

This week has been Safer Internet Week at Shire Oak Primary School and our children have been learning how to stay safe online.

At Shire Oak, we know how important staying safe is, and we know you're always keen to promote ways to stay safe at home, too. Safe and responsible use of the internet is something which is growing and growing in importance – we hear so many shocking stories in the media – so please do take an active approach at home to promote your child's online safety.

First of all, are you aware that social networking sites such as Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and Facebook have a minimum age requirement of 13? (For some sites, it's older.)

E-safety is a key part of our curriculum for both Computing and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE). Read the [National Curriculum for Computing](#) and the overview of our [PSHCE curriculum](#).

As teachers and parents, we're aware of the ways in which the use of social media, online gaming and the internet have become part of young people's lives. We embrace the educational and social benefits of these new technologies and encourage responsible internet use. We are also increasingly aware of the potential dangers and opportunities for misuse these technologies offer. Key to promoting online safety is open and honest discussions about the sites we're using and the ways we're using them – keep the dialogue open with your children about their internet use.

The following list contains lots of ideas and resources to help you to promote online safety – tell us if you know any more good resources. These links are always on [our website's online safety page](#).

The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has published a short, really helpful [guide for parents and carers whose children are using social media](#). The guide includes practical tips about the use of safety and privacy features on apps and platforms, as well as conversation prompts to help families begin talking about online safety. It also contains pointers to further advice and support.

A family agreement is a great way to start a conversation with your whole family about how you all use the internet and discuss together how to behave in a positive way when online at home, at school or at a friend's house. To support parents in creating a family agreement, [Childnet International have put together some free advice and a family agreement template](#).

The [Anti-Bullying Alliance](#) has joined forces with internet security company McAfee to produce a series of videos on the topic, looking at [how and why cyberbullying occurs](#); [advice for children and young people to protect themselves](#) and [tips to pass on to parents](#) about steps they can take at home. This [video](#) from [Common Sense Media](#) gives students five basic rules for engaging with social media, including switching on privacy settings and turning off location tracking features that harvest data (parents might be interested to watch this [Guardian video](#) which explores this in more detail).

[Common Sense](#) has also created videos explaining how the most popular apps and sites work, so if you have ever found yourself wondering what [Snapchat](#), [Vine](#) and [Instagram](#) are, these are a good place to start your education.

For younger children (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2), there are a number of picture books available online (and in print), including the tale of [Digiduck, who shares a nasty picture of a friend](#), and [Smartie the penguin, who runs into trouble with his new computer](#).

The ever-brilliant [Horrible Histories](#) tackles similar themes in a sidelong way, with Lady Jane Grey clicking a dodgy link and getting spammed; a prudish [Victorian lying about his age and stumbling across scandalous content](#) (ladies without gloves); and Guy Fawkes [learning a valuable lesson about privacy settings as his plot fizzles out](#).

**Other resources are:**

- [www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers](http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers) This site provides a whole host of useful ways to keep your child safe, with useful pages of advice, key advice, hot topics and tips for discussing online safety.
- [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org) Lots of useful advice for parents on a range of issues including cyber bullying, online reputations and online grooming. There is also a link to a useful 'guide for parents'.
- [www.parentinfo.org](http://www.parentinfo.org) Useful articles on a range of current e-safety issues and new apps and websites including Minecraft, Snapchat and ooVoo. New articles are added regularly.
- [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk) The official site of the National Crime Agency's CEOP (formerly the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre), containing advice and useful information and a link for reporting online abuse, exploitation or inappropriate images.
- <http://www.saferinternet.org> More links and advice for parents and children including resources linked to Safer Internet Day.
- [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) NSPCCs own website with lots of safety advice including video to watch with your children and a link to their work with O2.
- [www.mumsnet.com](http://www.mumsnet.com) Lots of e-safety advice including a section specifically for pre-school and primary.