



# MALET LAMBERT SCHOOL

*E-Safety Advice for Parents and Carers*

(Citing content from [thinkuknow.co.uk](http://thinkuknow.co.uk) and [ceop.police.uk](http://ceop.police.uk))

# E-safety at Malet Lambert School

At Malet Lambert, we take our student's online safety very seriously.

We deliver e-safety education on a variety of subjects relevant to your child in ICT lessons, PSHCCEE lessons and in assemblies.

Our staff participate in regular training sessions to ensure we are fully updated on the continual developments in the online world, and are able to offer proper guidance to our pupils.

We also require all students to agree to follow the school's Student ICT Acceptable Use policy. This encompasses rules relating to e-safety, including only sending appropriate content, refraining from bullying via the internet and keeping personal information safe.



## Online Parenting

As your child grows and becomes more independent, it is only natural that they take this independence online. In our teenage years we explore, try new things and sometimes push boundaries and take risks, this is an essential part of growing up.

With all of the potential that the online world and new technology offers, young people now have access to huge opportunities. They use technology to express themselves, explore, and be creative; it has changed the way they communicate.

The internet has changed all of our lives, and your child has grown up during this change. Many of the things that confuse, baffle or even scare us, are part of the everyday for them. For many of us, this can all be a bit too much.

Whether you're a technophobe or a technophile, it's still likely that you'll be playing catch-up with the way your child is using the internet.

You might wonder whether what they are doing is safe, and you might also be thinking '*how can I be as good a parent online as I am offline?*'

# What is my child doing online?

## Socialising

Your child will be using services online to create a network of 'friends'. Social networking sites, like Facebook, encourage and enable your child to link with their friends so they can chat, keep up to date, share photos and videos... and their opinions of them!

To young people, their idea of an online 'friend' may be different to an offline 'friend'. Friends online might be your best mate, your entire school, friends of friends, people you meet gaming, or even just someone with a funny profile. Therefore, online 'friends' are likely to be a much larger group than friends in the real world - the larger the group of friends, the more people can see things about you.

### *My child is under 13, should they have a Facebook account?*

To comply with different legislation, Facebook and many other social networking sites, require users to be 13 and over in order to set-up an account.

However, we do know that increasing numbers of children are registering on sites like Facebook, by claiming to be older than they are.

Sites like Facebook enable children to share an incredible amount of information about themselves, have conversations with their friends and also potentially provide contact with people they don't know.

We understand however that it can be difficult to stop a child from registering to sites like this and that you can be concerned that they might set it up behind your back.

We believe you should be involved in your child's life online, and it is better that they use a site safely with your involvement, than hide their behaviour from you.

### **If your child is setting up a Facebook account, consider the following:**

- Help them set up their account – make sure that they don't put any unnecessary personal information.
- Don't make them any older than 13. Facebook have separate security settings in place for younger users
- Use your email address as the main contact – this way you can see the people who are 'friending', messaging and commenting on your child's profile.
- Talk through the privacy settings – go through the settings step-by-step.
- Set privacy settings to 'friends only' and ensure that the friends they have are ones they know and trust in the real world.

- Limit the amount of adult 'friends' they have – these could be friends of yours or family members. These users may post content which you would not want your child to see!
- Talk to them about some of the things that can go wrong – such as bullying, unwanted contact and inappropriate content.
- Ask them to talk to you about anything that makes them feel unhappy.
- Learn how to report any issues directly to the site.

If your child is already an underage user, revisit their profile with them and ensure that these steps have been implemented; it is never too late to take control.

## Gaming

The internet has changed the way that young people play games. Games can be played against anyone in the world, at any time and for as long as you want.

Online, you can adventure in complex worlds, create characters, and meet and make friends to fight battles and go on journeys together...

Almost anything that connects to the internet will allow you to play these games – desktop computers, laptops, consoles, like Playstation or Xbox, or even mobile phones.



### *Helping your child to game safely*

#### **Check the age rating of the game**

Just like with films, you should check the game's age rating before allowing your child to play. The Pan-European Gaming Information (PEGI) system sets age ratings for games and classify their content according to what is appropriate for different age groups.

## Talk to them about the games they play

Get them to tell you about the game and, if they can bear it, play against them!

It is important to stay up-to-date and regularly ask your children about the games they play and the people they are friends with.

## Look for the game's advice for parents and carers

When you know the kind of games your child is playing, go on and take a look.

Look to see if the game has advice for parents and carers. This can help you to assess the appropriateness and learn more about the functions of the site.

In general, this advice tends to focus on the fun aspects of the game, but it should also highlight the safety measures the site has in place to protect your child and what you can do as a parent or carer to protect them, such as setting parental controls.

## Know who they're talking to

Most of the popular online games are played by adults and children alike. Therefore, your children need to be aware of the information that they share and the people they talk to.

It's never a good idea to share personal information such as their name, address, email address, passwords, telephone numbers or the name of their school with people they don't know and trust in the real world. Talk to your child about how people can sometimes lie online or pretend to be someone else.

## Set boundaries

Some online games are virtual worlds which never end, where missions can take hours to complete. It's important to set limits on the amount of time your child spends playing online. Be aware of how long they spend gaming and set rules, as you would for TV. Also, ensure that they take regular screen breaks – at least five minutes every 45-60 minutes.

## Know what to do if something goes wrong

Things can go wrong when gaming, whether that's someone being mean, inappropriate or asking you to do something that you're not comfortable with. It's important that you and your child know what steps you can take in the game to block and report people and how to report and seek support from other services.

# Talking to People

Young people use the internet to talk to others in a number of different ways: emailing, instant messaging, webcam and

chat rooms. The online world provides young people with the opportunity to be inquisitive, explore relationships and actively seek risks, such as flirting with people that they don't know.

It is important for young people to remember that there are offline consequences to online behaviours.

Until you feel your child is responsible and mature enough to understand and manage the risks of communicating with people they do not know, then you should restrict the sites they use and people they talk to. Young people should be aware that they can:

1. **Block contacts.** Most chat sites enable you to block contacts to prevent them from communicating with you.
2. **Report contacts.** If someone is being inappropriate on chat sites, you can often report this directly to the site administrator. However, if your child has experienced sexual or offensive chat that has made them feel uncomfortable or someone is trying to meet up with them, you can report this directly to CEOP.

## Sharing

Most sites your child uses will encourage them to share information about themselves with others. This might be:

- Opinions – such as what they like and don't like
- What they are doing
- Pictures and videos of themselves
- Information about themselves – such as their name and where they live
- Videos and music



The internet is a great tool for sharing information like this and young people love to keep up-to-date with what their friends are doing. However, it is important that they think before they share as there can be risks with sharing personal information.

Once you share information online, you lose control of it. It is important for young people to be aware of the implications of sharing different types of information.

## **Pictures and videos**

It couldn't be easier to share pictures and videos online. With cameras on every mobile phone, a picture can be posted and shared in an instant. It's easy to make mistakes.

Tell your child not to share anything online that they would be embarrassed to show you.

Young people might be tempted to share pictures of a sexual nature of themselves – this might be with people they trust, like a boyfriend or girlfriend; however, this can easily get out of hand.

## **Personal information**

The more information you share about yourself, the easier it is for a stranger to build a picture about you. You should discuss what information your child actually needs to share.

If your child is using social networks, like Facebook, make sure you go through the privacy settings with them so they can control what they share, and with whom.

## **Location**

Social networking sites increasingly allow you to share your exact location with your friends through your mobile phone. Services like 'Facebook Places' allow you to 'tag' yourself – which pinpoints you on a map and tells your friends where you are.

There are obvious risks with young people sharing this type of information. We recommend that people under 18 turn off this function on any social networks or services that they use.

## **Searching for content**

With a world of information at their fingertips, it's easy for young people to actively search for material that might be inappropriate for their age, or stumble across things that might upset or disturb them.

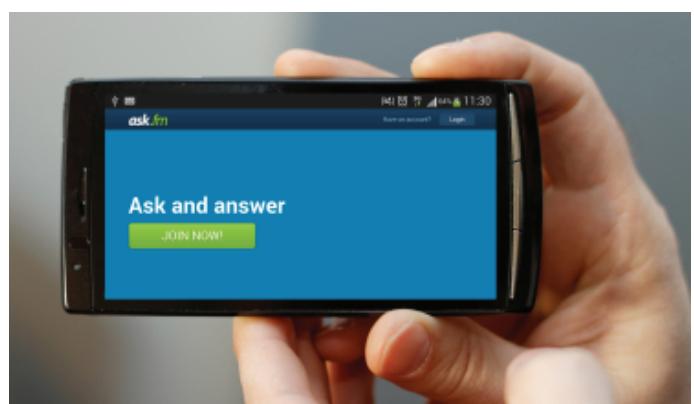
The internet can provide young people with unrestricted access to adult material. At an age where they are developing socially and sexually, it is natural for young people to be inquisitive. The internet can support natural exploration of sex, relationships and identity; however, there is the risk of exposure to material that could be detrimental to their development.

One of the ways to help manage what your child is exposed to online is the use of parental controls. These are a good tool available to you; however, they are not a substitute for talking to your child about what they see online.

## **Using a mobile phone**

Most young people in secondary school own a mobile phone. The devices themselves are becoming ever more powerful and many offer the same functions you might have on a computer. Many mobile phones can now:

- Access the internet
- Take and share photos and videos
- Chat with instant messaging, video and text
- Share your location
- Play games (sometimes at a cost)
- Add and buy 'apps' (sometimes at a cost)



With all of these functions available, talking to people is now only a small part of what mobile phones are used for. It can be difficult to keep tabs of what your child is up to on a mobile phone.

### ***How can I help my child use their mobile phone safely?***

**Parental settings** – some mobile phone service providers allow you to set certain controls over your child's phone. This can include blocking access to certain sites and monitoring your child's activities. When buying a mobile, speak to the sales representative to find out more about what services they offer.

**Loopholes** – even if you have set controls, your child may be accessing the internet through other sources. Accessing someone else's Wifi may mean that your safety settings no longer apply.

**Understand what your child's phone can do** – all phones are different and you need to know what they are capable of so you can manage the risks.

**Set a pin code on your child's phone** – setting a pin code is like a password. Without a password, others may use your child's phone. This could enable them to access personal information, online accounts or run up expensive bills. Set boundaries and monitor usage – this doesn't mean spying on your child! You can set rules with them about where it is used and how long for.

**Discuss what they can share** – teach your child to think before they share online and the consequence of doing this over the mobile phone, such as sharing their location.

**Discuss and monitor costs** – phones can be expensive. As well as bills, costs can be run up through downloading apps, music or leaving data-roaming on abroad. Your child should be made aware of the financial responsibility that comes with owning a phone. There are different ways to manage costs, such having a contract or pay-as-you-go deals; make sure you discuss this in the shop.

**Keep their mobile number private** – young people need to understand that their phone number should only be given to people they know and trust, make sure that if they are concerned, they ask you first.

**Be prepared in case the phone is lost or stolen** – know who to contact to get the SIM card blocked. Every phone has a unique 'IMEI' number; make sure you write this down so if the phone is stolen, the police can identify the phone if they find it. You can get this by dialling \*#06#.

## Online Risks

### Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place via technology. Whether on gaming sites, through a mobile device or via a social networking site, the effects can be devastating for the young people involved.

With online technologies accessible 24 hours a day, cyberbullying can be relentless. It can also intrude on spaces that were previously personal, for example at home; it can feel that there is no escape from it.

### *Malet Lambert Anti-Bullying Policy*

We encourage parents to present any problems they know or suspect their child might be having. From doing this, all parents are then fully informed on what to do and who to go to if their child has a problem, and staff will ensure that parents receive feedback on all matters connected with concerns about bullying.

We also apply fair and consistent sanctions to those who offend against the right others. We ensure that:

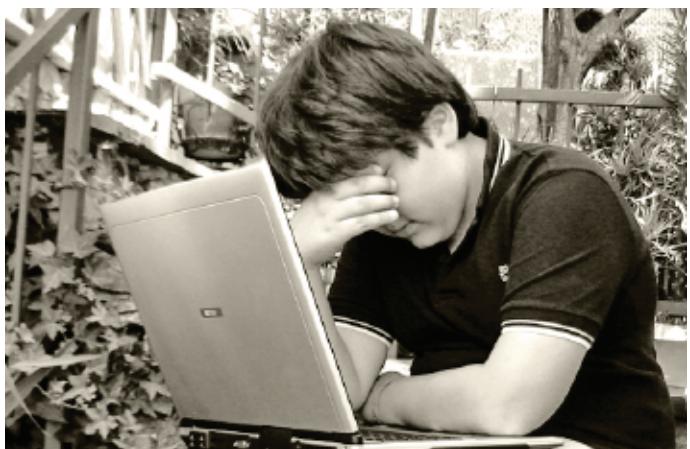
- we have a range of responses to deal with bullying according to the severity of the problem. This is because each incident is different and there is therefore no single way of dealing with problems. It is essential that all parties involved work together for a satisfactory outcome.
- violent behaviour is never tolerated from anyone. Students involved will normally receive detentions, isolations or exclusions depending on the severity of the

violence

- other sanctions are outlined in the school's behaviour policy and can be applied where appropriate
- where appropriate, we use restorative practises as a method of resolving bullying issues.

### *What to do if my child is being cyberbullied*

- Offer reassurance and support. Your child may be in need of emotional support or feel like they have nowhere to turn. Your child could visit CyberMentors. This is an online counselling service with a difference; the counsellors are also children and young people. This site has proved very popular and offers practical advice - [www.cybermentors.org.uk](http://www.cybermentors.org.uk)
- Tell your child that if they are being bullied to always keep the evidence. Whether it's a text message or email, tell them not to reply to the bully or delete the comments. Ask your child if they know the bully or where the messages are coming from.
- Block the bullies. If someone is bullying your child on a social networking or chat site encourage them to block or delete the individual so that they can't be contacted by them anymore.
- Report any bullying content to the website it's hosted on. If content has been posted, for example a video or image, which is upsetting your child you should report it to the website, for example, Facebook. Contacting the website is the only way to get the offensive content removed, unless it is illegal. In cases of illegal content for example indecent images or videos of young people under 18, contact your local police or report it to CEOP.



### Grooming

You've probably heard of the term 'grooming' before. In essence, this is a process used by people with a sexual interest in children to attempt to engage them in sexual acts either over the internet or in person.

Sadly, these people do attempt to make contact with children over the internet; this may be in social networking

sites, chatrooms or games. They could be by pretending to be someone else, or showing an interest in them.

It is important that children understand that people like this exist and that they should never do anything online or offline that they are uncomfortable with.

Grooming is a process of manipulating a child to gain control over them; as a parent or carer you should be approachable so that if your child is concerned about something, they know they can talk to you.

- Talk to your child about online grooming. Explain how easy it can be to lie online and the reasons why an adult may wish to contact them.
- For older children, the conversation might be a little more difficult. They may have built quite an online network over the years, and might feel you're intruding into their private matters. Why not use one of the Thinkuknow resources to open a conversation. Age appropriate education films are available through thinkuknow.co.uk or CEOP's YouTube channel
- Talk about their online friends. Ask them to think carefully about who they chat and share information with. If they don't know them in the real world they need to delete or limit what they share with them, for example not sharing their photos, videos or their locations.
- Let your child know that you are always there for support. Let them know that you understand how easy it can be to get into difficulties online. Get them to talk to you if anyone makes inappropriate/ sexual comments and ensure they know that, no matter what's happened, you are there to help.
- Learn how to report any inappropriate contact made to your child online. This can be done via [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

## Inappropriate websites

The Internet is open to anyone to post and create content so sometimes your child may see things they wish they hadn't, or access sites that are inappropriate for their age.

Inappropriate can mean different things to different people, from swear words to pornographic images or videos, and what is inappropriate for your child will also change as they grow and develop.

There are a range of things online that might upset children and affect what should be a healthy online experience. It's important to remember that inappropriate content online includes pornographic content, but could also include other content such as race hate, pro eating disorders or gambling sites.

If your child is using the internet, you should discuss the type of things they might see no matter what age they are.

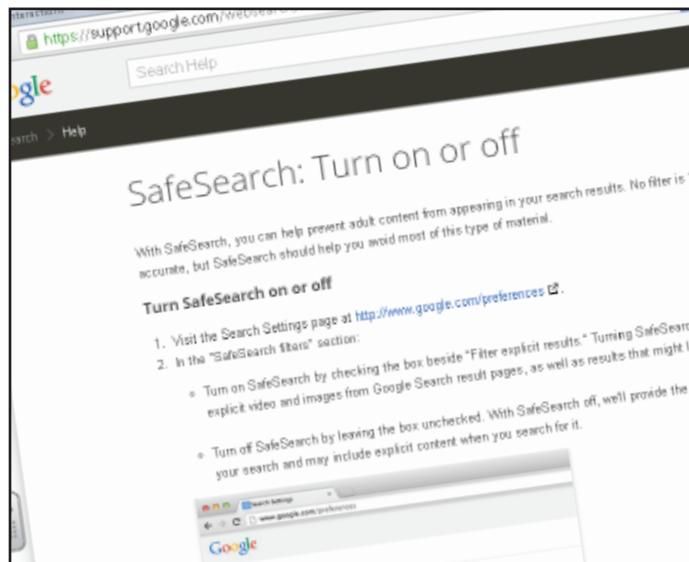
## Reducing the risks

The internet is not centrally moderated, but as a parent you can set controls on your child's internet access in the home. Parental controls packages can enable you to block access to adult websites, such as pornographic and gambling sites.

Setting age appropriate controls on the sites they use and your network can help reduce the risk, but remember no filter is 100% accurate.

Contact the provider of your internet package, such as Sky, BT or Talk Talk, the majority of service providers now offer free parental control packages. Make sure you do the same on your child's phone and all internet enabled devices.

Setting age appropriate controls is important but ensure that you also have an ongoing conversation with your child about content online. Ask them to tell you if you if they see anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or upset, so you can help and support them.



## Online pornography

Children may stumble across content online or actively search for sexual content which isn't appropriate for their age. It is natural for children to push boundaries and explore, however, it can be risky. Online it is easy to quickly access a wide variety of pornographic content including hardcore and extreme images and videos.

As the researcher Martin Flood noted, 'pornography is a poor, and indeed dangerous, sex educator'. Pornography rarely presents sex in the context of a loving relationship and there is concern that early exposure to hardcore pornography could give young people unhealthy views about the opposite sex and what they can expect from them.

## Losing control over pictures and videos

Pictures and videos can be copied, shared and spread at great speed. What may have started as being posted for a few friends can very quickly end up in the hands of the entire school and beyond.

Some young people have posted or sent sexualised pictures of themselves to a boyfriend or girlfriend and found them shared further. Some of the main risks with this type of image being in the hands of someone else include:

- **Bullying** – young people can be bullied by others about the content of pictures.
- **Distress** – knowing that other people they do not know are looking at personal pictures can be very upsetting.
- **Blackmail** – if the images end up in the hands of someone with bad intentions, they may be used to attempt to manipulate the child.
- **Reputation** – once something is online it is very difficult to remove. Images can become part of a young person's 'digital footprint' and potentially affect them in the long-term, such as if someone searches their name as part of a job interview.

## Online reputation

Young people are growing up online and may be posting information which in the past would have been written in their secret diary. These thoughts, opinions and activities provide a window to their lives at a time where jobs and responsibility might be far from their minds.

The internet provides permanent records of these high and lows which, if not controlled carefully, may be accessible to future employers, universities or friends.

Young people should think about what they share, where they share it and who they share it with – what seems funny now, may not do in the future.

## Overuse/addiction

With limitless information, endless games and the ability to escape from the real world, young people's relationship with the internet can become unhealthy.

This can be a problem when a young person's online behaviour diverts and distracts them from other activities – this might be school work, seeing their friends or even sleeping and eating.

The amount of time young people spend playing games can become unhealthy. If they are gaming against people around the world, they may want to be involved in activities that take place at unsociable hours and may find it difficult to stop. The fact that other players are real people can put pressure on young people to take part as they don't want to let their gaming friends down.

Young people can be someone else online. Therefore, if they are unhappy in the real world, they may want to spend more time online.

As a parent or carer, you should be alert to the amount of time they are spending online and aware of the issues that might be causing a dependency.

# Talk to your child about...Webcams

As you may have seen in the media, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) has recently warned of a concerning increase in sexual offending on the internet involving webcams.

## Webcam abuse

CEOP have investigated a number of cases in which sex offenders have used extortion to force young people to perform sexual acts on webcam.

Typically online sexual extortion happens in the following way:

- An offender makes contact with a young person. This can happen anywhere online
- The offender begins a conversation and tricks the young person into sending them an indecent picture, appearing naked or performing sexual acts on webcam. They trick them in a variety of ways including: pretending to be a girl or boy of the same age, pretending to be someone the child knows, flirting with them or sending them sexual pictures or videos.
- The offender records the webcam footage. They then threaten to share the video with the young person's friends or family if they don't perform more sexual acts. Some young people have been threatened for money or told to hurt themselves.

This has happened to hundreds, potentially thousands, of young people in this country.

This is sexual abuse. The emotional impact can be devastating. A number of young people have attempted suicide as a result of finding themselves in this situation.

To help prevent further harm, CEOP are calling on parents and carers to talk to their children about this type of crime and to support them to come forward should they find themselves in difficulty.

Remember, the internet is an essential part of young people's lives and provides them with tremendous opportunities. The vast majority use it without coming to any harm.

To start a conversation with your child you could tell them that you understand that some young people share sexual images and that you're interested to know what they think about it.



## *What to do if this happens*

If your child were to tell you this has happened, your response as a parent will be crucial in helping them cope. It is important to take it very seriously whilst reacting calmly. When a child tells a parent they have experienced sexual abuse parents should:

- **Believe their child** and tell them that they believe them
- **Not blame them** for the abuse they have suffered.
- **Tell them it's not their fault.** Even if they have engaged in risky behaviour, the only person responsible is the offender.
- **Not display anger or rejection** – even if they are feeling these things parents should work through them in a separate place
- **Talk to their child** about how they feel and let them know that they're here to listen.
- **Report to CEOP.** CEOP is a command of the National Crime Agency, and is dedicated to tackling the sexual abuse and exploitation of children and young people. CEOP is here to help young people (up to age 18) who have been forced or tricked into taking part in sexual activity with anyone online or in the real world. For information, advice and to report concerns directly to CEOP's Safety Centre. If a child is in immediate danger please call the police on 999.

Children can get confidential help and support 24 hours a day by contacting ChildLine on 0800 11 11 or visiting [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

# Tools

## Privacy settings

Most social networking sites, like Facebook, now give your child a lot of control over what they share and who they share it with. Through a site's 'privacy settings' you are able to control:

- Who can search for you – this means that when people search your name on a site, your profile does not come up.
- Who sees what – this means that you can control the information you share, like your photos or 'wall' posts. You can usually restrict this to friends only, friends of friends, certain groups of friends, or everyone. We would recommend that for young people it is restricted to friends only.
- Who can post information about you – some sites enable others to 'tag' photos of you or share other information about you, like your location. Many sites enable you to restrict people's ability to do this.

It is important that you stay up-to-date with the privacy settings that your child uses and help them stay in control of their profile.

## Parental controls

As a parent or carer it can be difficult to monitor what your child is up to online. Most parents and carers trust their children online, but it can be easy for a child to stumble across things that might upset or disturb them.

Filtering and moderation packages are a good way to stop the majority of inappropriate and harmful content coming into your home. They are a tool to help you set and change online boundaries in line with your child's development. There are some great packages out there, some are free and some come at a cost. Make sure you get one that suits your family's needs and budget.

## How can this help me?

Every parental control package is different, but most provide services such as:

- Filtering – content to restrict access to particular sites, such as pornographic websites.
- Time limits – restrict the amount of time your child can be online, or set periods of time where your child can access certain sites.
- Monitoring – where you are informed of certain sites that your child is attempting to gain access to.
- Reporting – where you are provided with information about what sites your child has used.

## Where do I get them?

There are three main levels for applying parental controls.

- Internet Service Providers (ISP's). These are the organisations that pipe the internet to your home (like Karoo, Virgin Media, Talk Talk, Sky and BT). All of the major ISP's provide parental control packages. These can allow you to apply controls across all of the devices that access the internet through your home connection – such as laptops or games consoles.
- Devices that connect to the internet. Most computers, mobiles and games consoles now come with parental controls that can be applied. For example, within Windows and the Mac operating systems, there are parental controls that can be set for individual devices.
- Software. There are a wide range of packages available to buy or sometimes download for free – always look for reputable companies and check out reviews online.

## Does this make my child safe?

Parental controls will never make the internet 100% 'safe'. They should not be used as a substitute for communicating safety messages to your child. Make sure that you talk to your child about their behaviour online and remember, your home is not the only place they will be accessing the internet!

Never ask your children to set these settings, if you are not confident in putting these in place ask a family friend or the shop assistant to help.

# Top tips:

- **Be involved in your child's online life.** For many of today's young people there is no line between the online and offline worlds. Young people use the internet to socialise and grow and, just as you guide and support them offline, you should be there for them online too.
- **Watch Thinkuknow films to learn more.** The Thinkuknow programme has films and advice for children from five all the way to 16. Your child may have seen these at school, but they can also be a good tool for you to find out more about what young people do online and some of the potential risks.
- **Keep up-to-date with your child's development online.** Be inquisitive and interested in the new gadgets and sites that your child is using. It's important that as your child learns more, so do you.
- **Set boundaries** in the online world just as you would in the real world. Think about what they might see, what they share, who they talk to and how long they spend online. It is important to continue to discuss boundaries so that they evolve as your child's use of technology does.
- **Know what connects to the internet and how.** Nowadays even the TV connects to the internet. Your child will use all sorts of devices and gadgets; make sure you're aware of which ones can connect to the internet, such as their phone or games console. Also, find out how they are accessing the internet – is it your connection or a neighbour's Wifi? This will affect whether your safety settings are being applied.
- **Consider the use of parental controls** on devices that link to the internet, such as the TV, laptops, computers, games consoles and mobile phones. Parental controls are not just about locking and blocking, they are a tool to help you set appropriate boundaries as your child grows and develops. They are not the answer to your child's online safety, but they are a good start and are not as difficult to install as you might think.
- **Emphasise that not everyone is who they say they are.** Make sure your child knows never to meet up with someone they only know online. People might not always be who they say they are. Make sure your child understands that they should never meet up with anyone they only know online without taking a trusted adult with them.
- **Know what to do if something goes wrong.** Just as in the offline world, you want to help your child when they need it. Therefore, it is important to know when and how to report any problem.

## Reporting problems.

Ultimately, if you are concerned that someone acted inappropriately towards your child online, or to a child or young person you know, then you should report it to CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection).

It may be sexual chat, being asked to do something that makes them feel uncomfortable or someone being insistent on meeting up.

You can report it to CEOP via:

[www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-report](http://www.ceop.police.uk/ceop-report)



The information in this guide is sourced from:  
[thinkuknow.co.uk/parents](http://thinkuknow.co.uk/parents) and [ceop.police.uk](http://ceop.police.uk)

Please visit these sites to view this information in full and many more resources for parents and children, including links to further support websites and educational films.

