

Online Safety

The internet provides vast opportunities for children to develop, both educationally and socially. As adults, it is important that we acknowledge these opportunities, maintaining an open mind and positive attitude when talking with your child about the internet.

Online Safety forms an important part of keeping children safe at Helen Allison School and as such we would like to share with you some useful advice and resources to help you consider how you can keep your family safer online at home.

Ground Rules

- Discuss with your children what they think is and isn't acceptable to do online, then add your own rules and boundaries to the list.
- Decide on what information should be kept private online, such as contact information, photos in school uniform, and agree rules for making and meeting online friends.
- Set clear boundaries relating to use of webcams, video chat, live streaming and live voice on different devices; even when children are talking to people they already know, they can still experience risks.
- Explore how to create strong passwords and discuss how to keep passwords safe, for example not sharing them with their friends or using the same password for several accounts.
- You might find it helpful to write 'ground rules' down as a visual reminder. See a template 'family agreement' at: www.childnet.com/resources/family-agreement
- Remember these are whole family rules, so consider your own use of the internet and lead by example. Think about how much time you spend online and consider the information you are sharing on your social networks about your children and who can see it.
- Share quality time together. Consider nominating 'tech-free' areas or times, such as your child's bedroom or dinner time, where you can give each other undivided attention and share offline experiences, like reading a book together.

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- Install antivirus software and secure your internet connection.
- Make the most of the parental controls on your children's internet enabled devices and games consoles to help restrict access to inappropriate content. They can also help you manage how much time your child spends online.
- Do your research and select the tools which are most suitable to you, your child and the technology in your home. Find more information on parental controls at:
 - www.internetmatters.org
 - www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/a-parents-guide
- Set up filters on internet search engines to limit the likelihood of your children accidentally coming across inappropriate content when searching online.
- Ensure your child understands that parental controls are in place to protect them, not restrict them; some children will actively work around parental controls if they feel constrained without knowing why.
- Read any parental guidance and safety recommendations for games, apps or websites **before** allowing your child to use them.

Websites to visit for more information:

[Online Safety Tips for Parents - Be Internet Legends](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.saferinternet.org.uk

www.parentinfo.org

www.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety