Dear Parents and Carers, welcome to March’s Safeguarding letter

This letter is focussed on supporting parents around ‘video-chats’

Top Tips:

Always encourage your child to consider who they are chatting to and what they may be sharing with them. What you share on camera (including things in the background) can give away personal information. Remind them that webcam or live video footage can also be recorded by someone and then potentially shared and uploaded anywhere online

Young people may receive chat requests or invites from people they don’t know. Encourage them to think carefully about who they choose to chat to and why others might want to video chat with them. Discuss with your child the risk that the person they see on camera may not be the person they are actually speaking to. If a site or service has privacy settings, encourage your child to always make use of them to control who can contact them

Some video chat services allow users to chat to and see strangers online and may put them at risk of seeing pornographic or violent content or sexual behaviour on camera. This content should always be reported to the website/service and be blocked via blocking tools if available.

People may use video chat to convince a young person to take part in a dangerous dare, to appear naked on camera or to perform sexually suggestive acts. This can then be recorded by the watcher and potentially be used to threaten or blackmail the person in the video. Make sure your child knows that if someone ever asks them to do or say anything on camera that makes them feel uncomfortable then they can say no, end the chat and tell you, or another adult they trust. Remind them that it is never too late to tell someone. They should also block or report a user to the website/service if the harassment continues.

If a young person has been the subject of inappropriate sexual contact or approach by another person via webcam or other forms of online communication then it is vital to tell a trusted adult and to report it to the police via the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre CEOPS.

This is an excellent family support page, just click on the title  [‘](https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/have-a-conversation)[Let’s talk about life online](https://www.childnet.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Lets-talk-about-life-online.pdf)

Should you have any concerns about how best to support your child to navigate their way through the world of social media, please do not hesitate to contact me [deputy@westlancs.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:deputy@westlancs.lancs.sch.uk) or your child’s class teacher or trusted adult.

Kind Regards Andrew Grant -DSL