

26 November 2021

Dear Parent / Carer

Online Safety

This Christmas there will be even more children using digital devices such as tablets, laptops and mobile phones than ever before. Despite the happiness and entertainment they can bring, they can pose a number of dangers too. Please see the attached flyer and the following recommendations:

1. **Security** - Help your children to set up their accounts on their new devices and ensure their settings are set to private. Take the time before Christmas Day to read the manual and get to grips with security and privacy options. We advise that you set up a 'two-factor authentication' process when logging in to an online service. Some toys and devices are fitted with web cameras – you can turn the remote viewing option off in the device's settings. In addition to this, remove any default location tracking and GPS settings on new devices.
2. **Setting up parental controls** - We advise that you set up parental controls for young and vulnerable children to help prevent them from viewing content or engaging in activities that they shouldn't be. Additionally, take interest in your child's online activities. Play with them on their devices and encourage open conversation to help build that trust and confidence that will mean your child can confide in you if they ever feel uncomfortable, troubled, worried or unsafe.
3. **Check age restrictions** - Games and apps have age restrictions. It is important that you make yourself aware of these age restrictions and WHY they have these restrictions and make the decision whether it is appropriate for your child.
4. **PEGI rating** - The PEGI rating considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty. A PEGI 3 game will not contain any inappropriate content, but can sometimes be too difficult to master for younger children. Reversely, there are PEGI 18 games that are very easy to play, yet they contain elements that make them inappropriate for a younger audience. When purchasing or downloading a new game for your child we recommend you check the PEGI rating to ensure the content is suitable for their age. Further information and guidance can be found at <https://parentinfo.org/article/pegi-games-ratings-explained>

This advice and guidance was provided by www.nationalonlinesafety.com. For additional guidance on supporting your child to be safe online go to www.internetmatters.org

Yours sincerely

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