Parent Information Sheet

Online Safety

Whether we like it or not, technology and the Internet are firmly fixed in our children's lives. Use of the Internet can be a wonderful thing, opening up new worlds and supporting children's learning and development in many ways, as well as being a fun way to relax and keep in touch with friends. However, we are all aware of the pitfalls and dangers of the online community. Since most of the current generation of parents grew up in the days before smartphones and social media, we can feel a little clueless as to how best to protect our children.

Here are some ideas which will support your primary school child's safety and well-being online.

Research shows that the age at which children are accessing smart devices and the Internet is getting younger and younger. It's never too soon to start good eSafety habits with your child.

- **Educate Yourself –** Research for yourself and stay up-to-date with changing technology and support. Talk to friends about what they do to keep their children safe when online.

- **Parental Controls -** Set up parental controls on your home broadband and all Internet-enabled devices your child has access to. Apple devices have lots of parental controls

- **Protect -** Password-protect all accounts.

- **Choose -** Choose the sites your child has access to on their account.

- **Child Safe Search Engine -** Make sure your child is using child-safe search engines, such as Swiggle or KidzSearch, and activate 'safe search' options on other search engines such as Google and Youtube. You could even use YouTube Kids app.

- **Disable -** Disable in-app purchases or switch devices to airplane mode when your child is playing online games. This will prevent them from accidentally making in-app purchases or contacting other players online.

- **Age Ratings -** Pay close attention to the age ratings on games, apps and films to make sure they are suitable for your child. If you would not allow your child to watch a 15 certificate film, you should not let them play a game with the same rating.

- **Home Page -** Set the homepage to a child-friendly one on all children's devices and those they use regularly.

- **Places -** Keep all devices your child will use in a high-traffic communal area in your home, such as the kitchen or living room. Be with your child when they are online and talk about what they are doing. Do not let your child sleep with technology or charge in their bedroom. Leave them downstairs overnight.

- **Rules -** Set rules for screen time and stick to them. Some devices automatically disable at certain times with parental controls.

- **School Rules –** Get to know your child's school online safety rules. Talk to them about it and ensure they follow them at home.

- **Investigate -** Investigate safe sites that your child can use for research, games, videos and social media.

- **Cyberbullying -** Sometimes children find themselves bullying or being bullied online (also known as 'cyberbullying'). Talk to your child about being a good friend online, and how our words and actions still hurt even if we can't see a person's reaction to them. Never put anything online you wouldn't say to a friend. If your child does find themselves being bullied online, tell your child not to respond and report it to your child's school.

- **Talk -** Talk regularly about the importance of online safety and about what your child is getting up to online. You'll be grateful you did this, especially as your child gets older. Keeping those lines of communication open is a powerful way of letting your child know that you trust them but expect them to be honest.

For More Information, try these websites:

https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/

https://www.safesearchkids.com/

https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/staying-safe-online/

http://www.safetynetkids.org.uk/personal-safety/staying-safe-online/

https://www.getsafeonline.org/