

Moggerhanger Primary School

# Online Safety Special

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020



## Online Safety- News and Tips for Keeping Safe Online

Dear Parent/Guardian

We are aware that due to the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent period of lockdown more children are spending time online. Unable to attend school, socially distancing from friend, and being able to see loved ones in person, the online world has become even more important. Even if you have not yourself used them, you may be aware that Zoom, House Party and Microsoft Teams have been used by many families to keep each contact with each other, allowing us precious time to connect with those that we love. Many children are also working online, undertaking research and completing tasks set by their teachers. It is probably inevitable that because of this experience, our ways of working and communicating with each other will never be quite the same again.

While there are innumerable benefits of ICT and online usage, there are also dangers of young people having unregulated access. It is a sad reality that many individuals have chosen to take advantage of the current situation and attempt to exploit children and other

vulnerable people in our society through the use of the internet and social media.



In school, we spent a considerable amount of time seeking to educate young people about positive ICT usage, and how to remain safe online. During this period, we are unfortunately not in a position to do this face-to-face.

We therefore wanted to share with you some of the sources of useful information and advice that may be of help at home. In particular, I would highlight **CEOP** and their associated education programme- **Thinkuknow**. While the focus of this organisation is on preventing exploitation and abuse, it provides a range of additional resources and videos that are useful and informative for both you and your child. Please click [here](#) to view these materials. They have also produced an excellent introduction to online safety, and how you can support your children at home. The video can be accessed [here](#).



The **NSPCC** has also produced some useful advice on how to reduce the risks of online usage during the pandemic, and what parents can do to support their children. They also give some guidance on how protect and improve our mental health when using the internet, something particularly important given that we are coming to the end of **Mental Health Awareness Week**. Please click [here](#) to view these materials.



Some basic steps you can take to support your child online include:

- 1. Be as interested in your child's digital life, as you are in their school life.**
- 2. Discuss what healthy and unhealthy online usage looks like.**
- 3. Encourage your child to only use age-appropriate sites.**
- 4. Enable your child to have digital access in the same physical space as you (enabling you to pick up on non-verbal clues as**

**to whether their online life is a happy one)**

- 5. Discuss what information it would be appropriate to share online, and with who. Set the privacy settings, and check these regularly.**

In addition to the above, we would also encourage children to restrict the amount of screen time they access. This should be limited to a few hours per day, with regular breaks. Unfortunately, the nature of social media means that it can sometimes be all-consuming, and so it is important that children spend time talking to others in person, and take time to undertake exercise, and eat healthily. Like most things in life-moderation is the key!

I hope that you find the links and resources contained in this newsletter helpful. I have attached some additional information which may also be of interest. If you have any questions, you need any additional support in respect of this issue, or any other matter affecting the health and wellbeing of your child, we are here to help and are committed to supporting you and your family in any way that we can – please do not hesitate to use [parentcontact@sandysecondaryschool.com](mailto:parentcontact@sandysecondaryschool.com).

Best wishes, and keep safe.

Mr A Rutter

