devices do belong to them) or are happy with 'spot checks' where you ask to go through the device with your child and look at their pictures, messages and feeds.
- Include clear guidance about who your child will talk to if they see or share something that worries them online. Make sure that this is someone your child has regular opportunities to communicate with and has agreed they are comfortable talking to.
- Be clear about your expectations regarding who your child 'adds' or 'friends' online, that this should only be people that they actually know and about the kind of personal information they share online: surnames, name of school or picture of school uniform, address etc. are all pieces of personal information that can make your child vulnerable online, especially if shared with people they don't really know.

Sexual Content



It's not common but unfortunately the storing and sharing of youth produced sexual imagery is an increasing issue with young people today. Make sure that you and your child are well versed on the legal situation around the storing and sharing of sexual imagery, around the reasons why someone might find themselves in the position where they feel they should or must share an image of themselves or of someone else and be clear about where your child would turn in this situation. Think U Know have some useful guidance on this.

You can report concerns about grooming and sexual abuse directly to CEOP. Remember, you know your child better than anyone. If you feel something isn't right, get in touch with them. CEOP is a command of the National Crime Agency and can investigate what is happening – with the assurance that the safety and wellbeing of your child is paramount always. If you are concerned that your child is in immediate danger, call 999.

You can make a report to CEOP using the CEOP Safety Centre www.ceop.police.uk

You will need to complete an online form which will ask you for your contact details and information about what has happened. It will ask:

- What happened?
- Who did it happen to?
- What do you know about the suspect involved?

You should complete the form as fully as you can but don't worry if you don't have all the details.

When completing a CEOP report you are reporting suspicions of crime to law enforcement so we can't receive anonymous reports.

If you want to discuss your concerns with someone first, then make an appointment to speak to your child's achievement coordinator at school or call the NSPCC Helpline on 0800 800 5000.

Cyberbullying



Sadly, the relative anonymity of social media can encourage people to behave in ways they wouldn't normally dream of and to treat people extremely unkindly. Childline has a very good resource for parents and young people about how to block and report any instance of cyberbullying online.

Our advice in terms of how to react if you experience cyberbullying follows their guidance:

- Do not respond to the post or message personally, this will only provoke further unpleasantness
- Report the person who is bullying you using the help or report function of that site or app
- Block the person from contacting you, on all platforms
- Take a screenshot of the bullying in case it needs to be reported elsewhere
- Talk to an adult you trust.

Again, if you need support with this please do get in touch with your child's form tutor, particularly if this is regarding a child who is also a pupil at our school, as it will be important for us to know this context in further supporting your child.

Gaming



Gaming is fun but be aware that it can be all consuming. Some things to consider:

- Use the gaming consoles' safety settings
- Agree with your child how much time they can spend playing online
- Pay attention to the PEGI (age) ratings and what they mean
- Remember that some online games have inbuilt chat functions
- Be aware that your child might use servers or 3rd party applications to access interactive online communities.

Other sites we recommend:



- Thinkuknow has loads of info about reporting someone and getting help.
- Internet Watch Foundation lets you report criminal online things.
- Childnet has advice about gaming, safe downloading and much more.