



7 April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: Helping your child stay safe online during COVID-19

Over the past few weeks e-learning has provided an invaluable resource in ensuring schools can continue to deliver the curriculum in these unprecedented times. With young people spending an increasing amount of time online, potentially unsupervised, it is important to ensure that it is being used in a safe manner and that your child knows who to talk to should they need to.

Discussion with your child

The key to helping ensure your child is using the internet in a safe and responsible way is to create an open and transparent dialogue where the risks of using the internet can be discussed, and your son/daughter feels they can openly chat to you about what social media they are using, how they are using it and most importantly anything that concerns them.

Whilst it is true that in school we do have sophisticated filters in place to limit potentially unsafe content, our primary focus is and always has been education and discussion so young people can make the safe choices themselves both in and outside of the classroom.

Turning on parental controls

The big four UK internet providers (BT, Sky, TalkTalk, Virgin Media) have parental controls that can be enabled limiting the content which can be accessed when using the internet. The UK Safer Internet Centre has put together easy to follow guides on how to turn on these parental controls, which can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

Online chat / socialising

If there is one area that is extremely fast moving at present it is that of online chat. Only a few weeks back, we would hazard a guess that most parents would not have known their Zoom from their Houseparty but in these times of social distancing, technology is providing an invaluable tool to enable people of all ages to keep in touch with friends and family, and companies have rapidly innovated to fill this need.

Despite such quick developments and the popular platforms changing at pace, our guidance to young people is still the same as it always has been whether they are communicating through SMS, Snapchat, Instagram, Houseparty or one of the many other services available.

- Only engage (invite to a chat, or join a chat) with individuals you personally know.
- Never give out personal or identifying information.
- If someone is asking you to do something online that makes you feel uncomfortable then stop and tell an adult immediately. Do not be pressured into doing anything you do not want to.
- Remember, even if you think you are chatting in a one-to-one conversation, it could be being recorded.

Cyberbullying

Another risk associated with an increased amount of time online is that of cyberbullying. This can range from sending hurtful and intimidating messages, sharing unflattering content and harassment on social media, to circulating inappropriate images online.



The school takes instances of cyberbullying, as it does with any other form of bullying, extremely seriously and this is no different during this period of exceptional closure. It is important to continue reporting instances of cyberbullying to the school by emailing remotelarning@brockington.leics.sch.uk where it can be investigated fully. Also, if the content is criminal please report using the guidance below.

Reporting inappropriate material and behaviour

If you come across material online that you feel is inappropriate, or your child is having conversations online that you are concerned are of an inappropriate or grooming nature, it is important you report these concerns to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection service at <https://ceop.police.uk>. If you or your child are in immediate danger, please call 999.

If you wish to report anything of concern to the school, you may do so using the email remotelarning@brockington.leics.sch.uk or pastoral@brockington.leics.sch.uk

Acceptable Use Policy

Parents are asked to remind students that the Acceptable Use Policy, signed by all students, is still applicable and to use the school provided online resources (email, Show My Homework etc.) responsibly.

Useful resources

Please find below a range of resources we have collated for further information should you wish to find out more on how to stay safe online.

Website	What they offer
https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/	National Crime Agency online education portal with a range of useful guidance and advice for parents and students alike.
https://ceop.police.uk	National Crime Agency website for reporting content online.
https://smartsocial.com/	Fantastic e-safety resource with in-depth looks at some of the most common smartphone apps (including Houseparty, Snapchat, Instagram etc.) and the risks associated with them.
https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/	Online safety tips, advice and resources to help children and young people stay safe online.
https://www.childline.org.uk tel: 0800 1111	Advice and tips on staying safe online, as well as how to deal with cyber bullying and much more.
http://www.brockington.leics.sch.uk/e-safety/	E-safety section of the Brockington website with specially curated tips and guidance.

We hope that the above will provide a starting point for discussion with your child and will allow you to better understand how to support them in staying safe online. If any of the above has raised concerns or you would like further advice on any area of online safety, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the school at remotelarning@brockington.leics.sch.uk and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Regards

The Brockington College IT Team

