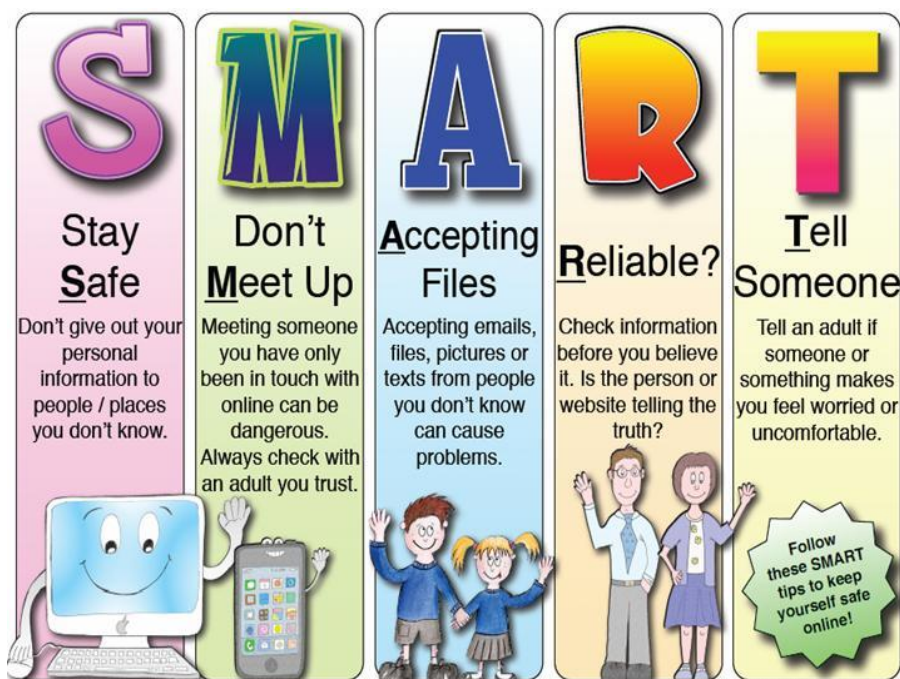




## An understanding of Internet Safety 2024

Your child will see the SMART rules around school as a reminder to keep safe.



The following pages are to inform parents of some of the most 'popular' sites amongst children. Please take note of the registration ages as well as being aware of the dangers of using these sites. As a primary school, we **do not advise** or promote any of the following apps/sites to be used by the children due to the increasing mental health impact linked for inappropriate use. If you would like to find out more, please visit the parental guides on The National College Website or any other website listed on our E-Safety page.

### Why do social media apps/websites have an age restriction?

Many sites ask for personal data such as names, date of births, or even place of residency. However, some companies collect and market user data. The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) exempts children from data collection, hence the restrictions.

### Please note:

Although these sites do have privacy filters this does NOT always mean your child is safe.



# Snapchat

Age: **13**



SNAPCHAT IS NOT INTENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 13

## What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is an online photo-messaging app with a twist. Users can take photos, videos and message and share with other users but these are only available for a short time before disappearing.

## The dangers of Snapchat:

1. Due to a feature on the app, you can now see where your friends/other users are by zooming out on the map. This allows users to view exactly where you are including street names and road maps.
2. Disappearing messages – conversations can no longer be retrieved.
3. Inappropriate content- it has been known to feature explicit content.
4. Children have been known to be at risk of physical harm, stalking or cyberbullying.



# Facebook



Age: **13**

FACEBOOK IS NOT INTENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 13

## What is Facebook?

Facebook is an online social media app where users can upload text, photos, and videos, join groups and message other users.

## Using a Facebook account:

Facebook will ask you to enter your date of birth when creating an account. It is very important that you enter your correct date of birth. If you are between 13 - 18 the settings will automatically only share your posts with your Facebook friends. However, you can make your account public, which means anyone can see your posts, and are able to comment on them and share them with their friends.

## The dangers of Facebook:

1. Although most people using Facebook are genuine, there is no proof that people are who they say they are. This is why it is so important NOT to meet up with ANYONE from Facebook – even if you believe they are a friend.
2. Be very careful not to upload too much personal information such as your address, phone number, school or college.
3. Loss of copyright over your photos.



# Instagram



Age: **13**

INSTAGRAM IS NOT INTENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 13

## What is Instagram?

Instagram is an online photo app. Users can upload photos, videos and message other users.

## Who can see your Instagram account?

Instagram does have privacy features, however when setting up the account it will be public (everyone can see the posts). This setting **MUST** be changed in the profile settings to private. If friends wish to see the account, they must request you as a friend first. Once you have accepted, they will be able to see your posts. Do not accept anyone that you do not know!

## The dangers of Instagram:

1. Having your account showing publicly means anyone and everyone is able to see your photos and videos.
2. You are able to receive messages from strangers.
3. There is a section to write a biography about yourself – this is **NOT** for personal information such as your address, telephone number etc.
4. Loss of copyright over your photos.



# YouTube



Age: **18** to have an account however, an account can be set up at the age of 13 with parental consent

YOUTUBE IS NOT INTENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 13. PARENTAL SUPERVISION IS **ESSENTIAL**.

## What is YouTube?

YouTube is an online video app. Users can watch and upload videos as well as follow vloggers (video blogger).

## Who can see your YouTube account?

Everyone is able to see your YouTube account! There are no controls in place to stop strangers viewing your channel. There is the option to turn the comments off, meaning no one can comment on your uploaded videos.

## How to turn on parental controls:

Turning on parental controls is very simple. Please go to:

[www.safesearchkids.com/youtube](http://www.safesearchkids.com/youtube)

and follow the step by step instructions. This is strongly advised for anyone under the age of 18.

## The dangers of YouTube:

1. If the account does not have the parental controls turned on, your child may view a number of inappropriate materials such as explicit videos, violence and much more.
2. Anyone is able to view the channel. Do not give out personal information on a video such as your address, phone number etc.
3. YouTube encourages viewers to express their opinion on materials.
4. YouTube are in control of adverts – some may be inappropriate for your child to view. These adverts change each time – it may not be the same advert every time you watch the same video.



# Twitter

Age: **13**

X IS NOT INTENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 13.

## What is X?

X was previously known as Twitter. It is an online social media app. Users can upload photos, videos and 'Tweet' on their own profile or on other users' profiles.

## Who can see your X account?

X does have privacy features, however when setting up the account it will be public (everyone can see the posts). It must be changed in the profile settings to private. If friends wish to see the account they must request to follow you. Once you have accepted, they will be able to see your posts. Do not accept anyone that you do not know!

## The dangers of X:

1. Having your account as public means anyone and everyone is able to see your photos, videos and 'Tweets'
2. You are able to receive messages from strangers if your account is public.
3. There is a section to write a biography about yourself – this is NOT for personal information such as your address, telephone number etc.
4. Some of the top problems that users reported on X involved posts that allegedly violated the platform's rules on harassment, violent content and hateful conduct.



# TIKTOK

Age: 13

TIKTOK IS NOT INTENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 13

Some features may not be available to you until you turn 16 or 18.

## What is TikTok?

TikTok is a social networking app that gives users the ability to watch and create short clips of up to 60 seconds with friends, family or the entire world.

## How does TikTok work?

When you download the app, you can instantly see the videos that others have posted on the channel. You are not allowed to share a post until an account has been set up. Once registered, anyone can share a video about anything! Content is often cross-posted to other platforms.

## Who can see your TikTok account?

Once the app has been downloaded, all content can be seen. You must change the settings to 'restricted mode' to filter out some of the inappropriate content. An account can be set to 'private', so that all videos can only be seen by the creator and no one else on the platform. With a private account, you can approve or deny users and limit incoming messages to followers only.

## Dangers of using TikTok:

- Inappropriate language around some of the videos
- Contact from strangers- predators seeking to connect with children is a risk
- Once the app has been downloaded, you are able to see everything- turn on the restricted mode.
- All accounts are PUBLIC by DEFAULT
- Users can like or react to a video, follow an account or send messages to each other. There is a risk of strangers being able to directly contact children.



# Online Gaming

Age: Ranging from 3 years up to 18+

PLEASE CHOOSE THE CORRECT AGE FOR YOUR CHILD. AGE RESTRICTIONS ARE IN PLACE FOR A REASON. REFER TO THE PEGI RATING.

## Gaming:

Gaming is a way for people to relax, socialize with friends and to have fun. Children may be given the option to play in a team, one against the other, play individually or play against the game itself. Games were originally designed to be entertaining.

## What should I look out for?

Most games have an age rating based on their themes. Games with violent and sexual content will have a higher rating. The age rating system is provided by PEGI and gives an overview of individual games, which can help you decide if it is appropriate.

All major games consoles have settings that prevent children from finding inappropriate games. You can set limits for playing time, as well as speaking to unknown players.

## What are the risks?

- Being bullied
- Trolling, griefing and scams
- In-game purchases
- Talking to people they don't know
- Being exposed to inappropriate language/themes including violence/sexual content
- Privacy and security settings can be difficult to manage with games. Some allow communications features to be turned off or placed on mute.





# Cyber Bulling

Age: **THIS CAN HAPPEN TO ANY AGE GROUP**

## What is Cyber Bulling?

Cyber Bulling is when someone is bullied via a device such as a computer, tablet or mobile phone. This could be in the form of a text message, email or any kind of contact on social media.

## How to seek help when Cyber Bulling occurs?

Discuss this with your child/children. Should your child/ children encounter any form of cyber bullying, encourage them to REACH OUT! This could be to parents/guardians, a teacher or another trusted adult.

## Do you retaliate?

No, this could cause an escalation, causing further problems and distress.

## Identifying signs from your child that there MAY be a cyber-bulling issue:

- Unexpectedly stops using their device(s).
- Appears uneasy about going to school.
- Shows an increase/decrease in eating.
- Becomes secretive about their online activities.

## The dangers of Cyber Bulling:

- Sadness
- Anxiety
- Depression or other more serious mental health problems
- Anger
- Shame
- Fear
- Low self-esteem
- Inability to trust in others
- Withdrawal, seclusion, avoidance of social relationships
- Poor academic performance
- Bullying others – to feel in control
- In extreme cases – Suicide.



# Online Grooming

## What is Online Grooming?

Online grooming is when children are convinced that the person they are talking to is a friend/ a trustworthy person, and they are persuaded into getting involved in illegal/sexual and religious activities.

## Is grooming illegal?

**YES**

## Can grooming only take place online?

**NO** – children can be groomed online and in person! It can also happen to BOYS as well as girls.

## Is your child at risk?

Do they:

- Have older friends
- Tell lies and keep secrets
- Have an older boyfriend/girlfriend or friends
- Hang out with older people
- Not tell you where they are
- Skip school

These are only examples.  
This does not necessarily  
mean your child is being  
groomed.



# Sexting

## What is Online Sexting?

Sexting is a term, which describes the sharing of intimate images of yourself with others. This includes text message, email and/or social networking sites such as Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube.

## Is Sexting illegal?

**YES**

## Reasons why minors may begin Sexting:

- Sending by accident.
- Being brave about a naughty photograph.
- Feeling sexually confident.
- Feeling less inhibited and less aware of risks and consequences.
- Doing it as a dare.
- Thinking that it is a good laugh and there is no harm in it.

## If your child finds themselves in this situation, there are several steps to follow:

- If your child has posted it on their own social media – get them to remove it.
- If they have sent it to someone else, contact them and ask them to delete it.
- If the image has been shared on other users' social media accounts, follow the procedures to report it.