

SG/met

17th September 2013

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we begin a new term and your daughter returns to school for what will be an exciting and challenging year I thought it a good time to bring to your attention one of the challenges that she might face. There has been much in the news recently of some of the horrific consequences of the misuse of the internet and so I believe that the following may be of some help to you in supporting your daughter in her use of it.

Of course you will be aware the internet hosts many exciting opportunities for education. The online world is a wonderful place for young people to explore, with unprecedented opportunities for learning and creativity, but just like the real world there are risks and dangers they should be aware of and which we should all act to protect them from. As a school we encourage the use of technology as an important part of our students' development but always want them to spend their time online safely. As a parent/carer you can play a significant part in ensuring this.

There are just a few simple steps which you can take to help keep your daughter safe and give her the awareness to know what to do if she feels uncomfortable about anything she encounters while on the internet.

If you do not wish for your daughter to be able to access any inappropriate content online, please ensure that her computer, laptop and other devices with internet access are all fitted with parental controls.

You can find free downloadable versions online or you can contact your internet service provider (such as BT, Talk Talk, Sky) for more information.

As a **minimum**, please set parental controls on your search engines, youtube account and the mobile phone your daughter uses.

One of the most popular search engines in the world is Google. You can visit Google's informative safety centre for **simple** step by step guides - www.google.com/familysafety/tools

Here are a few options available to you; they truly are simple to set.

Visit the Google home page – www.google.co.uk and click on the 'search setting' tab in the top right hand corner.



Scroll down the page and change the filtering options to suit your family's needs. Make sure you lock the safe search; otherwise these settings can easily be changed without your knowledge.

SafeSearch Filtering [Google's SafeSearch](#) blocks web pages containing explicit sexual content from appearing in search results.

- Use strict filtering (Filter both explicit text and explicit images)
- Use moderate filtering (Filter explicit images only - default behavior)
- Do not filter my search results

[Lock SafeSearch](#) This will apply strict filtering to all searches from this computer using Internet Explorer. [Learn more](#)

You can also set this on your daughter's smart phone;

SafeSearch on your phone

SafeSearch is accessible on your mobile device by using the browser to access the Google homepage. Choose settings located at the bottom of the screen and you'll see the option to select Strict, Moderate or to turn SafeSearch off completely.



Please be aware that no filter is 100% accurate. The Child Exploitation Protection Centre (CEOP) advises that you talk to your daughter about the sites she uses. Why don't you discuss:

- Her favourite online sites
- What she enjoys most - is it the fun aspects of being online?
- What she thinks can go wrong?
- How would she react if things got out of control?

Let her know that you understand that situations happen online and that seeing 'adult' material can make her feel uncomfortable. Make sure she knows that you are there to help.

One way to do this is to use "Click CEOP". This is available on Facebook and connects Facebook users (and parents / carers) directly to CEOP from their Facebook profile and news feed to help, advise and report abuse. By adding "Click CEOP" both your daughter and you can get support on a range of issues such as viruses, hacking and dealing with bullying online. Your daughter or you can also report someone who is acting inappropriately online. www.facebook.com/clickceop.

Visit The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) parents' information website for more information - www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents.

I do hope that this information is helpful to you but, of course, if there is anything that you wish to discuss concerning your daughter's wellbeing please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "S.J. Greenfield". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and 'J'.

Mrs S. J. Greenfield
Assistant Headteacher
Pastoral Care and Guidance
Designated Child Protection Co-ordinator