# Online Safety

Dear Parents and Carers,

Whilst we find ourselves in this unique period, and where you find yourselves attempting to home school your children, I am sure you will be using the wonders of the internet a lot to help. While using technology can provide hours of education and important social opportunities for children and young people during this period, it can also present risks.

Please continue reading to find out some really useful and essential information to help support keeping you and your children safe during this increased usage from the 'Think You Know' education programme.

Here are 4 things you can do to help keep your child safe online during this unsettling time.

## 1. Use the opportunity to chat with your child

With children and parents spending more time at home, now is a great time to continue to chat with your child about how they are using online technology and what it means to them.

Ask them what they are doing online, and what they like and dislike about the apps and services they use. If you like, discuss some 'ground rules,' like how much time they spend online doing different things and what games and apps are appropriate to use.

## 2. Explore Thinkuknow resources together

Thinkuknow is the online safety education programme from the National Crime Agency.

Every fortnight, Thinkuknow will release a new set of simple online safety home activities to share with children and young people between the ages of 3 and 16. Use these to help you keep up a positive, supportive conversation about safety online in your home.

Take a look at the Parents and Carers Helpsheets for further online safety advice and links to useful resources and support services.

## 3. Remind children to report anything worrying, and how they can do this

It's important that children and young people always know where to go if they come across something that worries them or makes them feel uncomfortable online.

This is especially important during this time as trusted sources of support, such as teachers may not be as available. Children may not have as many opportunities to confidently talk to their friends, who we know are often their first point of contact when they are worried.

To help, you could:

- Help them to identify a trusted adult that they can approach during this period, even if this means on the phone. Encourage them to speak to you or another adult immediately if they have any worries or concerns.
- Remind them that they can always call Childline (or other helplines such as the one from The Mix) if they have any worries, big or small – whether it's something that has

happened online, stress about being stuck at home, arguments with siblings or anxiety about Coronavirus.

The best thing you can do is make sure they would feel they could talk to you if they were ever worried - make sure they know that you would never blame them for anything that might happen online.

### 4. Set up or review your parental controls

Setting parental controls can be a quick and effective tool to help protect your children online, and should be installed on all devices that children use. For advice and support in setting these controls, please read our Thinkuknow article.

https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Parental-controls/