

Alcester Academy



Online Safety Bulletin

Keeping Your Child Safe Online

Welcome to our first E-Safety Bulletin. The internet is an amazing resource for learning, connecting, and entertainment. However, just like the real world, there are potential risks online that we need to be aware of to keep our children safe. This newsletter aims to introduce the concept of E-Safety and provide resources to help you support your child in navigating the online world confidently.

What is E-Safety?

E-Safety stands for 'electronic safety.' It's all about being aware of the risks associated with using technology and developing positive online habits. This includes aspects such as:

- **Cyberbullying:** Unfortunately, online bullying can be a reality. It's important for children to know how to identify and report it.
- **Privacy:** Understanding how personal information is shared online and setting strong privacy settings is crucial.
- **Inappropriate Content:** The internet is vast, and some content may not be suitable for young people. Knowing how to filter content is essential.
- **Online Scams:** Protecting children from falling victim to online scams is an ongoing challenge.

Throughout these termly newsletters, topics such as these will be outlined and discussed in more detail.

Cyberbullying

What is it?

Cyberbullying has had a considerable amount of coverage in the national press over recent years. Unlike bullying, cyberbullying can follow a victim wherever they go, through social media, games platforms, or through messaging apps. It can take many forms, including threats, harassment, rejection, manipulation or publicly posting information about another person. Ofcom's children and media use report shows 84% of 8-17 year olds have been subjected to cyberbullying in one form or another. Cyberbullying can dramatically affect the mental health of young people, and the potential effects can be long lasting.

How to help prevent Cyberbullying?

The impact of cyberbullying can be devastating, so starting talking to your child as early as possible about online safety can help prevent it from happening. Being aware of & setting parental controls is an effective first step as this can help prevent who has contact with your son or daughter, and who can contact them. Keeping up to date with understanding new trends and apps is also another helpful way to tackle cyberbullying. This will assist you and your child to be aware of what to watch out for online.

Dealing with Cyberbullying

If your son or daughter experiences cyberbullying from another pupil please do

get in contact with staff at Alcester Academy to report this. It may be necessary to block or report people if the cyberbullying is from unknown people online.

What can you do at home?

Here are some practical tips to help keep your child safe online:

- **Open Communication:** Talk to your child about their online activity. Encourage them to come to you with any concerns.
- **Set Boundaries:** Establish clear rules for internet usage, including screen time limitations and appropriate websites/apps.
- **Privacy Settings:** Review privacy settings together on social media platforms and other online accounts.
- **Parental Controls:** Many devices and platforms offer parental controls to restrict access to certain content. Explore these options.
- **Be a Role Model:** Demonstrate positive online behavior yourself. Avoid online arguments and be mindful of what you share.

Apps to be Aware Of:

- **Social Media:** Platforms like Facebook (13+), Instagram (13+), and Snapchat (13+) are popular, but can expose children to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and privacy concerns.
- **Messaging Apps:** WhatsApp (now 13+) allows for easy communication but can also facilitate cyberbullying and contact with strangers. Kik (13+) has a history of attracting predators due to its anonymity features.
- **Gaming Platforms:** While many games are age-appropriate, some, like Roblox (13+ recommended), allow user-generated content that may not be suitable for younger audiences.
- **Live Streaming Apps:** Platforms like Twitch (13+) allow users to broadcast themselves playing games, but can expose them to inappropriate language and content.

Remember, age restrictions can be bypassed. It's important to be aware of the apps your child is using and have open conversations about online safety.

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To find out more detailed information about specific social media apps, click on this link here provided by internetmatters.org, and view specific parental guides and advice.

[Social Media Privacy Guides](#)

Advice on Inappropriate Content:

The internet provides a huge wealth of information, easily accessible by any internet enabled device. However, this easy access, can result in children mistakenly encountering inappropriate content. This video link, also from internetmatters.org, provides details & advice on encountering inappropriate content on the internet; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzDAECIQELg>

School Support:

Our school takes E-Safety seriously. We integrate online safety lessons into the curriculum and provide resources for students. During years 7 & 8 all pupils complete an online safety course provided by the Online Safety Alliance. This organisation also provides a parental course, consisting of a short video, and a series of interactive questions to complete. Details of how to access this online course are included at the end of this newsletter.

Other Resources:

- **National Online Safety Centre (NOSC):**
<https://nationalcollege.com/categories/online-safety>



- **UK Safer Internet Centre:**
<https://saferinternet.org.uk/>



- **NSPCC Online Safety:**
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

NSPCC

Together, we can create a safe and positive online experience for our children.

This is just the first of our E-Safety Newsletters.
We will continue to provide you with updates and resources throughout the year.

If you have any immediate concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school safeguarding team.

Thank you for your support!



Details from the Online Safety Alliance
about its parental online course and enrolment
can be found in the attachment called
*'OSA Parental Course—
Safeguarding Bulletin June 2024'*