Follow the GOLDen Rules

Ground Rules

- Discuss and agree as a family how the internet will be used in your house at a level that is appropriate to your children's ability and age.
  - 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. Find more information about live streaming at: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/live-streaming-responding-to-the-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 'grounds 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.

Online Safety

- Install antivirus software and secure your internet connection.
  - More advice on online security can be accessed at www.getsafeonline.org/
- 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.
    - The following guides provide balanced information to help you make informed decisions:
    - www.net-aware.org.uk,
    - www.askaboutgames.com/
    - www.commonsensemedia.org

o Be aware that parental control tools and filters are not always 100% effective and you can't rely on them alone to protect your child online. It's important to monitor and supervise your child's online activities; where possible access should take place in a family area, but this will depend on the age and ability of your child.

Learning

The internet provides vast opportunities for children, both educationally and socially, especially during the current situation. As adults, it is important that we acknowledge the many wonderful and positive opportunities the internet provides for our children; we just need to steer them in the right direction.

o Ensure you make appropriate checks on anyone online offering educational support to you and your child; whilst many people will be acting with good intentions, it's important that we are all vigilant when children are using the internet and act together to ensure they are protected from anyone who may pose a risk to them.

o Encourage your child's creativity by teaching them how to take photos or make videos safely; these can be used to make a collage or be shared with family and friends.

o Being online should be a sociable activity; keep your devices in a communal area and take it in turns to choose a game or video that the whole family can enjoy together. Why not take it in turns the good old fashioned way to beat the highest scorer?!

o Create learning opportunities; just because they're not at school, doesn't mean children can't continue to learn new things. There are a number of educational apps and resources available online or simply encourage your children to safely research different things online.

Dialogue

- Maintain an open mind and positive attitude when talking with your child about the internet. Take an active interest in your child's online activities and engage in their online world with them.
    - Ask your child which games, apps, websites or tools they like to use and why; playing together with your child can often open opportunities to discuss safe behaviour online.
    - Ask your child if they know where to go for help; do they know where to find safety advice or information about privacy settings and know how to report or block users on their games and websites.
- Make sure your child knows that they should come to you, or another trusted adult, for help if something happens online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable.
    o Talk to your child about being kind online and encourage them not to retaliate or reply to cyberbullying and to keep any evidence; you may need to show your child how to take screenshots on their device.
    o Have a look at the following links for useful tips on talking to children about online safety in an age appropriate way:
        - www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/have-a-conversation
        - www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/onlinesafety/talking-your-child-staying-safe-online/

Websites to visit for more information:

Think U Know: www.thinkuknow.co.uk

The National Crimes Agency Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP) have a website which is suitable for children aged 5-16 and a section just for parents/carers with advice and information.

NSPCC: www.net-aware.org.uk and www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety

The NSPCC have produced resources for parents, including Net Aware, a tool which reviews some of the most popular apps. The website has helpful advice for parents about issues such as online grooming, 'sexting' and cyberbullying. They also provide a helpline for parents: 0808 8005002

ChildLine: www.childline.org.uk

The ChildLine website has a wide range of info and advice on both online and offline safety.

There is info about online gaming, grooming which can be shared with children. They also provide a helpline for children: 0800 1111

UK Safer Internet Centre: www.saferinternet.org.uk

UK Safer Internet Centre provides a wide variety of advice and guidance to help you discuss online safety with your children. There are useful checklists for privacy settings on social networks and suggestions to consider before buying devices for your children.

Childnet: www.childnet.com

Childnet has resources, including videos and storybooks, to help you discuss online safety with your children. It includes advice on setting up parental controls, cyberbullying and setting up a family agreement for safer internet use.

Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org

Internet Matters bring you all the information you need to keep your children safe online. It has a tool which guides you through how to set up parental controls on all the different devices in your home to protect your children.

Parent Info: www.parentinfo.org

Parent Info provides information to parents and carers about a wide range of subject matter, from difficult topics about sex, relationships and the internet or body image and peer pressure to broader parenting topics like 'how much sleep do teenagers need?'

BBC "Own It" Website and App: www.bbc.com/ownit and www.bbc.com/ownit/takecontrol/own-it-app

The BBC Own It Website aims to help children aged 8-13 "be the boss" of their online lives. The website has a range of videos and activities to explore with children and even has a helpful app which can be installed on children's devices to help them use technology responsibility

If you are worried

Be alert to any changes in behaviour, language and attitude in your child that may indicate that something is upsetting them online, for example, if your child starts to withdraw from family and friends or becomes secretive about their online behaviour.

If your child discloses an online issue or concern to you, ensure you **listen** to them.

- o Avoid being angry or blaming them; reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- o Take their concerns seriously; even if you feel they are overreacting or their worries are unfounded, it is important not to dismiss their feelings as this can prevent them from coming to you for help again in the future.
- o Support your child to report and block people online who may have tried to contact them or have sent them nasty or inappropriate messages or content. o Help your child to report to the site or service where the concern happened.

    Depending on the issue, you can report specific concerns online at:
    - Inappropriate content: https://reportharmfulcontent.com/
    - Terrorist content: https://act.campaign.gov.uk/
    - Child Sexual Abuse Imagery: https://www.iwf.org.uk/ -   Online Child Sexual Abuse: https://ceop.police.uk/