April 2025 Online Safety Update

This month's Online Safety theme is "AI and Pseudo-Images."

Recently, media stories have highlighted the troubling use of AI to create explicit content, including instances involving public figures including Oprah Winfrey and Emma Watson (who played Hermione in Harry Potter).AI is an abbreviation for Artificial Intelligence and in simple terms, it means when technology is used to gather lots and lots of information on, and images of someone, and uses that to then create highly realistic images and videos that mimic someone's likeness without their consent.

Pseudo-images refer to computer-generated visuals that resemble photographs or videos. Tools such as photo editing software, deepfake apps, and AI text-to-image generators are often employed to create these images by combining or altering existing visuals.

Why does this matter? Unfortunately, there have been cases where abusive individuals exploit images of children found online to create inappropriate content. This highlights the importance of being cautious whenever we share images of our children, as we cannot always predict who might access them.

Beyond pornography, some people also create harmful memes or misleading news using images of children, including those with disabilities. The other risk is that most people would struggle to recognise the difference between an AI-created image of someone and a real image of the real person. For adults, we may eventually work it out once we realise that the person would not usually say or do those things but children with SEND may lack the ability to spot those subtle differences. This means they might be vulnerable to 'fake news' or false information, perhaps being manipulated into believing a certain idea, or buying a product because they believe it has been endorsed by their favourite celebrity.

If you discover that your child's image has been misused, report it to the relevant social media platform. If the issue isn't resolved promptly, you can escalate it via reportharmfulcontent.com.

As always, if you have concerns about online safety regarding your child, please reach out to us for support. The pastoral team at The Meadows is available at 0121 569 7089.