

Date: 08|09|2021

Dear parents/carers,

Working together to keep children safe online

As parents, carers, teachers and support staff we know that young people today have access to an overwhelming amount of material online, some of which provides useful resources to support them in their learning, but some which can be highly inappropriate and even put them in danger.

At Sydney Russell School we teach our students about how to stay safe online as well as how to use social media correctly, raising awareness of the difficulties young people can face when using social media inappropriately which can result in friendship miscommunications and issues. Through our curriculum, specifically in computing and PSHE/Civics, as well as through assemblies and whole school focus events we raise awareness of the importance of staying safe online as well as ensuring children know what to do and who to turn to if they have a problem or encounter something which they are uncomfortable with.

As we work together to protect and safeguard our children, can I take the opportunity to remind you of the **SMART** principles which we ask you to discuss with your children to ensure they stay safe on the internet:

S – Safe

Keeping safe by not giving out personal information – such as your full name, email address, phone number, home address, photos or school name – to people you are chatting with online. This also includes discussing gamer tags or other details in online forums.

M – Meeting strangers – don't do it.

Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online is dangerous. This should only be done with parental permission or when they can be present. Maintaining relationships with people we trust is important for our mental wellbeing. Think about how you can stay in touch with friends and family safely via telephone or video calls. Parents can check age restrictions of social media apps and access security settings.

A – 'Accepting' – beware!

Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages. Do not accept/click on these messages if you do not know/trust who they have been sent from.

R – Reliable – is it?

Information you find on the internet may not be true. Someone who you meet online may be lying to you about who they are. Protect yourself, be SMART.

T – Tell someone

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. Don't be a bystander. If you are added to/part of a 'chat' which you are not comfortable with, leave the chat and tell an adult.

When your child is accessing the internet for their learning, it is especially important to be clear on the permission you give to your child for:

- what they can and can't do online
- where they can use the internet
- how much time they can spend online
- the sites they can visit
- the type of information they can share.

Agree with your child when they can have a mobile phone or tablet – it is a good idea to set appropriate times so they are not using their devices late at night and you are ensuring they still get enough sleep.

Additional support on some of the following websites

- eSafety Training ('The 2 Johns'): <https://esafetytraining.org/>
- Childline – www.childline.org.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre to report and remove harmful online content www.reportharmfulcontent.com
- CEOP (to make a report about online abuse) www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre
- Internet Matters (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online) www.internetmatters.org
- London Grid for Learning (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online) www.lgfl.net/online-safety/
- Net-aware (support for parents and carers from the NSPCC) www.net-aware.org.uk
- Parent info (for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online) www.parentinfo.org
- Thinkuknow (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online) www.thinkyouknow.co.uk
- UK Safer Internet Centre (advice for parents and carers) - <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>

Further links can be found on our school website at <https://www.sydneyrussellschool.com>

Finally, if you come across something that you think the school should be made aware of, a new social media platform your child is using, a particular website which parents should be aware of to monitor/restrict, please let us know. By sharing information affectively we can all work together to best protect our children. I thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,



Clare Cross

Acting Principal