

January 2025 Online Safety Update

This Month's Online Safety Theme: 'Social Media Spring Clean'

While the nights are still long and we might have made some new year resolutions, it can be a great time to give your child's devices a thorough 'spring clean'! While this might mean a physical clean (as laptops and devices can be home for many germs!); it is important to ensure you are aware of – and happy with – what your child is accessing, who your child is communicating with, what they are buying and which sites they use online.

While they may not have their 'own' device, if your child uses the internet in any capacity, you could take just five minutes to:

- Review their search history together, or encourage them to share what they typically look for online. This is a valuable opportunity to ensure they are accessing safe, accurate, and helpful information.
- Check their friends and contacts list – do these people seem to be safe? Do they know them online or in real life? What are their interactions like?
- Examine the suitability of the online games they play – are there any harmful themes?
- Assess what personal information they have posted online. Could they be easily identified, or is their personal information at risk of being stolen?
- Check any images or videos they have shared. Are these safe, and who has access to them? Your child may wish to choose to remove old or embarrassing photos, even if you, as their parents, like them. Try to respect your child's wishes.

Discuss with your child the idea of starting fresh for the new year, and consider deleting anything that could pose a risk. You can assist them in updating their passwords or closing any old social media or gaming accounts. This proactive approach will empower them to take control of their online presence.

As always, if you are worried about online safety issues affecting your child, you can always contact us for support. The pastoral team at The Meadows can be contacted on 0121 569 7089.

