



MILE POST



E-Safety Special

Dear Parents and Carers,

Our first job in school is to keep children safe and it is something that is always our highest priority. An area that has grown hugely over the last decade is teaching children about E-Safety – how to keep safe online and how to use games and apps in a responsible and age-appropriate way.

You will not need me to tell you the fascination children have with all things digital and there is no doubt that the opportunities offered to children online today can enhance learning and leisure. However, with new technology has come new dangers and we want to make sure that parents and carers have all the information they need to be able to support school in teaching children about the dangers they face. As well as regular E-Safety lessons in classrooms, so far this year we have:

- Created a new E-Safety page on our website full of links to help you keep up to date with what your children may be using.
- Had an E-Safety team from Google deliver a session to all children – Be Internet Legends (follow up resources on the website).
- Appointed two new ‘Digital Leaders’ to work with children across Equals Trust, producing a regular Digital Leaders magazine.
- Safer Internet Day 2019 will be celebrated globally on Tuesday 5th February with the slogan: ‘Together for a better Internet’. Coordinated in the UK by the UK Safer Internet Centre, the celebration sees hundreds of organisations get involved and join a national conversation about using technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively. There will be a special assembly on the day and work in classrooms to follow up the themes discussed.



Underpinning the curriculum are the SMART rules which are reinforced across school:

- ◇ **Safe** - Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information when you're chatting or posting online. Personal information includes your name, location, phone number, password and school name.
- ◇ **Meeting** - Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be very dangerous. Remember online friends are still strangers even if you have been talking to them for a long time.
- ◇ **Accept** - Accepting friend requests or opening messages, files or pictures from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems - they may contain viruses or nasty messages.
- ◇ **Reliable** - Someone online might lie about who they are and information on the internet may not be true. Always check information with other websites, books or someone who knows. If you like chatting online it's best to only chat to your real world friends and family.
- ◇ **Tell** - Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

There is lots of information on our E-Safety web page to help parents and carers support the work we are doing in school. You can also find lots of tips on how to manage your child's screen time (this month's E-Safety Tip of the Month), information about keeping safe playing online games, ways to make it safe for your child to access the internet and much more.

I would like to mention a couple of things in more detail because issues from children's use of the internet and social media in particular at home can spill into school and create problems that can be difficult for school to sort out.

Mobile Phones

As children move through primary school more and more of them have their own mobile phone, specifically smart phones that can access the internet and make use of a wide range of apps and ways of communicating online. It is crucial for your child's safety that their use of these is monitored closely by adults. **If your child is allowed unfiltered and unmonitored access to a smart phone they are being placed in danger on a daily basis.** We can and do teach children many different ways to stay safe using a phone but we have no control over their use of devices once they are not at school. Sadly, inappropriate use can, and has, caused distress to a number of children and without careful monitoring unfortunately will occur again in the future.

With regards to mobile phone use at school our current rules are straightforward and known by the children. Our rules are as follows:

- Children in Years 5 and 6 are only allowed to bring a mobile phone to school if they are walking unaccompanied to or from school.
- Phones must never be out of bags or seen anywhere on the school premises before or after they are handed to the teachers.
- Children must hand their phones in to their teacher as soon as they get into the classroom. Each teacher will have a place to put the phones. Phones will be collected at the end of the day and put back in bags until off the school premises.
- Teachers and the school **take no responsibility for damaged or lost phones at school.** If children do wish to bring a phone it is entirely at their own risk.
- School has the right to search pupils' bags and pockets and will do so if we have reason to believe a phone is being concealed.
- If any child is found to be deliberately concealing a phone by not handing it in or getting it out during the school day it will be confiscated, returned directly to parents and that child will be banned from bringing a phone into school at all.

These rules are to keep all our children safe. If you wish your child to bring a phone to school please help us by going through the rules with your child and stressing the importance of keeping to them.

Social Media

We know that as children get older they are beginning to use social media platforms of all sorts and we also know that the majority of these should not be accessed by children of primary school age. For example the minimum age to open an account on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat or Tik Tok is **13**, users need to be **13** or older to have their own YouTube channel and WhatsApp users need to be **16**.

Obviously we have no control over whether children are allowed to have accounts with all these social media services and we understand the pressure from children along the lines of "well so and so has an account" or "all my friends do." However, our advice, and the advice from anyone involved in keeping children safe online is that it's always better to wait until the required age to join any social media service.

These rules around age relate to privacy, but also are relevant to safety. Some services offer additional protection for users who are registered as under 18, and by supplying a fake age children can potentially lose some of this protection. Young people also risk being exposed to content which is intended for older users when they use sites that are not designed for people their age.

We know that social media services are popular with young people of all ages. As parents and carers you have an important role in helping prepare your children to go online before they start to use social media platforms. Together you can look at the key things they need to know about staying safe online, critical thinking, and the safety settings that are available to them. This last part is crucial - if you have allowed your child to create an account then it is vital that you learn how to set up the privacy settings to protect them. Guidance on how to do this can be found through the E-Safety web page on our website.

Accompanying this newsletter is an E-Safety checklist for parents. As your children begin to get older and start to use more and more online services, I hope it is useful for you to go through with your child.

Even if you feel you have set all your child's equipment up safely, this is no guarantee that they will not get themselves in situations that trouble them online. We recently conducted an exercise with Years 5 and 6 into their use of social media and the internet. On the following page you will see some of the responses we got.



“What my parents don’t know about my use of social media and the internet.”

Responses are all from Year 5 and 6 children at Robert Miles Junior School

On Fortnite someone said they knew my password and that scared me

My old account on Tik Tok got loads of hate

I have been hacked twice and I am too scared to tell

Sometimes I search videos and they are inappropriate videos

I have been cyber bullied by the same person for two weeks and now they want to be my friend.

People watch my videos and sometimes I do not know who they are

Once at a friend’s house somebody swore at us and that scared us quite a lot and we both couldn’t sleep for a week.

On Tik Tok I saw a baby in a video being treated badly and I want that to stop completely because it makes my life miserable

You can talk to random people on SnapChat

My parents do not know what I usually do on the internet

I have watched something on YouTube and regretted it and wish that I had not done it

I have looked at some rude comments and clicked on them and read some

Someone on Roblox asked me for a date before

I know my mummy’s password and forgot to tell her

A stranger followed me on every game I was on

My parents do not know you can do in game chat on the games I play

People swear at me on Tik Tok

My parents don’t really know what to do on the things I play online

Rude words are said to me on Roblox

They don’t know I am scared on the internet because I got bullied online before and random people keep on friending me online

We did a Tik Tok video and my friend posted it (not on private) without my permissions and I am worried

Somebody has said mean things to me and send rude messages

My parents don’t know my search is not restricted and I can search whatever I want

You can write messages in the live chat on Twitch

A man I did not know started talking to me once when I wore my headphones

I sometimes worry when I come back from school when I check my phone and there is a person who is a stranger and they always ring me

Sometimes on Roblox people ask me how old I am and what gender I am and then they do things I don’t like

Sometimes I get texts from strangers and I don’t tell my mum and dad

We took a photo on SnapChat and in the comments a person was being racist to us and encouraging others to be racist

When I go on Fortnite and play I have loads of people saying add me or meet me somewhere

Xbox can be very unsafe in chat or party mode

This certainly makes for thought provoking reading and I am sure you will agree that many of the comments made by the children give much cause for concern. What was clear in conducting this exercise (the children answered anonymously) is that there are many children who have the freedom to use the internet and social media without oversight. What is also clear is that some children are worried and scared about being online and that these worries are not always shared with parents.

There were also many comments from children who had nothing to say because they were not allowed use of social media or to go online unsupervised. To contrast with the comments on the previous page one child responded: *"I use the internet but my parents know everything and I have never had any worries or concerns on the internet. I use it every day and I do have gmail, facetime and imessage but I only connect with my friends and my family on it. I would tell my parents if I had any problems anyway,"* and another: *"My parents know everything about social media that is why they have not allowed me to have it (even though I don't want it anyway! They are more bothered about keeping me safe."*

Our aim in conducting this exercise is to provide food for thought and hopefully will start conversations in many houses about this serious issue.

Important Dates

Thursday 7th Feb: Year 6 SATs information meeting, 6.30pm
Friday 15th Feb: INSET Day
Monday 18th - Friday 22nd February: Half term holiday
Thursday 28th Feb: Year 4 visit to Twycross Zoo
Friday 1st March: Year 4 Bikeability Training, Level 1
Monday 4th March: Spring disco 6.30pm
Thursday 14th March: Ilam trip information meeting, 6.30pm
Monday 18th March: Open evening for 3P, 4E, 5L & 6M
Wednesday 20th March: Open evening for 3B, 4CM, 5AR & 6H
Tuesday 2nd April: Year 3 Trip to Lincoln
Wednesday 3rd April - Friday 5th April: Year 5 Ilam Residential trip
Thursday 4th April: Year 4 Viking Day
Friday 5th April: Last day of term
SUMMER TERM
Tuesday 23rd April: First day of term
Monday 6th May: School closed for bank holiday
Monday 13th - Thursday 16th May: Year 6 SATs week
Monday 27th May - Friday 31st May: Half term holiday
Wednesday 19th June: Sports Day 12.45pm
Thursday 20th June: Equals Trust Choir Concert
Friday 21st June: Reserve Sports Day
Wednesday 3rd July: Toot Hill Area Athletics Finals
Friday 12th July: End of year barbeque
Wednesday 17th July: Year 6 Leavers' Assembly 1.45pm
Friday 19th July: End of school year

Cycle Training

We have managed to secure some basic Level 1 cycle training this year. This will be a two hour session on the school playground on Friday 1st March. It will be offered initially to Year 4 and if there any places available, to Year 3.

Level 2 and 3 training for Years 5 and 6 will be available later on, in the Summer term. We will send details when we have the dates finalised.

Snow Procedure

Just in case we experience any unduly severe weather through January and February, it is worth reminding parents/carers of our snow procedure.

If there has been a heavy snowfall overnight, I will endeavour to make a decision as early as possible as to whether the school will remain open, hopefully by 8.15am. The school will only be closed if snow makes it impossible for staff to get to school.

If the school is to be closed, notice to this effect will be sent via text message and confirmed on the school website. We will not send this information to radio stations because past experience shows it is not a 100% reliable way of transmitting closure news.

The decision to close will be made, if possible, with Robert Miles Infant School. However, this very much depends on staff availability and it may be the case that one school is open when the other is closed.

Hopefully the school will remain open if it snows, so we can all enjoy it at playtime. The rule for snowy days when school is open is that if children bring a pair of wellies and gloves, then they will be allowed out at playtimes to build snowmen.

