

OUR ONLINE SAFETY CURRICULUM

Term 2: Our online safety theme this term is 'Online Bullying.' We will be discuss and describe appropriate ways to behave towards other people and why this is important. In classes, we will think carefully about how we speak to others online through chats and posts, as this might affect other people and their perception of us. We will discuss different ways bullying can happen and what that could look like but most importantly how we can prevent these situations escalating by getting help. We will explore strategies for effective reporting and intervention and how bullying and other aggressive behaviour relates to legislation.



ProjectEvolve

To support this, you could talk to your child about the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Reminding them to celebrate those differences. Maybe they could draw a picture of themselves, and another family member then discuss the things that are the same and different.

We will be celebrating...



This term we will be focusing on the 'T' in our online safety SMART rules.

Talk to your child about what they understand this to represent. What do they know?

BE SMART ONLINE

S SAFE Keep your personal information safe. When chatting or posting online don't give away things like your full name, password or home address. Remember personal information can be seen in images and videos you share too. Keep them safe to keep yourself safe.

M MEET Meeting up with someone you only know online, even a friend of a friend, can be dangerous as this person is still a stranger. If someone you only know online ever asks you to meet up, for personal information or for photos/videos of you then tell an adult straight away and report them together on www.thinkuknow.co.uk

A ACCEPTING Think carefully before you click on or open something online (e.g. links, adverts, friend requests, photos) as you never know where they may lead to or they may contain viruses. Do not accept something if you are unsure of who the person is or what they've sent you.

R RELIABLE You cannot trust everything you see online as some things can be out of date, inaccurate or not entirely true. To find reliable information compare at least three different websites, check in books and talk to someone about what you have found.

T TELL Tell a trusted adult if something or someone ever makes you feel upset, worried or confused. This could be if you or someone you know is being bullied online. There are lots of people who will be able to help you like your teachers, parents, carers or contact Childline - 0800 11 11 or www.childline.org.uk

BE SMART WITH A HEART Remember to always be smart with a heart by being kind and respectful to others online. Make the internet a better place by helping your friends if they are worried or upset by anything that happens online.

WWW.CHILDNET.COM





An new era for internet safety is coming!

The Online Safety Bill is receiving Royal Assent which means that many of provisions and laws will be implemented in two months time:

- “the Act makes social media companies keep the internet safe for children and give adults more choice over what they see online”.
- “Ofcom will immediately begin work on tackling illegal content and protecting children’s safety”.

This new Bill ‘allows children and adults more control over the content they see online, and for stronger action to be taken against online harm.’

Find out more using this link: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/online-safety-bill-becomes-law>



Some tips about technology from NOS...

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, facts and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about X

AGE RESTRICTION 13+

In October 2022, the enormously popular social media network Twitter was purchased by tech tycoon Elon Musk. That sparked a host of changes to the platform – not all which have been received positively by its fans. The alterations have continued with each passing month, many of them raising online safety concerns among the 330 million users of Twitter (now rebranded as simply X). With further adjustments reportedly in the pipeline, X has attracted more than its usual share of controversy and caution in recent times.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

A BLOCK ON BLOCKING

X has announced plans to remove its blocking feature. Previously, this stopped other users from viewing your profile or sending you direct messages, while also hiding their posts from your feed. Only this latter function will now remain. The decision has been criticised by some members, who feel that blocking (in its current form) protects them from X users who promote abuse and hatred.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Many of X's less age-appropriate posts can feature anything from extreme political views to pornography. While comments marked as 18+ are restricted from non-members, it's still fairly easy to stumble across this material accidentally. X's new 'For You' page also shows content from accounts that a user doesn't already follow, meaning that almost anything could end up on a child's feed.

LIMITED REPORTING FEATURES

X offers a premium membership, with some functionality (such as controlling who can view and reply to your posts). Increasingly being made exclusive to those who pay the subscription fee, several commentators have speculated that X could one day become an exclusively paid-for service, with access to accounts being revoked for anyone unwilling or unable to take out a subscription.

VERIFICATION FOR SALE

Historically, Twitter's moderators granted account verification: a blue tick next to their username. One of X's earliest changes was to place verification behind a paywall; this caused the number of celebrity impersonators to rise and left no way to distinguish, say, a legitimate influencer from a copycat fake account seeking to exploit other users.

BLUE TICK SALE

Advice for Parents & Carers

PROTECT PRIVACY

Unsavory characters may try to gain access to a young person's X account – either to view their posts and gather information on them, or to completely take control of it. To minimise risk, ensure the account has a strong password and enable the 'Protect Your Posts' feature (via the account settings), so that strangers can't view your child's posts without first being approved as a follower.

DON'T RISE TO THE BAIT

To gain more views and followers, some X users post deliberately inflammatory comments on sensitive topics such as race, sexual orientation and gender issues. Many young people could find this appealing. Emphasise that, if your child encounters someone spreading hate on X, it's best not to give that person what they want: an argument. Ignore them, mute their account and move on.

STAY ALERT FOR IMPOSTERS

Make sure your child understands that X's blue ticks no longer guarantee the identity of anyone on the platform. While it might be exciting if a celebrity liked your child's post, it could just as easily be an imposter with malicious intentions. If your child's not 100% sure that an X user actually is who they claim to be, advise them to set on the side of caution and avoid interacting with that account.

ONLY FOLLOW TRUSTED ACCOUNTS

Using the 'Following' tab on X helps to ensure that the only content your child sees has come from accounts they've chosen to follow; this should reduce the chance of them inadvertently being exposed to harmful, violent or explicit content. Show your child how to 'Protect Your Posts' feature (via the account settings), so that strangers can't view your child's posts without first being approved as a follower.

BE READY TO TAKE ACTION

If your child suffers harassment on the platform or becomes the target of a scam, you should consider deactivating their account entirely. Recently, X's safety features have been criticised for allegedly failing to protect users' wellbeing – so if your child is being subjected to abusive messages or similar mistreatment on the platform, it might be prudent to remove them from X altogether.

Meet Our Expert

Hayal Coombes is Editor in Chief of parenting and experts site, Dorle.com and has worked in the gaming media for around four years. Always eager to test out the latest apps, games and online trends, her view is generally on understanding the importance of online safety, writing mostly about tech and fitness. Her articles have been published on influencer sites including iStock.com.

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#WakeUpWednesday

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