



Shirebrook

ACADEMY

Shirebrook Academy's
Parent/Carer Guide To:

Online Safety

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.

In this booklet we aim to give you the information you need to help safeguard your children online.

If you ever feel you need more support with this, contact the school directly through a phone call (01623) 742722 or email safeguarding@shirebrookacademy.org



What are the signs my child is spending too much time online?

Changes in behaviour, such as:

- Getting agitated, angry, or defensive when their online time is restricted/interrupted.
- Avoiding their responsibilities (homework, chores etc).
- Not wanting to spend time with family or friends in person, and becoming socially isolated.
- Being constantly preoccupied with being online/getting back online.
- Losing interest in previously enjoyed hobbies or activities.

Physical signs such as:

- Constantly feeling tired due to lack of sleep.
- Staring at screens for excessive amounts of time can lead to regular headaches, blurred vision, dry eyes.
- Regular back and neck pain resulting from poor posture whilst using devices.
- Increased anxiety and/or depression.

The 4 C's of online safety:

Contact

Content

Conduct

Commerce

Content

Content is anything posted online - it might be words or it could be images and video. Children and young people may see illegal, inappropriate or harmful content when online. This includes things like pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism. 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.

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. Reinforce with your child the importance of telling a trusted adult straight away if someone

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 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.

Commerce

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.

How can I make sure my child is safe online?

The ABC online safety checklist:

ACTIVATE

Use parental controls and tools available from broadband providers, online platforms and apps to install safe search settings, block inappropriate content and prevent contact from strangers.

BALANCE

Agree a good balance for your child's screen time, taking education and leisure content into account. Encourage active screen time over passive (mindless scrolling) and consider limits for the total hours spent online each day.

CHECK

Check which apps your children use and the relevant age limits for each platform. Talk regularly about online safety and what they might come across so you can work together to manage any risks and keep online experiences positive.

ACTIVATE

Turn on broadband filters for basic protection on devices in the home. To see more information on how to do this on your specific network visit [this page](#).

Manage *SafeSearch*, a feature available on search engines (like Google and Bing) that filters out explicit content from search results.

Password protect app stores to limit downloads made by your child.

Activate Parental Controls, and be sure to update them as their online activities change. To find guides on how to set up parental controls on specific apps/platforms, visit [this page](#) where you can search for the specific app/platform you want help with.

BALANCE

Set a good example for you child with your own screen time — children tend to copy what their parents do!

Create screen-free zones at home.

Switch off devices an hour before bedtime.

Encourage your child to take breaks from their devices (for example every 20 minutes).

Charge devices outside of bedrooms.

Use screen time tools to help manage how much time they spend online, eg Google Family Link for Android or Screen Time for Apple.

Set digital boundaries and routines together as a family.

CHECK

Review the minimum age requirements for the apps, games and platforms your child wants to use—they've been rated at that age for a reason!

Discuss online risks, including online scams, and how to deal with them.

Ask your child what they like to do online and why.

Show them how to report or block inappropriate content on platforms they use.

Share your concerns about their online safety with them.

Talk regularly with your child about their online life in casual settings—make open and honest conversation the norm.

How do I know what all the words/phrases mean?

The terminology used online can be confusing. New words/phrases develop and are used all the time.

Check out this [online glossary](#) which is regularly updated with explanations of each word/phrase.

How do I report harmful content?

If your child comes across harmful content online, or experiences harm online, you can report it in different ways.

Organisations:

Report Harmful Content

Here you can report harmful content relating to: Threats, Impersonation, Bullying & Harassment, Self-harm or Suicide, Online Abuse, Violent Content, Unwanted Sexual Advances, and Pornographic Content.

Report Child Exploitation (CEOP)

Here you can report issues around online sexual abuse and grooming.

Report Sexual Abuse Content

Here you can report images or videos of suspected child sexual abuse.

Always report an issue directly to the app/platform you have come across it on. To find more information on how to report on specific apps/platforms, visit: [This Page](#).

Talk to school if your child experiences any harm online, we can help support yourself and your child to understand what they have experienced, and help to educate them on online safety.

My child experienced harm online, I reported it, but they need more support, where can I go?

Online harm can have a substantial impact on your child and they may need support to understand what they have been through, and to cope with it. You should always talk to school about what has happened.

We are here to help and we can help you refer for external support as well.

Some organisations that can help are:

- [ChildLine](#)
- [YoungMinds](#)
- [Kooth](#)
- [The School Nurse](#)
- [SV2](#)