



## Ready for..... the online world?

Whether on a computer at school, a laptop at home, a games console or mobile phone, children and young people are increasingly accessing the internet whenever they can and wherever they are.



**E-SAFETY!**

As we would protect children in the real world, we want to make sure that they are safe whatever they are doing. Like learning to cross the road, online safety skills are skills for life. If children understand the risks and can make sensible and informed choices online, they can get the most from online technology and stay safe whilst doing so – particularly from those people who might seek them out to harm them.



Although chatting online can be great fun, young people can sometimes find themselves in situations where they can feel out of their depth. Risks can arise when young people give out their personal details to strangers. The online world can often seem very different to the real world for young people, and they can be tempted to say and do things that they wouldn't dream of if they met someone face-to-face.

This can include giving out personal information such as their full name, address, school, mobile numbers and pictures of themselves etc. Paedophiles are very clever at piecing together small bits of information to track children down in the real world.

There is also an increasing risk of young people being ‘bullied’ or ‘bullying’ using online technologies and mobiles. This is known as ‘cyberbullying’. Bullies often behave more aggressively than they might face-to-face because they can hide behind an electronic veil to disguise their true identity.



Why do we need information for pre school children?

At this age, pupils will have been exposed to very differing experiences of internet use. However, a survey by Ofcom tracking digital usage has shown that 66% of 4-7 year olds use the internet at home – with at least 30% using it for games, schoolwork (26%) and information (15%). Additionally, over 85% have access to games consoles which may have an online ‘gaming’ or ‘chat’ facility when linked to the internet. Many will have observed older siblings using social networking sites, instant messaging and chat rooms. It is our belief that early awareness of the dangers will prepare young children for ‘safe’ enjoyment of the internet as they get older



At nursery we use a story book called “Lee and Kim’s animal adventure”. ‘Lee and Kim’ are playing an online game on a computer where they meet several animal characters. One character asks them “what school do you go to?” and before they have the chance to answer – our superhero ‘SID’ appears in a flash to warn Lee and Kim they may be putting themselves at risk. The kids don’t understand why SID is kicking up such a fuss – so SID decides to take them ‘for a ride’.

The children are magically sucked through the computer screen and into 'cyberspace'. Here they have the ability to see the real people controlling the animals in the online game and with SID's help - recognise the warning signs.

Even if children are not using the internet, this resource also reinforces awareness of 'stranger danger' in the real or offline world as well as the online world.

Just a few simple steps by you can help keep them safe and give young people the awareness to know what to do if they feel uncomfortable about anything they encounter while on the internet.

If you do not wish for your child to be able to access any inappropriate content online, please ensure that their computers, laptops and other devices with internet access are all fitted with parental controls.

### Internet safety checklist for pre-school children

#### Explore together

Talk to your child about what the internet is and explore it together so you can show them all the great fun and educational things they can do.

#### Put yourself in control

Install **parental controls** on your home broadband. Most internet-enabled devices also allow you to set parental controls so you can manage what content your child can see and how they interact with others online.

#### Use passwords

Keep your devices out of reach and set passwords on all your internet-enabled devices and don't share them. Then you'll know when and where your child is accessing the internet. You can also make sure

they're not making additional purchases when they're playing games or using apps.

### Search safely

Use safe search engines such as [Swiggle](#) or [Kids-search](#). You can save time by adding these to your 'Favourites'. Safe search settings can also be activated on [Google](#) and other search engines, as well as [YouTube](#).

### Manage access

Set your homepage to a child-friendly site like CBeebies and create a user account for your child on the family computer or device which only allows access to sites you've chosen.

### Be involved

Put your computer or main device in a communal area like the lounge or kitchen so you can keep an eye on how they're using the internet and also share in their enjoyment.

### Help them learn through games

You can choose safe, fun and educational online games to play with your child and that you'll be confident about them exploring. You can find good free of charge examples from companies like Disney Junior, Nick Jr and Fisher Price.

### Set boundaries

It's never too early to start setting boundaries. Set some rules about how long your child can spend online.