



Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to inform you that we have recently become aware of issues in relation to the online safety relating to Google searches at home and then discussing these searches with friends at school.

Online safety is an important part of keeping children safe at Rivington Foundation Primary School. Online Safety is taught to all pupils in our PHSE curriculum; general curriculum; through visits from external advisors (the police and NSPCC); Internet Safety Day and through our weekly newsletters. We are confident that our curriculum empowers children to understand and be aware of how they can to stay safe and behave appropriately online but we can only be successful in keeping children safe online if we work with you.

Your help is needed to talk to your children about how they can keep themselves safe and behave appropriately online. It's important that we are all vigilant when children are using the internet and act to ensure they are protected from people who may pose a risk to them. Children can accidentally or deliberately be exposed to illegal, unwanted or unpleasant content, comments or activity online and there are steps you can take at home to minimise this risk.

Websites to visit for more information:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk – Visit the “Parent/Carer” Section and use the “Click CEOP” button to seek advice and report online abuse

www.childnet.com – Visit the ‘Know It All’ Section for an interactive guide about online safety

www.getsafeonline.org – Free up-to-date Security advice including using complex passwords and managing hacked accounts

www.internetmatters.org – Information from the four largest internet service providers (BT, Sky, Talk Talk and Virgin)

www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety - NSPCC's Share Aware campaign provides information for parents about popular social media sites, apps and games.

www.saferinternet.org.uk – Parents guides to safety tools on popular devices and signposts report mechanisms for some websites.

<https://www.lancashire.police.uk/help-advice/online-safety/> - Guidance from Lancashire Police

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/youthzone/need-to-know/online-safety/> - Guidance from Lancashire County Council.

As the Schools e-Safety Coordinators and Designated Safeguarding Leads both Mrs. Green and myself are available to discuss any help you may need or concerns that you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Annette

Follow the “Gold”en Rules

Ground Rules

- Discuss together as a family how the internet will be used in your house. By law, children are not allowed to join social networking sites below the permitted age of 13 (for most sites including Facebook and Instagram).
- For yourself and your child, consider what information should be kept private (such as personal information, photos in school uniform etc). Ensure you know what your child is doing online much like you would offline.
- Consider locating your child’s computers and laptops in a family area but be aware that children access the internet on mobile phones, games consoles and tablets so use can’t always be supervised.
- Be especially aware of settings rules relating to your child’s use of webcams and any applications or devices which allow voice or video chat. Childnet have useful information for young people about using webcams safely www.childnet.com/young-people/secondary/hot-topics/video-chat-and-webcams

Online Safety

- Install antivirus software, secure your internet connection and use Parental Control functions for computers, mobile phones and games consoles to block unsuitable content or contact from unknown people. Research different parental control software and tools available for your home and select the tools which are most suitable to you, your child and the technology in your home. Visit sites like www.internetmatters.org, www.getsafeonline.org and www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/a-parents-guide for safety information and advice about parental controls on consoles and devices and how to report concerns.
- Make sure you read any parental guidance and safety recommendations (including age requirements – most popular social networking sites and apps are only for users aged 13+, 16+ or 18+) for any apps or websites before allowing your child to use them - visit www.net-aware.org.uk
- Always remember that parental control tools are not always 100% effective and sometimes unsuitable content can get past them, so don’t rely on them alone to protect your child.

Listen

- Take an active interest in your child’s life online and talk openly with them about the things they do. Talk to your child and ask them to show or even teach you how they use the internet, learn which websites or tools they like to use and why. Learning together with your child can often open opportunities to discuss safe behaviour online.
- To start a conversation with your child you could tell them that you’re interested to know how they think they can keep themselves safe.

Dialogue – keep talking

- Ensure that your child knows that once a picture, video or comment is sent or posted online, then it can be very difficult to remove as other people can forward it and share it with others, without them even knowing.
- www.childnet.com and www.thinkuknow.co.uk has some really useful tips and ideas for parents/carers about starting conversations about online safety
- Encourage your child not to retaliate or reply to cyberbullying and to keep any evidence.
- Make sure your child knows it’s important that they tell an adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable.

Remember, the internet is an essential part of young people’s lives and provides them with tremendous opportunities. The vast majority use it without coming to any harm so it’s essential to be realistic: banning the internet or web sites often will not work and it can make a child feel less able to report a problem or concern, so education around safe use is essential.