

Online Safety Monthly Bulletin

Edition 1

Parents and Carers



Miss Hyland – Computing Coordinator

Online Safety Coffee Morning – 12th November

Alan Mackenzie, a well-known Online Safety Specialist, is visiting our school on the 12th November.

Parents and carers of Whitehall Junior School students are invited to join us for a coffee morning where Alan will be updating us on key information about keeping children safe online.

We hope you will join us and share your own experiences so that we may best support the children together.

9:00 - 9:45, Tuesday 12th November

Please wait by the green front gate after dropping your child off in the morning. We shall then meet in the Studio room.

Online Gaming

Many children use game consoles to access the internet. This can make it harder for parents and carers to understand and monitor their use.

This article from Childnet explains some of the risks that can arise through console gaming and gives some suggestions of how you can start conversations with your children about their gaming habits.

Advice can be found at:

<https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/online-gaming/>

Contact Us

If you have any concerns or questions regarding online safety or your own child's well-being, please email the Whitehall Junior School office on: office@whitehalljunior.org

Visit our parent [Online Safety](#) webpage for previous Online Safety Bulletins and further information.

This issue...

- 12th November, Coffee morning
- Online Gaming

Top Tips

- Set up phones, consoles, tablets and computers with parental control settings.
- Have open and honest conversations with your child about what they are accessing and what is acceptable.
- Guide them to appropriate games and activities.
- Follow age rating guidance.
- Keep up to date with trends through [our newsletter](#) and [online safety website page](#).

Helpful Links

CEOP – Child Exploitation and Online Protection



Internet Matters



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING AND REVIEWING PARENTAL CONTROLS

Phones and computers are essential parts of children's lives, but with unfettered internet access comes a multitude of risks. While not foolproof, parental controls can help with this; filtering out inappropriate content, limiting the ability to spend real money, capping screen time and generally making devices safer for young people.

1 KNOW THE TYPES



While parental control software can apply to an entire device, it also pays to know about options on individual apps and websites. TikTok, for example, has Restricted Mode for limiting unsuitable videos, while Snapchat lets you keep an eye on who a child has been talking to. Check the settings of any new app young users want and review your options.

2 COVER ALL DEVICES



Knowing what parental controls cover is crucial, as remaining unaware can run the risk of 'blind spots' in the device's safety measures. Controls on a phone will apply whenever a child's on that device, for instance – but you'll want to ensure that parental controls are set up across any laptops, tablets and potentially other phones, too. Remember, buying a new device may require you to set everything up again.

3 DON'T NEGLECT SHARED TECH



While children often have their own devices, if you have a shared family computer or tablet, for example, you'll need to make sure that's not a weak point in your safety measures. Parental controls for your router, that cover everything connected to your Wi-Fi, are one option – or you can just be thorough with each device and online account. Just ensure that unprotected laptops, phones and tablets are password locked.

4 CONSIDER TIME CONTROLS



Even safe internet content can be harmful if it's viewed in excess. Not only are certain apps addictive enough to distract from other duties, but late-night usage can badly disrupt sleep, which is vital for adolescent brain development. Most parental controls offer some kind of time limit – either blocking access at certain hours or capping the number of minutes it can be used per day – so be sure to consider these.

5 BLOCK APP SPENDING



Seemingly free apps can sometimes include microtransactions: purchases that can be made using real money. While plenty of developers implement these fairly, some companies attempt to manipulate children into paying for additional features or content, which can soon add up to hundreds of pounds if a child gets carried away. Thankfully, iOS and Android's settings allow you to block in-app purchases, preventing any huge bills.

6 NO CONTROLS ARE PERFECT



Parental controls can be very useful, but they're far from infallible. Some unpleasant content can and unfortunately will slip through the net, so remember that setting up these measures isn't a substitute for taking an active interest in young people's digital lives. Talk to them, and make sure they're aware of the risks of the internet as well as its benefits.

7 MIND THE GAPS



There'll undoubtedly be some gaps in parental controls, no matter how thorough you intend to be. For example, if you use router-level parental controls, bear in mind that these won't cover WiFi outside the home. For that reason, it's important to keep an open dialogue with children about the many unpalatable aspects of social media and the web.

8 KEEP THINGS SECURE



Some children can react poorly to parental controls and feel tempted to circumvent them. It's important to ensure that the passwords to these settings remain unknown to children, otherwise they can easily modify the restrictions without you knowing. Similarly, make sure your phone isn't left unlocked and unattended.

9 REVIEW CONTROLS REGULARLY



Parental controls shouldn't be a 'set and forget' deal. Not only can parental summaries provide you with a frequent overview of a child's digital life – to let you spot any warning signs – but companies often add new features, and some of these may be useful to enable (or disable). Regularly checking in ensures that if a child has found a way to wiggle out of the controls, you'll be the first to know.

10 KNOW WHEN TO LET UP



The parental controls you install on a computer for a seven-year-old probably wouldn't be appropriate for a child of 16 – and as young people approach adulthood, bubble wrapping the internet can do more harm than good. Consider relaxing parental controls as children get older, so they can learn to manage the risks of the internet themselves, without so many training wheels.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist and the former deputy editor of technology and internet culture website Alphr. Now freelance, he has contributed articles to publications including the New Statesman, CNET, the Evening Standard, Wired, Rock Paper Shotgun, Gizmodo, Pocket Gamer, Stuff, T3, PC Pro, Macworld, TechRadar and Trusted Reviews.



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