INTERNET SAFETY
NEWSLETTER

INTRODUCTION

The National Crime Agency's CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) command uses the latest intelligence about child sex offending to produce educational resources to help teachers and parents raise young people's awareness. During term one children have used these resources to learn about internet safety. The information contained within this newsletter has been taken from CEOP's website which is designed to support and inform parents/carers.

GENERAL ADVICE FOR ALL AGES

Keep computers in the family room and ensure that you monitor your child's use so that they are staying safe and not becoming overly involved in gaming which can lead to addiction. Educational games can be equally as addictive as entertainment games. It's really important that screen time is limited and that children have access to the outdoors. Playing computer games for prolonged periods and before bedtime can have a huge impact on your child's sleep, overall wellbeing and concentration levels.

PRIMARY ONE

Children are learning the basics of managing technology. They are encouraged to treat the equipment with care and to keep their water bottles safely out of reach.

PRIMARY TWO

Hector is a young dolphin who with his underwater friends is learning all about the internet. Over the course of six cartoons he explores ways to keep his information private and how to get help when he is worried. The storylines help children understand why and how they should protect their identities online. Hector also introduces the idea that things online may not be as they seem and that sometimes other people may wish to be unkind or unpleasant.

You can support this learning at home by:

– Reminding children not to disclose any personal information online and to use a fake name when gaming.

– Encouraging your child to ask a trusted adult for help if they are worried or upset by something they have seen online.

CLICKABLE LINKS

Gaming: what parents and carers need to know.

Gaming: what's appropriate for your child?

Online grooming

What is sexual grooming?

Using parental controls.

I'm worried my child might see something inappropriate online.

PRIMARY 3

The cartoon follows the adventures of two children – 'Lee and Kim' - who 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 - 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 kids 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.

You can support this learning at home by:

- Encouraging your child to treat others how they would like to be treated when they interact online. Some young people who use online games can be abusive to other gamers. This can range from saying nasty things if there is a chat facility within the gaming site, to always winning and not sharing cheats or knowledge on how to progress to the next level.

- Reminding your child that their online behaviour has offline consequences. There are some young people who engage in risky behaviour to obtain cheats or knowledge to progress within a game. Adults with a sexual interest in children will encourage them to engage in inappropriate behaviour for rewards including sexual acts via webcam or sex chat. If someone engages your child in a sexual or threatening manner online they should inform a trusted adult immediately.

PRIMARY 4-7

"Play Like Share" followed the adventures of Alfie, Ellie and Sam as they form a band and enter their school's Battle of the Bands contest. The three friends learn that while the internet can help, they need to use it wisely and safely. The aim of the films is to help children learn how to stay safe online. In particular, the films and activities teach them to spot the early signs of manipulative, pressurising and threatening behaviour by people they might meet online, and develops their confidence to respond safely and get help.

You can support this learning at home by:

- Asking your child to show you their favourite websites, apps and social media services and what they do on them. Listen and show interest. You could also encourage them to teach you the basics of the site or app.

- Asking them if anything ever bothers or worries them about going online.Talk in general about what children can do to stay safe online.

- Use examples from Play Like Share to start a conversation about online 'friends' or 'followers'. Ask them about who they chat to online, and whether they know and trust them 'in real life'.

- Talk about the importance of privacy settings and how they can help your child stay in control of what they share with others. Together, look at the privacy settings for the services they use, encourage them to only share things with people they know and trust in real life.

- Talk to your child about what it might be appropriate or inappropriate to share online - this includes photos, videos, comments and personal information.

- Talk to your child about how their online actions can affect others. Remind them to consider how someone else might feel before they post or share something.

- Ensure your child understands that if anything ever happens online which worries or upsets them, they should always tell you.

- Explain that you would never blame them for anything that might happen online, and you will always give them calm and non-judgemental support.