

25th January 2021

RE: Online safety

Dear Parent/Carers,

Due to increased access to numerous different technology platforms, many children are at a greater risk of online grooming, cyber bullying and exposure to inappropriate or illegal content online. At Knowle DGE, we believe that promoting online safety plays a critical role in protecting our pupils online. We are writing to you today as we believe it is important for us to work in partnership with you as a parent/carers, to keep pupils safe online.

Our online safety measures enable us to provide an environment for all our pupils to thrive, grow and learn, whilst staying safe online. We put these measures in place through policies and security provisions which safeguard pupils against unsuitable content and contact, and ensure they maintain appropriate conduct.

These policies include our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, E-Safety Policy, Acceptable Use Agreement and parent/carer, staff and pupil codes of conduct, which outline the proper use of technology for both pupils and staff. If any incidents breaching these policies occur, they are logged and managed in accordance with the relevant policy.

We have a number of procedures in place to ensure children cannot access unsuitable websites when using school technology, including software which blocks all websites with adult, violent or age-inappropriate content. Social media sites are also blocked, unless they are school pages used within lessons and under supervision. Online safety is taught to all pupils during IT lessons and staff are required to undertake online safety training to update their knowledge.

There are many ways you can help minimise the risks associated with children being online and increase online safety in your home – the list below provides ideas for some of the ways you can do this.

- Only give your children devices or access to devices that you feel comfortable with, and not as a result of peer-pressure deriving from their classmates/friends who are also using those devices. e.g. gaming systems and mobile phones at a young age.
- Talk to your children about why it is important to stay safe online. Explain that whilst the internet is a fun, exciting and knowledge-rich tool, it is also a place where people may wish to bring them into dangerous activities or expose them to unpleasant material. It is important to be clear that you are not saying your child may never use the internet again, or that everything on it is harmful – it is about teaching them to have a greater awareness and to be able to manage and report any risks.
- Discuss rules for being online and draw them up together, including which sites, games, etc., are acceptable. If certain games are off-limits, try to explain why, for example, because of excessive violence. If your child uses online

gaming, consider setting rules, such as only talking to others in the same age range and having the conversation on speaker, rather than headphones, so you can monitor it.

- Discuss what information should be private and what is ok to share; for example, addresses, names of schools, and names should never be given out to strangers online, as this could allow them to identify where your child goes to school or lives.
- Keep an open dialogue with your child – letting them know they can always talk to you about anything that has made them feel uncomfortable online is key to keeping them safe.
- Ensure all devices used by your child are kept in a communal space, or a space where they can be supervised whilst using their devices.
- If your child uses a mobile device then set parental controls – do this as a dialogue with your child so they are aware of what they are not allowed to view; however, do not rely on parental controls on devices, as they are not always 100 percent effective and many children know how to bypass them.
- Make sure your child knows how to report or ‘block’ unsuitable content, messages or people online – show them how to block on the websites or games they frequently use and explain that they can always tell you, a teacher or another adult if they experience anything which makes them feel uncomfortable.

If you would like to discuss the matter of online safety in greater depth, please contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Jon Jones.

You can find a copy of our E-Safety Policy on our website.

For more information on ensuring your child’s safety online, you can visit the websites below:

- www.childnet.com
- www.internetmatters.org
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- www.nspcc.org.uk
- www.getsafeonline.org
- <https://parentinfo.org/>
- <https://parentzone.org.uk/parents>

Yours sincerely,



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