Keeping our children safe online

We want our children to be confident and safe in the online world. We take E-Safety very seriously at Madley Brook and want to ensure that both the children and their parents/carers are aware of the risks they face as well as ways we can help to reduce these. Hopefully this information will inform and provide guidance in both of these areas.

Rise of the tablets

Tablet ownership has sky-rocketed over the last 5 years. Many children come into school being able to navigate tablets with ease. Very few of them are able to use a mouse or keyboard, but they can swipe!

1 IN 3 CHILDREN now own a tablet

...and 71% of children live in a house with a tablet

This ease of accessibility means that we need to take extra care to keep them safe online and educate from a young age about E-Safety.

The World Wide Web is an amazing resource and platform. We want to encourage the use of the internet as a tool and it is such a part of everyday life now. The networking it offers is both amazing and scary. We certainly don't want to put children off using it.

Why do our children like to go online?

- Helps tackle inequalities
- Allows them access to otherwise inaccessible support
- Gives them a voice about issues they care about
- Allows them to portray themselves in ways that are important to them
- It's fun!
- Their friends are there!
- They can meet new people

<u>What issues might they face?</u>

- **Exposure** to inappropriate content on the internet

- **Social Networking** - Using 'mature' social networking sites and apps, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat and connecting with individuals they don't know **(these sites & apps have a minimum age of 13 years, along with many others).** These platforms are age specific for a reason.

- **Cyberbullying** - this is similar to bullying in the real world. Bullying is defined as being repetitive, intentional and gives one person power over another. Cyberbullying can come in the form of emails, texts, phone calls, social media posts, online videos, comments and gaming platforms. The nature of the internet means that these messages/videos/posts etc, are in the virtual world forever, often kept on people's phones or other devices and are a constant reminder to victim and perpetrator. In this way, Cyberbullying is often a lot more difficult to cope with. There are lots of resources to help us deal with Cyberbullying - look for them in the links section below.

- **Digital Footprints** - Sharing personal information with others they don't know on the internet (potentially leading to a meeting). What digital footprint is your child creating? What sites have they visited? What information have they shared? Do you know?!
At the moment, 48% of employers use search engines to research candidates before considering them for a position. This is set to rise and by the time our children are looking for jobs it will be the norm. What information/images/messages will be found about them?
Want to find out more about this, including how to search your child's digital footprint? Look at the Digital Footprint information attached from the GDST.

- **Online Gaming** - Playing video games with adult or inappropriate PEGI ratings, e.g. Call of Duty, Grand Theft Auto. Games consoles offer the chance for children to play with their friends and with strangers. Headsets are often used to communicate and can be very difficult to monitor. The risks for children multiply if they are playing games which are inappropriate for their age.

- **Sexting** & using technology inappropriately, e.g. webcams and cameras on mobile devices. Sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others, or sends sexually explicit messages. This also includes 'sexually suggestive' images or videos. They can be sent using mobiles, tablets, smartphones, laptops - any device that allows you to share media and messages.
It is illegal. Under 16s **can be prosecuted** if they create, send, receive, share or store any images as described above, even if it is of themselves or another consenting individual. If prosecuted, this information is kept on Police databases and can appear on any criminal records checks that employers carry out, forever.

Still not sure of the risks? Watch this video:
https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/Films-to-watch-with-your-children/Jigsaw_original/
It's a film we share with our KS2 children during E-Safety lessons.

It'll never happen to us (right?)
We often think that these dangers won't apply to our children. In a recent survey of children in KS2 at Madley Brook, an alarming number of children said they have social media profiles on some of the sites listed above (and others). These children ranged from 8 to 10 years old, well below the minimum age requirement of these platforms. They also said they spent time online every day, on a variety of devices and a lot of them didn't speak to their parents/carers about what they did online. This is a very worrying situation and one which we need to educate children and parents/carers about. We also have a number of children in Years 5 and 6 who regularly play Call of Duty and Grand Theft Auto, which are 18 rated games.
As teachers, parents & carers we have a responsibility to safeguard our children against the risks they face and educate them about how to behave online.

Kids apps
We often steer our children towards 'kids' versions of apps and websites, for example YouTube Kids or SnapKids. This doesn't absolve us of that responsibility to monitor our children's online activity though. YouTube Kids is aimed at younger children to help filter inappropriate or upsetting content. However, what might upset a 3 year old, may differ to what will

upset a 9 year old – every child is different. **No filters are completely accurate** and children using YouTube Kids, or any other apps, may come across content that upsets them so it's really important children are still supported & monitored when using all online apps, sites and games.

How do we teach E-Safety?

In school we talk about staying safe online using a number of tools, many of which can be found on the websites in the section below. Any issues are also discussed on an ad hoc basis and often brought into our discussion of Values.

In Foundation Stage we use a range of resources to talk about making different choices online.

In KS1 we learn to:

- Know that some information is precious or special because it applies just to us.
- Understand that not everyone we talk to / play with online is automatically trustworthy.
- Understand that our emotions can be a powerful tool to help us assess unsafe situations.
- Know what to do if we feel uncomfortable or need help when online.
- How 'being nice' online is the same as 'being nice' offline.

In KS2 we learn to:

- Understand what is appropriate to post online and what can happen if posts are inappropriate.
- Understand that we can not trust everyone online.
- Understand what personal information is and how to keep it private online.
- Know what to do if we feel uncomfortable or need help when online.

We also take part in Safer Internet Day every year. This usually involves whole school assemblies and activities taking place in classes across the school.

So, what can you do to help?

1. Get involved in your children's online activity at home and TALK
Check you know what applications they are using, especially chat rooms and games played with others online. Ask who their online friends are. Get them to teach you about how things work. Set up accounts with them. Communication and education are absolutely vital to keeping your child safe online. Monitoring their usage is our responsibility!

2. Support the school
Discuss and sign the Acceptable Use Policy and take an active interest in what your children are doing in Computing at school.

3. Encourage Internet use that builds on offline activities
It helps to keep the computer/devices in a family room not tucked away in a child's bedroom. Help your children to use the Internet for homework and leisure interests. Do things together. Reflect on how much 'gaming' time they have.

4. Use some of the tools on the computer/device to help you
Parental settings are available through all Internet Service Providers and nearly all websites have safe settings available. There are also some great websites which can tell you about all of the privacy and security features of the social media platforms (particularly net-aware and CEOP).

5. Visit some of these sites and look at the materials we have provided for your information:

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/

http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers

http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/parents-and-carers/

https://www.net-aware.org.uk/

https://www.ceop.police.uk/

https://www.gdst.net/parents/live-my-digital/online-safety-videos-resources

Ofsted recently held a webinar for parents and schools in the South East region which focussed on online safety. It has some good talking points and tips. It can be found on youtube using this link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwezxYyq3Ss

Please come and talk to us at school if you have any concerns about your children online.

iRepairtech, which is run by Mr Hikins (a parent at this school), also offer a free advice service if you have any concerns about the safety of children online. They have lots of experience in e-safety and the measures we can put in place to safeguard our children. Just pop in to their shop, 7 days a week: iRepairTech, 62 High Street, Witney, OX28 6HJ.