

e-safety @

Oakdale Primary School

'A guide for parents and carers'



Keeping young children safe online

Children love using technology and are learning to navigate websites, online games and consoles, and touch screen technology like iPads and smartphones from a younger and younger age.

Latest [Ofcom research](#) has shown that 91% of 5-15 year olds live in a household with internet access and over a third of all 3-4 year olds are now accessing the internet in their homes. We know that children need support in these environments, to get the best out of using the internet, and there are real advantages in making sure that children are supported in their internet use right from the start.

These eight frequently asked questions will provide you with useful information and tips that you can put in to place at home, to help keep your youngest children safe online.

- Where do I start?

The best way to keep your family safe online, and to understand your children's internet use, is to use the internet together. Active engagement and conversations with your children are key. Be positive and embrace the technologies that young children enjoy and look for family activities or games. Take time to explore the games and services that your children are using, or want to use, and look out for any safety features that may be available. This will give you a better understanding of the different ways that children are engaging with technology and help you to feel more confident.

- Are there tools to help?

There are free parental controls and filters available, to help you set safer boundaries for your children, but you will usually be required to set them up. Your internet service provider (such as BT or TalkTalk) will provide free filters to help block age inappropriate content for children, and on the UK Safer Internet Centre website you can watch [video tutorials](#) that show you how to find and set these up. All mobile phone operators (such as O2 or Vodafone) also provide such parental controls for free. The

websites of device manufacturers (such as games consoles) should also outline the controls to which you have access.

Filtering options can be found within websites and services themselves, for example on YouTube or 'safe search' settings can be applied to search engines such as Google or Bing. There are even some search services designed for children (such as Yahoo! Kids). Parental controls can be password protected, so it's advisable to choose a strong password and not share it. Parental controls and filters are a good starting point but it is important to recognise that they are not 100% effective. They are a great help, but not a solution, and work best in combination with parental supervision and engagement, to help your children understand how to stay safe online. As children grow and develop, so do their online needs, therefore you may want to periodically review your parental controls to accommodate this.

- Where can I report?

Reports can be made to websites through safety/help centres and moderation services. If you are suspicious about the behaviour of others online, reports can be made to [CEOP](#) and inappropriate media content, online and offline can be reported via [Parentport](#). Criminal content online can also be reported to the [IWF](#). For more information regarding reporting, visit [need help?](#)

- What advice can I give my child?

Education is the best tool that a child can have, so discuss with your child the importance of telling an adult immediately if someone, or something, upsets them online. Make sure that your children know that they can come and talk to you (without necessarily getting into trouble) if they see anything that worries them on the internet, and encourage them to feel confident enough to do so. Other immediate strategies to deal with unwanted content or contact could include; switch the screen off, close the laptop, exit the website, or turn the iPad or phone over and put it down.

Younger users may be distracted by advertising and pop ups and with just a couple of clicks, or a spelling mistake, may find themselves on a different website. Children are naturally curious and will innately push boundaries. Bookmarking sites or creating a 'favourites' list is a simple way to help your children find the content they want without having to search the internet for it. It is also important whilst beginning to explore the internet that your child realises that other internet users may not be who they say they are and that 'friends' made online are still strangers, so personal information should be kept safe, including their name, address, phone numbers and passwords etc. Encourage the use of screen names and nicknames where possible. This is where a family agreement can be incredibly useful, to establish rules and good online behaviour in advance.

Online grooming

The internet can be a fantastic place for children and young people to connect with their friends, discover new things and be creative. However, 'friends' made online may not be who they say they are. This is a difficult concept for children to understand.

Online grooming is the process by which an adult with an inappropriate sexual interest in children will approach a child online, with the intention of fostering a relationship with that child, to be able to meet them in person and intentionally cause harm. For more information and age appropriate resources for children relating to online grooming, visit [Thinkuknow](#).

If you are at all concerned that a child in your care has been contacted by an adult online, it is important to report it straight away. Reports can be made to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre ([CEOP](#)) and further information can be found at [Inhope](#). Child sexual abuse content found online can also be reported to the [Internet Watch Foundation](#).

Parental controls

Parental controls are designed to help protect children from inappropriate content they may come across online. These controls can be used to limit access to only age appropriate content, to set usage times and to monitor activity.

It's worth being aware that no parental controls or filtering options are 100% fool proof. As well as setting up parental controls it's important to educate your children about the potential risks online, and establish rules concerning the sites that are suitable, or inappropriate, to visit. It's important that you involve yourself in their online world; as a starting point you could ask them what their favourite websites are and why they like them.

Where should I begin?

Once you have bought a new device for your child, have a look at the manual that came with it as these normally contain some information and a step by step guide on how to install parental controls. You could also type the name of the device plus parental controls into a search engine eg. 'Nintendo DSi + parental controls'. This can help you to find how-to guides and useful video tutorials.

Portable devices

Children are accessing the internet on a range of different devices. Gone are the days where the only way to surf the web was on a desktop computer in your home. You can now access the internet wherever and whenever you want. Your child may be using portable devices such as smartphones, laptops, gaming devices (eg Nintendo DSi), media players (eg iPod Touch) and tablets (eg iPad). It can really help to be informed about how to install parental controls onto each device.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is when someone uses technology, such as the internet or a mobile device to bully others.

Being a victim of cyberbullying can be very distressing for a young person and occasionally they don't know who is bullying them. Cyberbullying includes things such as sending nasty text messages or emails, or setting up a hate group on a social networking site. The bullying may also happen 24/7 and the victim is often targeted even when they are in the comfort of their own home. Images and text messages can be circulated very quickly and widely on the internet which can make it difficult to combat cyberbullying.

Tips to help with cyberbullying

1. **Don't deny access to technology:** this may prevent your child from speaking to you about cyberbullying. When we asked a group of pupils about why they wouldn't tell someone, if they were being cyberbullied, their main response was that they were worried the technology that they use on a daily basis would be taken away from them.
2. **Discuss cyberbullying with your child:** explore the tools available together and know [how to report](#) nasty messages.
3. **Save the evidence:** encourage your child to save the evidence of any messages they receive. This is so they have something to show when they do report the cyberbullying.
4. **Don't reply:** most of the time the bully is looking for a reaction when they're teasing or calling someone nasty names. Tell your child not to reply. Instead, they should tell someone about what they have seen.

Gaming

Online gaming is hugely popular with children and young people. Recent research shows that gaming is one of the top activities enjoyed by 9-16 year olds online, with gaming more popular than social networking.

From sport related games, to mission based games and quests inspiring users to complete challenges, interactive games cater for a wide range of interests, and can enable users to link up and play together. Games can provide a fun and social form of entertainment often encouraging teamwork and cooperation when played with others.

Just like offline games, they can have educational benefits, and be used, for example, to develop skills and understanding. Traditionally, games could be bought from shops, often in the form of a disk for use on a PC or console. Now, games can also be downloaded online. Games are played on many platforms, with those bought in shops often having an online component to them. Internet connectivity in a game adds a new opportunity for gamers as it allows players to find and play against, or with, other players from around the world (in a multi-player game).

There are many ways for users to play games online. This includes free games found on the internet, games on mobile phones and handheld consoles, as well as downloadable and boxed games on PCs and consoles such as the PlayStation, Nintendo Wii or Xbox.

Top tips for online gaming:

1. It may seem daunting, but one of the best things parents and Carers can do is to engage with the gaming environment and begin to understand what makes it so attractive to young people as well as the types of activities that they enjoy!
2. Talk with your children about the types of game(s) they are playing. Are they role-playing games, sports games, strategy games or first person shooters? If you're not sure what they are, ask them to show you how they play and have a go yourself.
3. Some games may offer children the chance to chat with other players by voice and text. Ask them who they are playing with and find out if they are talking to other players. If chat is available, look at the type of language that is used by other players.
4. Look out for age ratings and familiarise yourself with the [PEGI](#) icons on games. The [PEGI](#) classification gives you a clear indication whether a game is suitable for your child.

Internet safety advice is directly applicable to the gaming environment because of the risks that are present. It is essential that children are aware of these issues and are given the skills and knowledge to help manage and reduce these risks, with the help of those around them. For primary aged children, the [SMART rules](#) offer straightforward memorable safety messages that can be applied to online gaming and the five accompanying [cartoons](#) are available within our resource bank.

Social networking

Social networking sites are very popular with young people, even those who are of primary age. These types of sites allow young people to be incredibly creative online, keep in touch with their friends as well as sharing photos and videos.

Try to become familiar with social networking sites. Ask your child about them, create an account yourself and find out about what it is about. Some sites have information and advice for parents. By understanding these sites you can help to support your children in choosing an appropriate site and using it in a safe and constructive way.

Parents should be aware that many sites have a minimum user age of 13, although some interactive sites are designed specifically for younger children.

Young people need to protect their online reputation

Young people use social networking sites for many different purposes; to communicate with their friends, to share content and to find out new information. You need to remind your child that they need to be careful about what they're posting online. Children can sometimes believe that social networking sites are a private space for them and it can be difficult for them to realise that what they're posting online may be publicly visible and can be spread very quickly to a large audience.

The blur between public and private expression can potentially put a child at risk in two main ways:

Content : Content which is uploaded online can be copied, altered and reposted by anyone and it is very difficult to 'take back' what may be later regretted. Children who create or post inappropriate, offensive or even illegal content on their own or others' web pages could get them into trouble with their school, friends and even the police, depending on the nature of the material.

Contact: Young people need to be aware of how much personal information they upload onto these sites. If a user of a social networking site doesn't protect their information by enabling the correct privacy settings, they could be exposing their information to adults with a sexual interest in children. Posting or chatting about personal details might enable someone to identify and contact your child online or in person. Sharing personal information may also increase the risk of cyberbullying.

Downloading

There are many great ways of accessing and downloading music, film, TV and video safely online and it is important that children and young people understand how to download content legally. This advice page provides introductory information about staying safe and legal while enjoying entertainment online or via mobile devices. For further information, [explore and download our free music leaflet](#) to find out more.

1. Music, film and TV on the internet - what you should know:

Copyright law applies to downloading, sharing and streaming just as in the world of physical CDs and DVDs. If you make music, film or TV content available to others on a file-sharing network, download from an illegal site, or sell copies without the permission of those who own the copyright, then you are breaking the law and could face serious penalties.

2. Staying tuned in while staying legal:

There is a wide choice of legal sites where you can download or "stream" (transmit over the internet) music, film or TV content. Some are stores where you can buy downloaded tracks, albums, TV shows, videos or films to play on a computer, or a portable device or on a music player. Others charge a monthly subscription fee and let you stream from an internet-connected device at any time. Some services provide entertainment for free, supported by advertising.

3. What you can and can't do with music, film and TV online:

It is illegal to upload or download copyrighted files without permission from the person who owns the rights. File sharing services can in theory be used legally, but in practice nearly all the content on them is illegal. The only safe way to use them legally is to be sure you are sharing materials that are not protected by someone else's copyright.

4. Staying safe and responsible:

Illegal file-sharing programmes and websites pose greater risks to your computer or mobile phone than legitimate sites. Users often unwittingly download viruses or spyware and can inadvertently share personal computer files and information. Some files are purposely misnamed on file-sharing and peer-to-peer networks to trick people into downloading them.

5. Tips for parents:

Are you aware of how your children are using the computer to access music, film and TV? Talk to your children about their online activities so that they understand why it's important to use legal sites online. It is also worth discussing with them what the consequences would be for the whole family if they were caught breaking the law. There are more than 13 million tracks licensed to legal music services. A full list of services worldwide is available at [Pro Music](#), and [Why Music Matters](#) also lists the services available in the UK.

'SECURUS' at Oakdale Primary School.

Every time anyone logs onto the school network they have to accept to abide by certain rules. If they do not, a program called 'Securus' automatically logs them off.

Securus then monitors what they do on the school network and any inappropriate text, images or wider content is monitored. If there is any unacceptable behaviour a screenshot is automatically taken and sent to the ICT co-ordinator who follows this up.

The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) at Oakdale is as follows:

- . I will only access the system with my own login and password, which I will keep secret;*
- . I will not access other people's files;*
- . I will only use the computers for school and home work;*
- . I will not bring in CD's or other computer media from outside school unless I have been given permission;*
- . I will ask permission from a member of staff before using the Internet;*
- . I will only e-mail people I know, or my teacher has approved;*
- . The messages I send will be polite and responsible;*
- . I will not give my home address or telephone number, or arrange to meet someone unless my parent, Carer or teacher has given permission;*
- . I will report any unpleasant material or messages sent to me;*
- . I understand my report would be confidential and would help protect other pupils and myself;*
- . I understand that the school may check my computer files and may monitor the Internet sites I visit.*

This could form the basis for similar rules outside school. It could at least form the basis of a great discussion about ways to stay safe. This has been shared with all children in assemblies and is referred to by teachers when children use school ICT.



For further advice and online links go to :

<http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/hot-topics>