

Red Oaks Primary School Safeguarding

Newsletter December 2025

At Red Oaks we are committed to ensuring a culture of safeguarding in our school and it is paramount in all we do. It is so important for children to learn about how to keep themselves safe in different situations and we have developed our own safeguarding curriculum to ensure all of our children have a good understanding of how to stay safe.

For more information about safeguarding at Red Oaks, please see the website:

<https://www.redoaks.org/page/?title=Safeguarding&pid=12>



Keeping Children Safe Online this Christmas



As the festive season approaches, many children will be spending more time online or receiving new devices such as tablets, smartphones or gaming consoles. While technology can be exciting and educational, it's important to ensure children use it safely and responsibly.



Top Tips for a Safe and Happy Holiday

Research before you buy – check if the device, app, or game is age-appropriate.

Websites like [Common Sense Media](#) provide helpful reviews.

Set up devices in advance – before gifting, charge the device, explore its features, and activate parental controls. [Internet Matters](#) has helpful parent guides

Create a family agreement – agree on rules for screen time, online safety, and respectful behaviour. Most devices allow you to set screentime limits and downtime to help establish healthy screen time habits. You can find an example [here](#).

Talk about online safety – encourage open conversations about what your child does online. [NSPCC Online Safety](#) provides useful tips for parents and carers

Stay alert to risks – be aware of potential dangers such as cyberbullying, inappropriate content, unwanted contact from others and scams. The [Think U Know](#) website has helpful online safety advice from CEOP.

24 APPS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

This list is not exhaustive, and will be updated each year to reflect new risks and dangers

THESE APPS CAN EASILY BE USED AS GROOMING TOOLS BY ONLINE PREDATORS LOOKING TO MEET UP & SEXUALLY ABUSE CHILDREN. (UPDATED 2021)



FACEBOOK



FACEBOOK allows you to connect with others and share comments, photos and videos. You can add friends, write on people's pages and posts, join groups and play games.

SNAPCHAT



SNAPCHAT Is one of the most popular apps in recent years. Whilst the app promises that photo's, videos and stories disappear, others can take screenshots of private photo's.

INSTAGRAM



INSTAGRAM Kids are creating fake accounts to hide content from their parents, according to police. Messages are also deleted once a user leaves a conversation.

WHATSAPP



WHATSAPP allows you to send messages, images and videos in 121 and group chats with your contacts. You can choose to share your live location for up to eight hours with one contact or a group.

KIDSCHAT



KIDSCAT.NET is a free online messaging app for children. You can talk to people you don't know on public forums and via private message. You can access the site as a guest.

SKYPE



SKYPE is a platform and app that lets you make audio and video calls to other people around the world. You can also send instant messages.

WHISPER



WHISPER is an anonymous social media app that promotes sharing personal secrets with strangers, (new people). It reveals a users location so people can meet up

CALCULATOR %



CALCULATOR % is only one of SEVERAL social media apps disguised as a calculator, the app is actually a secret photo vault to hide photos, videos, files and browser history.

HOT ON NOT



HOT ON NOT Strangers rate a user's 'attractiveness' with the aim of real-world meet ups in your local area.

ASK.FM



ASK.FM An app where users can anonymously ask questions and receive answers. The app has been featured in a number of cyber bullying cases.

YUBO



YUBO Similar to Tinder, the app is designed to allow teens to flirt with each other.

KIK MESSAGING Kik



KIK MESSAGING Kik is a messaging app that allows content normally filtered on a home computer.

BURN BOOK



BURN BOOK Anonymous rumours can be posted about people through audio messages, texts and photos.

WISHBONE



WISHBONE This app allows users to compare kids and rate them on a scale.

GRINDR



GRINDR Is a dating app geared towards gay, bisexual and transgender people. The app allows people to chat, share and meet up in person based on a GPSS location.

SKOUT



SKOUT is a location based dating app and website. Whilst people under 17 are unable to share private photo's, Children can easily create fake accounts.

MEET ME



MEET ME Is a dating social media app that allows users to connect with people based on geographic proximity. The app encourages people to meet in person.

TIK TOK



TIK TOK Is one of the most popular apps in recent years used for sharing short videos with very limited privacy controls users are vulnerable to explicit material.

TELLOYMN



TELLOYMN anonymous messenger app. It calls itself "the most honest place on the internet." Age controls are inconsistent and sexual explicit material can be found.

Zoomerang



Zoomerang Is a popular app that looks like a harmless messaging app however it allows private anonymous messaging and is location enabled.

BUMBLE



BUMBLE is a location based dating app and website. Whilst people under 17 are unable to share private photo's, Children can easily create fake accounts

FACEBOOK MESSENGER



FACEBOOK MESSENGER Is one of the most popular message apps in the world. It has already heavily been used by predators and the end-to end encryption will make it even more unsafe.

BADOO



BADOO is a location based dating app and website. Whilst people under 17 are unable to share private photo's, Children can easily create fake accounts.

OMEGLE



OMEGLE is a video chat website where users are matched randomly with strangers.



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SETTING UP NEW DEVICES FOR CHILDREN

At Christmas, millions of lucky children will be excitedly ripping the wrapping off new phones, tablets, computers or consoles. However, in the rush to let young ones enjoy their shiny gadgets, many parents neglect to set these devices up safely – increasing the chances of children going online and stumbling across adult content, making expensive downloads or installing unsuitable apps. A little time configuring the device properly can save a lot of anguish later. Here are our top tips to ensure that a dream gift on Christmas morning doesn't turn into a nightmare by New Year.

PASSCODES FOR IPHONE/IPAD

If your child's getting their own iPhone or iPad, you can set parental controls that make it difficult for them to access inappropriate content or download expensive apps. Once the device is set up, go to the Settings app and tap Screen Time, then select Use Screen Time Passcode and enter a passcode. Keep it to yourself so your child can't switch the protection off.

SCREEN TIME SETTINGS ON IPHONE/IPAD

Once you've set a Screen Time Passcode, you can adjust various safety settings. You could, for example, only allow communication with people from the Contacts app, place restrictions on App Store purchases and apply age limits to movies, music and web content. There are many more protective options available within the Screen Time settings section.

FAMILY LINK FOR ANDROID

Parents can manage Android phones and tablets, as well as Google Chromebooks, through Google's Family Link app. This gives your child some independence (and their own Google account) but lets parents monitor which apps are being used, set limits on content and ensure that parental permission is required to install apps. Look for Family Link in the Google Play Store.

ADD A CHILD TO FAMILY LINK

The easiest way to add a child's device to Family Link is to set it up with its own Google account. It's a good idea to create this before they use their new phone, tablet or Chromebook. Once they're logged in, open the Family Link app on your phone, press '+' in the top right and add a new family member using their Google account details. Then follow the on-screen instructions.

FAMILY SHARING ON A MAC

Families using a Mac get similar screen time options to iPhone and iPad users. Again, if you're setting up a Mac for a child, make yourself the main admin and add them as a user. This is handled through Apple's Family Sharing service, which not only allows you to put controls on child accounts but share apps and other purchases with them too. Search 'family sharing' at <https://support.apple.com>.

PLAYSTATION PARENTAL CONTROLS

With parental controls for the PS5, you'll need a PlayStation Network account (as the 'family manager') and the child will need their own account, which they should sign in with on the console. This all needs to be set up in advance, so you might want to do it before the big day. Go to PlayStation.com and search 'family account' for instructions.

DISCUSS IT WITH YOUR CHILD

If you're planning to implement any kind of restriction or protection settings on your child's new device, we'd recommend having a discussion with your young one first about what these controls do, and what they are for. If you try to impose parental controls surreptitiously or with no advance warning, don't be surprised if your child tries to find a way around them.

SET AN ADMIN ON PCS

On Windows PCs and laptops, it's important not to let your child share a general user account or be the main admin on the device. If you're booting up a new family PC or a child's own device, set it up using your own account details and you'll become the admin by default. Then set up children with their own separate account: Settings > Accounts > Family & Other Users > Add Other User.

SET WINDOWS LIMITS

Once your child's account has been created, a parent admin can go back into the Family & Other Users menu and apply limits to it. These include restricting screen time, the type of games and apps that can be installed, web filters and more. Microsoft also includes reporting tools which, for example, can email you with a weekly summary of your child's activity on the device.

TREAT AN XBOX LIKE A PC

The same control settings you use for a PC can be used to apply parental controls on an Xbox. Again, once your child is signed into the Xbox with their own account, you can then monitor and regulate their activity from a PC or web browser. Microsoft's dashboard allows you to manage voice communication through the console, so you can limit who can contact your child, for example.

INSTALL XBOX FAMILY SETTINGS

If you don't have a PC, but your child does have an Xbox, it might be easier to use the Xbox Family Settings app for iPhone or Android. Here, you can restrict console screen time (particularly handy if the console is in a bedroom), restrict communication and monitor the types of game being played. There's also a feature where you can allocate spending money for games or in-game purchases.

STAY VIGILANT

It's important to remember that none of these methods is 100% foolproof. Nobody will ever invent flawless filters or parental controls – not least because what's unacceptable to some parents is perfectly acceptable to others. So although devices' parental controls will help to keep your child safe online, they work best side by side with good old-fashioned parental vigilance.

Meet Our Expert

Barry Collins has been a technology journalist and editor for more than 20 years, working for titles such as the *Sunday Times*, *Which?*, *PC Pro* and *Computeractive*. He's appeared regularly as a technology pundit on television and radio, including on *Newsnight*, *Radio 5 Live* and *ITV News at Ten*. He has two children and writes regularly about internet safety issues.



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Contact details – always keep us up to date!

It is vitally important that we have the correct contact details for every parent/carer. If you change your phone number, email address or move house, please let the school office know. We also need at least two emergency contacts for your child.

Telephone – 01793 493920

Email – admin@redoaks.org.uk

Our Safeguarding Team: If you have a concern about the safety or well-being of a child, please speak to one of our safeguarding team.



Becky Taylor
Designated
Safeguarding
Lead (DSL)



James Lee
Deputy
Designated
Safeguarding
Lead (DDSL)



Sara Smith
Deputy
Designated
Safeguarding
Lead (DDSL)



Eirian Painter
Deputy
Designated
Safeguarding
Lead (DDSL)

Useful contacts:

Contact Swindon (integrated front door for social services). If you have concerns about a child and want to speak to a social worker – 01793 464646 or email contactswindon@swindon.gov.uk

If you have concerns that a child is at immediate risk of harm, please call the police on 999
School Nursing Team – for support to help children with their physical, mental and emotional well-being and referring to other specialist agencies.

Tel – 01793 465050 or email snn@swindon.gov.uk

Online safety guidance for parents – <https://swgfl.org.uk/>

Finally, we would like to wish you and your families a joyful Christmas filled with peace, happiness, and special moments. May the holiday bring rest and laughter, and may the New Year be full of exciting opportunities for your children.

Thank you for being such an important part of our school community. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in January for another fantastic term!

