



CHURCHFIELDS  
JUNIOR SCHOOL

## Keeping our children safe online...

Dear parents and carers

### Have a Conversation

It is really important to chat with your children on an ongoing basis about staying safe online.

Not sure where to begin?

These conversation starter suggestions can help.

- Ask your children to tell you about the sites they like to visit and what they enjoy doing online.
- Ask them about how they stay safe online. What tips do they have for you, and where did they learn them? What is OK and not OK to share?
- Ask them if they know where to go for help, where to find the safety advice, privacy settings and how to report or block on the services they use.
- Encourage them to help someone! Perhaps they can show you how to do something better online or they might have a friend who would benefit from their help and support.
- Think about how you each use the internet. What more could you do to use the internet together? Are there activities that you could enjoy as a family?

### What does Online Safety mean?

At CJS we are committed to the use of new technologies and recognise the internet as a valuable tool for learners of all ages. With ever expanding new technologies such as blogs, social networking spaces, online forums and mobile phones children are using technology in a way never seen before. The increased use of technology at school and home also exposes children to a number of risks and dangers. In its simplest form online safety is about ensuring children use new technologies – computers, mobile phones and gaming devices in a way which will keep them safe without limiting their opportunities for creation and innovation. Online Safety is embedded throughout the Computing curriculum, and explored when necessary and relevant pupil activities require it.

### Why the Internet and digital communications are important

The Internet is an essential element in 21st century life for education, work and social interaction. The school has a duty to provide pupils with quality internet access as part of their learning experience. Internet use is a part of the statutory curriculum and a necessary tool for staff and pupils. Technology offers unimaginable opportunities and is constantly evolving. Access is becoming universal and increasingly more mobile, and pupils are using technology at an ever-earlier age. All users need to be aware of risks associated with the use of these Internet technologies. At Churchfields Junior School we understand the responsibility to educate our pupils in Online Safety issues; teaching them the appropriate behaviours and critical thinking to enable them to remain both safe and legal when using the internet and related technologies, in and beyond the context of the classroom.

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### **Internet use will enhance learning**

The school Internet access will be designed expressly for pupil use and will include filtering appropriate to the age of pupils. Pupils will be taught what Internet use is acceptable and what is not and be given clear objectives for Internet use. Pupils will be educated in the effective use of the internet in research, including the skills of knowledge location, retrieval and evaluation. Pupils are shown how to publish and present information to a wider audience.

### **Posting of information**

Pupils are taught at school about how to practise critical thinking before they post any information online, and this should be reinforced by parents at home. Making pupils understand that all pictures and information can be used by others for the purpose of negative modification and sharing with a wider audience. Additionally making sure that pupils understand that once information is online, it is there permanently even after you delete it from your account. It is easy to forget that the internet is not private. For this reason, it is important to constantly support pupils to prevent them from engaging in risky behaviour online. Simply discussing the topic with them on a single occasion is not enough. Instead, encourage children to be open with you and to ask questions before posting something online.

At CJS we take the safety of our pupils very seriously, including their safety while they access the internet. Whilst it is impossible to ensure that all pupils will not access such material, the school, in liaison with the London Grid for Learning, is taking all reasonable steps to minimise pupil access to unsuitable material.

These include:

- Use of a filtered Internet Service to prevent access to internet sites with undesirable material
- The requirement that wherever possible, all internet access during school hours will be supervised by a member of staff or another responsible adult

### **Advice for home internet use**

We want this approach to online safety to spread to the home online environment too and we are therefore sharing with you some tips and resources to help you guide your children and help you keep up to date in a digital world. Here are a few tips to help you keep your children safe on line:

[Think U Know](#) is always a good place to start and you will see the report abuse button that your child should know about.

The site has an up-to-date parents' guide to online safety including:

- How Do I Know if My Child Is at Risk, or a Victim of Cyberbullying?
- How Can I Protect My Child's Online Reputation?
- How Can I Protect My Child From Identity Theft?
- Are Online Games Dangerous?
- How Can I Protect My Child if They Play Online Games?

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- How Can I Reduce My Child's Screen Time?

Another site that is helpful for parent controls is [UK Safer Internet Centre](#).

This site advises you to take four steps:

1. Have ongoing conversations with your children about staying safe online
2. Use safety tools on social networks and other online services, e.g. Facebook privacy settings
3. Decide if you want to use parental controls on your home internet
4. Understand devices and the parental control tools they offer in our Parents' Guide to Technology

## Keeping our children safe...

### Put yourself in control

Install parental controls on your home broadband and any internet-enabled devices. Set up a user account for your child on the main device they use and make sure other accounts in the household are password-protected so that younger children can't access them by accident. Parental controls on devices will help restrict the type of content children can view as well as monitoring their activity. For example on YouTube you can turn off 'suggested auto-play' on video to stop your child from viewing content that has not been directly selected.

### YouTube Kids app

Please use the YouTube Kids app which has a much higher bar for content allowed on the platform. You will be able to block specific content, set the age level of videos and report videos.

### Use Airplane Mode

Use airplane mode on your devices when your child is using them so they can't make any unapproved purchases or interact with anyone online without your knowledge.

### Turn off in-app purchasing

Apps are easy to access nowadays and children may do this without your knowledge. To prevent this, turn off in-app purchasing on smartphones and tablets.

### Agree Boundaries

Be clear what your child can and can't do online – where they can use the internet, how much time they can spend online, the sites they can visit and the type of information they can share. Agree with your child when they can have a mobile phone or tablet.

### Peer Pressure

Trends and viral challenges can be tempting for children to take part in; no matter how dangerous or scary they seem. Talk to your child about how they should not succumb to peer pressure and do anything they are not comfortable with, online or offline.

### Report or block

You can't always rely on parental controls to block harmful or distressing material. We advise that you flag and report any material you deem to be inappropriate or harmful as soon as you come across it. You should also block the account to prevent your child from viewing it. Also encourage your child to screenshot any message or content they feel could be malicious to provide evidence when you report it.

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### **Be Present**

It is important to be present whilst children are online. This will give you a greater understanding of what they are doing on their devices, as well as providing you with the opportunities to discuss, support and stop certain activities.

### **Explore Together**

The best way to find out what your child is doing online is to ask them to tell you about what they do and what sites they like to visit. If they're happy to, ask them to show you. Talk to them about being a good friend online.

### **Fortnite**

Increasing numbers of children are playing the game 'Fortnite', making its Battle Royale mode the most played online game in the world. As with all online gaming, there are a number of risks that need to be considered in order to ensure children and young people are effectively protected. The game is PEGI rated at age 12+, however there is no proof of age required which can expose younger children to violent content as well as inappropriate comments from older users. The PEGI website has more information about their classification system <https://pegi.info>.

## **In-game chat**

### **How it works**

In-game chat is one of the keys to success in online multiplayer games like Fortnite, League of Legends or Overwatch - it allows players to quickly coordinate with their team through the game's built-in chat functions, using voice (via a headset) or text.

Playing in a team with people you don't know in person can be totally exhilarating - but it can get rowdy, especially in ranked matches. Most in-game communication is immediate and unmoderated, and in some games swearing and insults are pretty common - especially when one player hasn't performed so well.

If your child is younger or more sensitive, or you feel strongly about bad language, you might want to hold off until they're older before letting them use in-game chat. If that's the case, be sure to talk to them about why you've made this decision - and maybe agree to review it at a future point.

Settings vary according to the game and the platform (PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch etc), but most allow you to limit who can communicate with you. Some games and platforms offer the option to set up a chat which can only be joined by invitation - this can be a great solution if your child plays only with friends they know in real life. For Xbox settings, visit <https://bit.ly/2CUrqTy>. For PlayStation settings, visit <https://bit.ly/2UvAeEO>, for Nintendo settings, visit <https://bit.ly/2Hb0DVy>.

### **Online bullying**

Sometimes, competitive criticism via in-game chat can start to feel like bullying. Mean comments or insults can really hurt, so if your child seems to be upset or down after

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playing multiplayer games, encourage them to talk about what's happened. Be sympathetic, and remind them that the issue is not with them, but with the bully.

Be sure that your child knows to mute players who seem to be trying to upset them - they'll still be able to see that player in the game, and possibly in future games, but will no longer see or hear what the muted player is saying unless they unmute them. Reporting tools vary, but they're normally easy to find - and if a game doesn't have them, it's probably best to avoid it.

### **Being kind online**

When someone is yelling at you, it's often tempting to respond aggressively too. This won't improve things in the long run, so encourage them to hold back if they can, and take a break if things get fraught.

If they're older, remind them that the chat will probably include younger children who might well be upset by harsh jokes or insults. Talk to them about being kind online as well as face-to-face; they have a choice whether or not to contribute to an aggressive game culture.

At the same time, let them know that they can always come to you if they have problems online - even if they think they might not have behaved as you'd have hoped.

### **Online grooming**

Most children have fun gaming with friends and strangers without any problems, but there have been [some reports](#) of children being contacted by abusers through voice chat, so it's important they know what to watch out for.

Be sure your child understands never to share photos or information like their real name, school or address. They should be very wary if someone they talk to using in-game chat asks to stay in touch on social media or wants to start a private chat; and of course, they should never agree to meet up with anyone they haven't met in person before.

Make sure they get to know the [reporting mechanisms](#) of the game, so they can quickly block and report anyone who makes them uncomfortable. Tell them that they can always talk to you about anything that upsets them online, and you will always help them even if they've not stuck to your family rules. And if you come across something you suspect might be online grooming, go to the [NCA-CEOP](#) site where you can quickly report it.

If you think your child might not yet be ready to communicate with people they don't know online, all games consoles feature parental and privacy settings which you can adjust so they can only communicate with people on their friends list - check online for information about your child's specific console.

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5 steps to protect your child online by Barnados:

<https://www.barnados.org.uk/blog/tips-to-keep-yourchild-safe-online>

<https://www.internetmatters.org>

**Positive Penguins...**

I would like to share with you the Positive Penguin app for children aged 8-12. It is designed to help them understand why they feel the way they do and help them challenge their negative thinking. Click here for more information

<http://positivepenguins.com>

There are lots of useful Online Safety resources on our school website at

<http://churchfieldsjunior.com/online-safety/>.

Best wishes

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