



Online safety at home:

Parents and Carers Newsletter

January 2026

Dear parents and carers, now that the rush of the holiday season is over and children have returned to school we would like to remind you of the importance of encouraging a healthy online culture at home. We understand that Christmas and birthdays are times when children may receive their first smart phone, tablet or a new games consoles, you may also as a family have purchased a new smart tv or speakers or other smart device where viewing online content is available at the touch of a button. We are always available to support you in ensuring that parental controls are enabled on both new and existing devices to help protect your children from inappropriate viewing and interactions whilst online.

Please take a look at the school website where there are lots of guides and tips on online safety.

<https://www.oakgreen.bucks.sch.uk/online-safety-parent-information/>

In particular the following poster is a really useful guide for setting up those first devices:

<https://pwhs.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2023/12/my-childs-first-device.pdf>

Internet Safety Day 2026
Tuesday, 10thth February

What is Internet Safety day?

Safer Internet Day is an annual event co-ordinated in the UK by the UK Safer Internet Centre and encourages thousands of organisations to get involved to promote the safe, responsible and positive use of digital technology for children and young people.

This year, in the UK Safer Internet Day 2025 will focus on **Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI.**



Things you can do to help mark Internet Safety Day

- Think about how you and your child uses the internet
- Ask them if they know where to go to get help
- Ask them how they stay safe online
- Ask them what they like to do online and what sites they visit

Is my child too young to learn about on-line safety?

The Department for Education have produced the following guidance for children in Early Years settings but this guidance is also relevant for all children in primary school.

<https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/internet-safety>

How device use can affect development:

Screen use can benefit children's development in the early years but there are challenges that you should be aware of. Ongoing research suggests there are both positive and negative developmental outcomes.

Benefits

Screen use (depending upon how it is used) can support young children in your care by:

- providing opportunities to promote creativity and learning
- encouraging language development
- improving numeracy and literacy skills
- creating a greater understanding of their world
- developing their digital skills



Challenges

Screen use in the early years can have an impact on a young child's development. It can:

- impact their ability to control their emotions
- impact how they deal with social interactions and activities
- expose them to inappropriate content

We would suggest the following tips for encouraging positive online experiences:

- Explore your child's favourite apps and games with them.
- Supervise younger children while they are playing games online as pop up adverts can take them to a completely different site.
- Ensure devices are used in communal areas where there are other family members around to support.
- Make sure you have access to parental controls on your home broadband and any internet enabled devices in the home.
- Be aware children can access the internet on tablets, phones, gaming consoles, smart tvs, laptops and have access to messages on smart watches.
- Use the "Safesearch" function on browsers which allows you to limit the material your child can access.
- Set boundaries such as times of the day when using technology is not allowed, enforce age restrictions on apps and games which are there to protect children from inappropriate content and use strong passwords on devices you do not want younger children to access.
- Lead by example. Remember children like to copy adults so be aware that your children will want to copy the way that you use and access your devices.

We cannot condone any of the children at Oak Green having their own social media accounts whilst they are below the age stipulated by the Terms and Conditions of the individual sites.

We do appreciate, however, that keeping in touch with family and friends is an important part of family life but would recommend any video chatting or text chatting apps are used under supervision only.

More information on the possible harms of children using social media can be found here:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety/online-safety-for-schools>

WhatsApp Channels

Users should be at least 13 years old to use WhatsApp.

If your child is using WhatsApp, then you should be aware of WhatsApp Channels. Channels are a one-way broadcast tool used by companies and individuals to send updates to followers. WhatsApp Channels can be found on the Updates tab. From here you can view a whole host of channels, including channels that will not be age appropriate and may include adult content.

You cannot switch off access to channels and there is no age rating associated with the channels so you would have to access them to know what the content truly is. Klicksafe highlight what you should be aware of:

<https://www.klicksafe.eu/en/news/was-sind-whatsapp-kanaele-und-wasmuessen-eltern-beachten>

Find out more about WhatsApp channels in general here:
<https://faq.whatsapp.com/549900560675125>



For users under 18, a parent or legal guardian's permission may be required to use the service

Roblox: From January 2026 in the UK, Roblox will require users to verify their age. It's important to sign up with the correct age, as this will automatically filter available content and limit who children can speak to. By default under 13s can only chat with their own friends or 'connections' within the game they are playing.

https://www.internetmatters.org/?generate_pdf=1&page=roblox-parental-controls&post_id=3923