



SEVENOAKS PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Cyber Safety Guidance for Parents & Pupils

INTRODUCTION

The Internet and Cyberspace are great ways to connect with people and with the World. They are technologies to enjoy and explore, and are going to play an ever-increasing part in our lives.

However, as we all know, this will involve risks and dangers: we all need to be aware of these and need to acquire and develop the knowledge and skills to reduce and avoid them. We have produced this document as a reminder to us all of some basic cyber-wisdom.

These suggestions are based on advice provided by respected sources in the field. We hope you find them helpful. If you have any comments or anything you think we should add, please let us know.

ADVICE FOR THE SAFE USE OF MOBILE PHONES:

- Be careful to whom you give your mobile phone number and never post it on websites.
- Never return a call or text message to a number you do not know.
- Never reply to texts saying you have won prizes. These are usually based around premium rate numbers and may cost you a small fortune.
- If you are using text chat, make sure your username does not give away your real name.
- If you receive abusive text messages, keep them. You do not have to read them. When the time comes to take action, these messages can be used as evidence.
- If you receive abusive text or chat messages, ask for help from a parent, your Form Tutor, Head of Year, the School Nurse, a School Counsellor or any trusted adult. You can also contact your mobile phone provider.
- Remember, by forwarding a text, email, photo, video, etc. you may be making a problem worse. You could be unwittingly involving yourself in bullying. You may even be breaking the law.
- Be careful with the language you use when texting, using email, instant messenger etc. The person receiving your message may be offended by your choice of words or even misinterpret what you say and take offence.

ADVICE FOR THE SAFE USE OF THE INTERNET:

- Always make up usernames which are not linked to your real name.

- Never agree to meet anyone you have met online unless you are sure they are who they say they are, you have discussed it with your parents and meet them in a public place in daylight.
- Remember that many people in chatrooms and on social networks are not whom they say they are.
- Always avoid posting personal information on websites such as Bebo or MySpace and in blogs. Information, such as your real name, address, phone number, email address, school, postcode and photos of you in your school uniform can be used to trace you or use your identity.
- Be careful about putting photos of yourself or friends on websites. Never send photos to someone you have met online.
- Avoid webcam chats with people you do not know.
- Do not respond to emails from people you do not know.
- Do not respond to any abusive emails. You may feel that you want to defend yourself; however, once you engage with the sender, the situation may escalate. If you receive any abusive emails, keep them. Create a new folder called "Abuse", and move the abusive mail into this folder. You do not have to read it. When the time comes to take action, this folder of abusive mail and flame mail can be used as evidence.
- Your passwords are very important; never share them, even with friends. Remember that passwords are more secure if they contain a combination of numbers and letters.
- Learn how to block people on email or websites. If someone sends you inappropriate mail, block them.
- Do not be afraid to ask for help. A parent, your Form Tutor, the School Nurse, or any trusted adult will always try to help you.
- Remember to contact the site administrators if you want something to be removed from a website. You must immediately lock your computer; turn off the screen and seek the assistance of an adult.
- Remember, by forwarding an email, photo, video etc you may be making a problem worse. You could be unwittingly involving yourself in bullying. You may even be breaking the law.

HELPFUL LINKS

www.childline.org.uk

www.childnet-int.org

www.kidscape.org.uk

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.safekids.com

www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/help/safesurfing

www.bullying.org