



Learning Update – Spring 2 2017

Online Safety

The government has recently launched a major new drive to make the UK the safest place in the world for young people to go online. It comes amid growing fears that the threat from online dangers has grown far more quickly than society's response to them, and worries that tech-savvy young people are being exposed to risks that their parents never were and might not know how to confront – like sexting, cyber bullying, and content which promotes self-harm and eating disorders.

How can you help protect your child against these potential dangers?

- Do not condone your child using social media sites that they are not old enough to use. Minimum age limits have been set to protect children. Any user that chooses to ignore the age restriction is not protected under the law.

Minimum age requirements for an account:

Facebook – 13 years old

Instagram – 13 years old

WhatsApp – 16 years old

Snapchat – 13 years old

OoVoo – 13 years old

YouTube account - 13 years old

- Create an open dialogue with your child. The NSPCC has carried out extensive research into how young people reacted to what they had observed online (intentionally and accidentally). Many young people have voiced a mixture of emotions including embarrassment and curiosity. Engage with your children regarding their online activity. Encourage them to discuss anything that worries or upsets them.
- Set up some rules and restrictions around online use. Ideally, children should be in a communal area as they use the internet. Give children an allotted time slot to use the internet to prevent over-use. Some children become grumpy when their device is taken from them. This undesirable behaviour is reduced when children know the device is to go off at a specific time.



- YouTube is a particularly popular digital service with many children and young people. Please be mindful of some features of YouTube that should be treated with caution.
 - Advertisements cannot be avoided and sometimes display inappropriate content.
 - The public commentary area (which can be hidden in settings) is an open global forum. Comments can be negative or contain rude language.
 - 'Up next' videos appear to the right of the screen. Suggested videos can be inappropriate and lead children to watch unsuitable content.

YouTube Kids is a safe app that is free to download. It can be found on Google Play or the Apple Store.



- Keep yourself informed. There can be no doubt that the internet is changing the world around us at an alarming rate. To be able to support your child you need to be aware of the challenges they might face. Below are links to support sites for parents. The sites have practical information about how to avoid problems online and how to deal with an incident should it occur.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

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