



St Mary's Catholic School



E-safety Guidance for Parents & Pupils

(December 2018)

Using the internet safely at home

Whilst many Internet Service Providers offer filtering systems and tools to help you safeguard your child at home, it remains surprisingly easy for children to access inappropriate material including unsuitable text, pictures and movies. Parents are advised to set the security levels within Internet Explorer or other browsers with this in mind. Locating the computer in a family area where possible, not a bedroom will enable you to supervise your son or daughter as they use the Internet. Also consider mobile phones and games consoles and other devices that can access the internet. However, don't deny them the opportunity to learn from and enjoy the wide variety of material and games available on the Internet. Instead discuss with them some simple rules for keeping safe online and making sure they understand their importance.

Simple rules to keep your child safe online

To keep your child safe they should:

- ask permission before using the Internet and discuss what websites they are using
- only use websites you have chosen together or a child friendly search engine
- only email people they know, (why not consider setting up an address book?)
- ask permission before opening an email sent by someone they don't know
- not use their real name when using games or websites on the Internet, (create a nick name)
- never give out any personal information about themselves, friends or family online including
- home address, phone or mobile number
- never arrange to meet someone they have 'met' on the Internet without talking to an adult
- first; always take an adult and meet in a public place
- never tell someone they don't know where they go to school or post any pictures of themselves in school uniform
- only use a webcam with people they know
- tell you immediately if they see anything they are unhappy with.

Go through these rules with your child and pin them up near to the computer. It is also a good idea to regularly check the Internet sites your child is visiting e.g. by clicking on History and Favourites. Please reassure your child that you want to keep them safe rather than take Internet access away from them. Create a dialogue and a relationship of mutual respect as far as the Internet is concerned.

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Useful Websites to Learn More



www.thinkuknow.co.uk
www.childnet.com



www.common sense media.org



www.internetmatters.org



www.saferinternet.org.uk



www.digizen.org

Who should I contact at St Mary's?

Bullying or Cyberbullying:

Don't forget that there is a significant difference between falling out with friends and being bullied. If your child is having friendship problems, whether in school or online, your first point of contact should be their teacher, who may then decide to refer the situation to the head teacher (Mr Jordan).

Child Protection/Safeguarding Issues

A child protection or safeguarding issue is anything at all that might lead you to believe that a child is under threat of, or in immediate danger from, violence, exploitation or abuse. Every school has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is trained and experienced in dealing with child protection or safeguarding issues.

At St Mary's, our Designated Safeguarding Lead is:
Mr Jordan, Headteacher

Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is:
Mrs Fullerton (Deputy Headteacher)

If your child confides in you about friends who you believe may be under threat from any child protection/safeguarding issue please do not hesitate to contact us – they may not want you to, but you could be helping us to protect a vulnerable young person.

St Mary's Online Safety, Child Protection and Anti-bullying policies can be found on our website at
<http://www.st-marys-churchdown.gloucs.sch.uk/policies-documents/>

Cyberbullying

"Cyberbullying" is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. It has to have a minor on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor. Once adults become involved, it is plain and simple cyber-harassment or cyberstalking. Adult cyber-harassment or cyberstalking is NEVER called cyberbullying.

Advice for the young person:

- Don't respond
- Don't retaliate
- Talk to a trusted adult
- Save the evidence
- Block the bully
- Be polite
- Don't be a bully
- Be a friend, not a bystander

Advice for parents:

- Listen to them and take them seriously
- Make sure they are safe, and feel safe
- Don't overreact
- Encourage them not to retaliate
- Gather the facts and save the evidence
- Get them to help solve the problem
- Talk to us if there are school links to the bullying
- Encourage them to reach out to friends

What we will do:

- Respond if there is a link to school, even if it happens outside of school time
- Make children aware of who they can go to for help
- Emphasise that most children don't bully
- Create a positive school climate
- Educate children about e-safety

Social Media

The minimum age to open an account on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, MySpace is 13. For Bebo it is 15, and FourSquare is 17. YouTube requires account holders to be 18, but a 13-year-old can sign up with a parent's permission. These restrictions are put in place for the safety of your child. A child under the age of 13 years is protected by the American's 'Children's Online Privacy Protect Act' (COPPA). Essentially, COPPA protects a child's personal information from being collected and shared. Creating an account for a child under 13, using a false date of birth, circumvents the U.S. Federal law intended to protect your child. The consequences are that the social networks, and all the information your child provides it, are completely out of your control.

If you are unsure if a social media site, or website, is suitable for your child to use, then please look at <https://www.common sense media.org/website-reviews>. Here you can filter the sites by age and genre and suitability.

Please note that it is our professional responsibility to report any under age accounts to the social network.

As your child reaches the age to use social media we advise you to insist on being a 'friend' on sites such as Facebook, and 'follow' them on Twitter etc.

Technology at Home

We all want to keep our children safe, but online safety is not the only issue affecting young people with access to technology.

Research into young people's bedtime habits has resulted in advice that parents should take televisions, computers, mobile phones, tablets etc out of children's bedrooms as they prevent sleep and harm their performance at school. (The Sleep Council – Nov 2013)

According to a study published in the Journal of Paediatric Psychology, one of the biggest culprits for inadequate and disturbed sleep is technology:

- Losing as little as an hour's sleep can significantly affect a young person's performance at school
- Students who have late nights find maths problems harder to solve and have poorer memory skills
- What students learn during the day is consolidated while they sleep, so they are losing out on two levels
- The study states: "Even modest differences in sleep duration, accumulated over a few days, can affect critical cognitive and emotional functions in children."

Online 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. Internet safety advice is directly applicable to the games environment because risks of content, contact, conduct and commercialism also apply to games:

- **Content**—The quality of graphics in many games is very high. Some games might not be suitable for your child's age – they might contain violent or sexually-explicit content.
- **Contact**—If your child takes part in multi-player games on the internet (where they play against other people, potentially from all around the world) they might be at risk of hearing offensive language from other players, being bullied, or making themselves vulnerable to contact by those with a sexual interest in children if they give out their personal details. Bullying on games is known as 'griefing'. This is when players single out others specifically to make their gaming experience less enjoyable.
- **Conduct**—Specific conduct risks for gamers include excessive use to the detriment of other aspects of their lives. This is sometimes referred to as 'addiction'. Some websites might not have the game owner's permission to offer a game as a download i.e. copyright infringement, the same as for music and film, and by downloading it the user might be breaking the law.
- **Commercialism**—Children and young people can get themselves into difficulty by inadvertently running up bills when playing games online. Some online games, advergames, are designed to promote particular products.

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! 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. 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.