

Safeguarding Update for Parents/Carers

As always, the safety and wellbeing of our pupils is at the heart of what we do. As a school we work hard to safeguard our children effectively and we aim to offer you, as parents/carers, updates and support on safeguarding your children outside of school, both in the real and virtual worlds. As we are all sadly aware, there are more cases emerging in which the internet and social media have played a role, as highlighted in the national media, to tragic events such as the case of Molly Russell. Our aim as always is to work with yourselves and our children to both protect and teach responsibility when it comes to safety and wellbeing. During the week of 4th February we will again be revisiting online safety with all pupils as part of the national Internet Safety Day Campaign. Please see below some updates that will be useful to you all and links to further guidance. If you have any additional queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Online safety:

The information below is designed to support you in ensuring that your child uses the internet safely when at home.

Each year, a growing number of our children are misusing the internet, causing a lot of hurt and upset to them and others. This includes:

- Being exposed to language, images and videos which are very harmful to a young person.
- Talking online to adult strangers who are pretending to be a teenager.
- Posting images and videos of themselves online which cause great hurt and upset.
- Using the internet for long hours late at night in their bedroom.

This can happen to any child - at any age - including your son or daughter.

The internet is an excellent resource - helping our children to learn, research and communicate with others. However, if it is not properly supervised or managed by parents, the internet can also be very harmful.

As parents, our most important responsibility is to keep our children safe. This is why we must do everything to ensure our sons and daughters are safe when online.

In particular, we really need you to:

1. Only give your child a phone or personal device if they are mature enough to understand the risk and respect the rules.
2. Agree rules about what your child can do or see when online.
3. Ensure that your child only uses the internet on their phone or device when a parent is present in the same room.
4. Ask your child to leave the phone with you or downstairs overnight before they go to sleep each night.

5. Contact your internet provider to apply strong filters and settings so that your child is not exposed to harmful images, videos and websites. The school can help you to set this up.

If you have any questions or concerns, or need help with setting up a safer internet in the home, please contact school.

Safety outside of school:

We are taking this opportunity to ask you all as parents/carers to continue to speak to your children about keeping themselves safe when travelling to and from school and also whilst out and about in the evening and on weekends.

The document entitled 'Is my child ready to go out alone' provides some helpful things to consider as a parent/carer.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/advice-and-info/out-alone-keeping-child-safe.pdf>

The link below is from the NSPCC and provides further information relating to keeping safe away from the home.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/staying-safe-away-from-home/>

Lancashire Police have also produced advice applicable to both pupils and parents that may be of use when considering safe travel arrangements.

<https://www.lancashire.police.uk/help-advice/personal-safety/staying-safe-when-out-and-about/>

Thank you for all of your support with this and if you have any queries do not hesitate to contact school.