



Brackenhill Primary School

ONLINE SAFETY

At school, we work with several partners to help teach our children how to stay safe online. West Yorkshire Cyber Safety team are regular visitors to school, running workshops for both children and parents. They regularly update the advice they give to parents and you can read it for yourself right here.

West Yorkshire Cyber Safety team also issue advice to parents on how to set up parental controls on a range of devices that children may have at home such as ipads and online gaming devices. You can find the most recent advice here.

The NSPCC visit school every other year and talk to the children about personal safety and wellbeing including discussing on online safety. You can find their advice here.

Should you need any help or advice on online safety, please speak to your child's class teacher who will be able to signpost you to the appropriate person or agency.

Online Hoaxes

A hoax is a deliberate lie designed to seem truthful, and online challenges generally involve users recording themselves taking a challenge, and then distributing the video through social media channels, inspiring or daring others to repeat the challenge.

A hoax is a deliberate lie designed to seem truthful. The internet and social media provide a perfect platform for hoaxes, especially hoaxes about challenges or trends that are said to be harmful to children and young people to be spread quickly.

Online challenge or online hoax, some principles remain the same

At school, we avoid sharing upsetting or scary content to show children and young people what they "might" see online. Exposing children and young people (many of whom will not be aware of or have seen the online challenge or hoax) in our setting to upsetting or scary content will be counterproductive and potentially harmful. If we do feel it is necessary to directly address an issue, we achieve this without exposing children and young people to scary or distressing content.

Whatever the response, ask:

- is it factual?
- is it proportional to the actual (or perceived) risk?
- is it helpful?
- is it age and stage of development appropriate?
- is it supportive?



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Helpful messages to share with parents and carers include encouraging them to focus on positive and empowering online behaviours with their children, such as critical thinking, how and where to report concerns about harmful content and how to block content and users.

If a child raises concerns about a harmful online challenge or online hoax directly

At school we consider the best way to speak to individual children or, where appropriate, in classes (but, as above, we are mindful of needlessly exposing all children and young people to something they may not even be aware of or concerned about).

While acknowledging it, if it has been raised directly, we avoid overly focusing on whatever the latest harmful online challenge or online hoax might be. We focus on what good online behaviour looks like, what to do if you see something upsetting online and who and where to report it. Fact checking by the Designated Safeguarding Leads, may help dispel myths if children and young people are identifying that they are particularly concerned that the latest online challenge or online hoax has put them or their friends at risk.

Further support

Challenges and hoaxes

- [online safety alerts: think before you scare](#) provides information on why sharing warnings can be counterproductive
- [the 'digital ghost stories' report](#) looks at the impact and risks of hoaxes
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) provides advice for school on responding to online challenges
- [Samaritans](#) shares information about challenges relating to suicide and self-harm research into online suicide challenges.

The internet – an inspiring and positive place

The internet is an amazing resource which enables children and young people to connect, communicate and be creative in a number of different ways, on a range of devices. However, the internet is always changing, and being able to keep up to date with your children's use of technology can be a challenge. You may sometimes feel that your child has better technical skills than you do, however children and young people still need advice and protection when it comes to managing their lives online. Issues that your child may encounter on the internet will vary depending on their age and online activities. We have grouped potential online risks into these 4 categories.

Conduct:

Children need to be aware of the impact that their online activity can have on both themselves and other people, and the digital footprint that they create on the internet. It's easy to feel anonymous online and it's important that children are aware of who is able to



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view, and potentially share, the information that they may have posted. When using the internet, it's important to keep personal information safe and not share it with strangers. Encourage your child to be respectful and responsible when communicating with others online, and to consider how what they share may reflect on them. Discuss with your child the importance of reporting inappropriate conversations, messages, images and behaviours and how this can be done.

Content:

Some online content is not suitable for children and may be hurtful or harmful. This is true for content accessed and viewed via social networks, online games, blogs and websites. It's important for children to consider the reliability of online material and be aware that it might not be true or written with a bias. Children may need your help as they begin to assess content in this way. There can be legal consequences for using or downloading copyrighted content, without seeking the author's permission.

Contact:

It is important for children to realise that new friends made online may not be who they say they are and that once a friend is added to an online account, you may be sharing your personal information with them. Regularly reviewing friends lists and removing unwanted contacts is a useful step. Privacy settings online may also allow you to customise the information that each friend is able to access. If you have concerns that your child is, or has been, the subject of inappropriate sexual contact or approach by another person, it's vital that you report it to the police via the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (www.ceop.police.uk). If your child is bullied online, this can also be reported online and offline. Reinforce with your child the importance of telling a trusted adult straight away if someone is bullying them or making them feel uncomfortable, or if one of their friends is being bullied online.

Commercialism:

Young people's privacy and enjoyment online can sometimes be affected by advertising and marketing schemes, which can also mean inadvertently spending money online, for example within apps. Encourage your child to keep their personal information private, learn how to block both pop ups and spam emails, turn off in-app purchasing on devices where possible, and use a family email address when filling in online forms. Make your child aware of scams that may seek to gain access to their accounts, and advise them to be wary in following links or opening attachments in emails that appear to be from organisations such as banks and service providers.

Find out more about how you can support and help your child learn how to stay safe online by clicking [here](#).

Nationalonlinesafety.com produced a collection of resources to help parents and carers understand how to support their children with staying safe online. Through their #WakeUpWednesday campaign you can sign up to receive regular updates about current issues relating to online safety. You can find a number of their parent guides by clicking on the links below:



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What Parents/carers need to know about PlayStation 5

Supporting Young People Online

Parental Guide to Social Media

Parental Guide to SnapChat

Parental Guide to Whatsapp

Parental Guide to You Tube

What is Screen Addiction?

Support for parents and carers

- [Thinkuknow: helping adults protect children from online harm](#)
- [Parent Info: help and advice for families in a digital world](#)
- [Internet Matters: helping parents keep their children safe online](#)
- [NSPCC: online safety](#)
- [London grid for learning \(LGfL\): online safety](#)
- [UK safer internet centre: Tips, advice, guides and resources to help keep your child safe online](#)
- [Childnet international: parents and carers toolkit](#)
- [Parentzone: experts in digital family life](#)
- [LGfL: parents - scare or prepare](#)
- [Thinkuknow: what to do if there's a viral scare online](#)