



# TIBBERTON CE FIRST SCHOOL HINDLIP CE FIRST SCHOOL

Exec. Headteacher: Mr A. Gromski BA Hons PGCE  
Tel/Fax Tibberton 01905 345284  
Tel/Fax Hindlip 01905 453455



*"Achieve, Believe, Care"*

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Dear Parents and Carers,

## RE: Online Safety

Keeping our children safe is the most important thing we do at school and home. When it comes to the online world this can be a challenge as technology moves so quickly! Especially as our children have ever increasing access to the online world.



As part of our work to empower our children to stay safe, we celebrate Safer Internet Day each year. Safe Internet Day is on 7th February and this will be the 20th year the day has been celebrated globally!

This year has a really important focus, as it is all about pupil voice. The theme is **'Want to talk about it? Making space for conversations about life online.'**

All our children learn about online safety, as part of our school curriculum, and for Safer Internet Day we will be exploring the above theme in class and through assemblies in the run up to half-term.

How can you help keep your children safe at home?

Do you talk about what your child does online at home? This is the perfect time to start a conversation! Open and honest conversations are a *vital* way to keep children safe, especially as they will then be used to this as they get older and encounter more of the online world. It really is a key part of helping to safeguard your family.

*As part of this year's Safer Internet Day **we challenge you to start a conversation**, about online life, at home.*

Below are some ideas and resources to help you stay safe online at home as a family, now and in the future. Please read on and take a look. From tips on starting a conversation, to guidance on how to set up appropriate privacy and security settings on different apps.

Finally, if there is a specific area where we could support you then please let us know, as we are happy to run a parent online safety meeting if this would be of use.

Regards

Mr Gromski

Executive Headteacher

## Practical tips for starting a conversation about life online

This story can help you talk about the importance of sharing worries with young children.

[Hanni and the Magic Window | Childnet](#)



Smart lessons - These 6 lessons can be shared at home to help raise and discuss a range of possible issues children may encounter online. [SMART Video Lessons | Childnet](#)



Whatever your level of knowledge or confidence, these *five tips* will help you start, manage and maintain an open dialogue with your children about life online, and help you support them to use technology safely and positively.

### **1. Be positive and open minded about the internet**

It's important to recognise the exciting opportunities that going online can offer children and young people.

Although your children may use the internet differently to you, their experiences are still significant.

If your child mentions something you haven't heard of, ask them to show you, or explain in more detail, or you may need to do your own research. Try to keep conversations broad, and value their opinions when they're talking about what they enjoy doing, to show that you are interested in all aspects of their online world.

### **2. Talk early and often**

The most effective way to deal with any online issue is to make conversations about the internet a part of your everyday routine.

Talking openly about life online from an early age, can be a helpful bridge to sharing safety messages and addressing more difficult conversations at a later date; it also shows your child that you are someone who knows about the internet and can help them.

### **3. Create a safe space for conversations**

Look for opportunities to talk together. Sometimes, talking face-to-face can feel difficult, so talking alongside each other when out for a walk, or travelling in the car for example, are options that might make it easier.

The environment needs to be right; free from distractions, so that your child has your undivided attention. Remind them often that they can talk to you about anything, no matter how difficult, and that they will not be judged or blamed.

Your child might not be ready to talk about something straight away, so show them that you are there to listen whenever they are ready.

### **4. Keep it relevant**

As they get older, your children will use technology differently from when they first went online. Their knowledge and understanding will grow too, as will the challenges they may face on the internet.

To get a sense of how much they know and what support they still need, ask open-ended questions to let your child lead the conversations you have.

There are appropriate ways to approach all online safety topics with different ages. For example, with a teenager, nude images can be spoken about in wider conversations around consent and healthy relationships. For younger children, you could discuss what types of images are okay to share online, and what areas of our bodies are private.

### **5. Be proactive**

Working together to create an agreement, outlining how the internet and technology will be used within the family, is a useful way to set clear expectations and boundaries for your children.

You might include time spent online; who your children can communicate with; appropriate apps and games; and why safety tools are helpful to block and report inappropriate content.

Ask your child what they would do if something went wrong online and they needed help, and reinforce the importance of telling an adult as soon as anything happens that makes them feel upset, worried, or uncomfortable in any way.

### **How to talk about difficult topics**

As your children get older, wanting more freedom online is natural. There will soon come a time when they're using the internet independently on a daily basis, for example when it comes to researching homework or for interacting with friends. Children and young people may also use the internet to seek answers to questions that they're not comfortable talking about with an adult, and this can raise the need to have conversations about some difficult topics.

Often these conversations can be planned for, but with online content being so accessible, occasionally they may be needed earlier than anticipated. Talking about serious issues can be a daunting prospect, but it's important to remember that as parents and carers you are the best people for your children to talk to.

If you need to talk about something difficult with your child, try to:

- Plan what you want to say in advance, and seek support and information if needed so that you feel prepared.
- Choose a moment when there are no other distractions and you are not rushed for time, but acknowledge that they might not feel ready to speak straight away.
- Consider the best approach to anticipate how your child might react. You might want to directly explain the concerns that led to the conversation, or feel that asking some broader questions might be more suitable in the first instance.
- Give your child time to process what you are saying and share their thoughts, without interruption or blame. Listen carefully to any confusion or concerns.
- Share your own experiences if you can. Were you ever in a similar situation and how was it resolved?
- Reassure them you are always there to help and even if you don't know the answers, you can find these out together.
- Get support quickly if they need it. This might be from family, friends, your child's school or other agencies.

### **My child has said something worrying – what do I do?**

If your child comes to you with a concern, the most important thing is to remain calm and reassure them that they've done the right thing by talking to you. If you suspect, or find out from someone else that your child is dealing with a worrying situation online, let them know that sharing it with you is the first step to resolving the issue.

When dealing with an online concern raised by your child, try to:

- **Let them explain in their own words what has happened.**
- **Remain composed.** If you are feeling shocked, angry or worried, it's likely that your child is feeling worse, but reacting that way may close down the conversation and lead your child to believe that they are to blame.
- **Acknowledge the challenges they have overcome, and let them know that they've done the right thing by telling you.**
- **Be honest.** It's okay if you are unsure what to do next, the important thing is to let your child know you are there for them. There is a lot of further support out there to help you decide on your next steps.
- **Save the evidence wherever possible.** You may be able to report what has happened to the online service being used when the incident occurred. Evidence may include screen shots taken on a laptop or mobile device, emails, texts or online conversation histories.
- **Make a report as soon as possible.** Knowing who to report to is a really useful step to resolving many issues, so try to familiarise yourself with the reporting, blocking or moderating settings available on the services your child is using. Depending on what has happened, it might be necessary to let your child's school know too, or other agencies such as the police.

### **I want to talk my child about a specific issue – where can I find out more?**

The following list of resources and support networks aims to provide you with an array of information so that you feel confident in starting a conversation with your child, whatever part of online life that may be about:

[UK Safer Internet Centre Help & Advice](#)

Online issues - Parents and carers will find the "Online issues" library on our website helpful in learning about and supporting their child with a particular issue. The issues covered on these pages include pornography, online challenges, gaming and many more.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/online-issues>

Guides and resources - Our guides and resources for parents and carers include information around using technology such as phones, laptops and games consoles as well as other useful links.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guides-and-resources/parents-and-carers>

### Childnet Help & Advice

Online issues - Aimed solely for you as a parent or carer, there are a host of topics to read about, from livestreaming, to online bullying, to reliability online. Issues you can find out more about include: How to make a report, Video chat and webcams, Sexting, Livestreaming, Privacy and data, Online bullying, Expiring content, Parental controls, Digital wellbeing, Reliability Online, Downloading

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/help-and-advice/parents-and-carers>

DeShame - Childnet has produced guidance to help parents, carers and foster carers talk to their children about the important issue of online sexual harassment – specifically, when this is happening between children of a similar age.

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/online-sexual-harassment-advice-leaflets/>

### Taming Gaming

Known as the “Family Gaming Database”, Taming Gaming has over 2000 video games which have been researched and tested with families. You can see which games have been tried and tested by other families before you decide which games may be best for you.

<https://www.taminggaming.com>

### BBC Own It

A hub for children and young people to own and be empowered by their online lives. We recommend you check out their webpage for parents and carers to learn more about a host of online safety topics. From celebrities giving top tips, to fun and engaging infographic videos, there’s so much you can explore to support your child online. Issues you can find out more about include: Social media apps, multiple devices, online gaming fears, cyberbullying, processing scary news

<https://www.bbc.com/ownit/curations/parents>

### Internet Matters

Internet Matters’ website provides advice and practical support to help your child with a wide array of online issues. Issues you can find out more about include: Cyberbullying, fake news, inappropriate content, online grooming, online pornography, radicalisation, screen time, and more.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/>

### Common Sense Media

Common Sense Media is a website which reviews games, apps, services and more to help you decide if something is appropriate for your child. You can set the age of your child and the content will be tailored to what young people around that age are interested in.

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>

### Report Harmful Content

You can go to Report Harmful Content to find out how to report across some of the most well-known social media sites and other popular online platforms. If you have found that a platform’s community guidelines have been violated but your report was rejected, you can head to Report Harmful Content for further escalation and review.

<https://reportharmfulcontent.com/report/>

## Social Media Checklists

Checklists which cover the privacy and security settings for some of the most popular online platforms.

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/checklists/>

## Report Remove

A tool from the Internet Watch Foundation and Childline to support under 18s report a nude image online that has been shared.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/remove-nude-image-shared-online/>

## ACT (Action Counters Terrorism)

If you have come across terrorist content, head to ACT and report in confidence on their website.

<https://act.campaign.gov.uk/>

## Make a Family Agreement

Childnet's Family Agreement is a great way to start a conversation with your whole family about how you all use the internet. It's also great to start discussions together around how to behave in a positive way when online, whether this is at home, at school or at a friend's.

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/family-agreement/>

## Moving on Up

Childnet's Moving on Up toolkit is mostly tailored towards young people transitioning from primary to secondary school. This is a fantastic opportunity to introduce online safety learning, as technology may be becoming more prominent in new ways within their lives. There are resources for parents and carers to use to facilitate the online aspects of the transition in your child's education. It includes the first phone checklist, which is not specific to any age – instead, it's there for when you decide it is the right time for your child to own their first smartphone, whilst helping you with any considerations and thoughts that you may want some advice about.

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/moving-on-up/>

## Internet Matters

Internet Matters is a website to help parents and carers keep young people safe online. They have a helpful checklist on their website on how to support teens (14+) online, including a video, guides, and apps for your child to download to find out more.

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/14plus/#apps>

## BBC Bitesize

For Key Stage 2 learners (age 11-16), Bitesize has an eSafety guide to help teenagers think before they share personal information online.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zrtrd2p/revision/1>

## Thinkuknow

Teenagers can explore to receive specialist advice from CEP Education at the National Crime Agency.

[https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11\\_18/](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_18/)