Dalmain Primary School

25 June 2020

Dear Parents/ Carers,

Online safety / activities Newsletter No 12

Welcome to newsletter number 12. When I started writing these I thought it would be for a few weeks 'until things got back to normal' - at that point, I didn't realise that we would have a future of 'the new normal'.

Hopefully as lockdown is gradually lifted and we are allowed more freedom you and your children will be getting out more (of course doing this safely and following social distancing!) and your children may be on their screens less. Even if your children are on their screens less, I still want you to be as informed as possible so as to keep them safe.

This week I want to make you aware of the BBC Own It app and what it is. I've had good feedback from both parents and children about this app.

I've also included information around inappropriate content online & CEOP. Every week I finish off this newsletter by asking you to report to CEOP. This week it occurred to me that some people do not know what CEOP is. So I thought that I would include a little information about it in this week's newsletter.

BBC Own It App updated for COVID-19

The BBC's Own It app helps young people new to social media manage their well-being, whilst empowering children to make smart choices, and helping them to lead a positive life online.

The Own It app and keyboard lets children:

· get advice whenever they type
· track their feelings
· win badges as they reflect
· find help when they need it
· take quizzes to learn more about themselves

The app also includes a special keyboard to use which offers helpful tips and friendly advice to children when they need it.

The app can be downloaded for free from the App Store or Google Play.

I'm worried my child might see something inappropriate online

There's no watershed, 'top shelf' or ID required online, but that doesn't mean you can't protect your child from adult content. Find out how to help them navigate the web safely.

Things they might see:

The internet is a public and open place, one where anybody can post and share content. This is part of the fun but it does mean that your child might see something that is intended for adults which might confuse or upset them. This could be violent or sexual content, extreme opinion or inappropriate advertising.

No matter how young your child is, if they are using the internet you will need to have the conversation with them about 'things they might see' online.

You can't always be there when your child is using internet enabled devices - even though it is advisable as much as possible when your child is at primary age. So it is important that your child knows that they can come to you if something online confuses or upsets them.

Children often tell us that a reason they don't tell a parent or carer when something goes wrong or upsets them online is because they are worried the adult will over react and take their technology away from them.

What is inappropriate?

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.

Every household will have different ideas on what's appropriate for their child, so discuss this as a family and give your child age appropriate examples.

Having a conversation

It is important to explain, especially to younger children, what is meant by 'inappropriate' using language they will understand.

Remember, no matter what you've told them, as we all were as children, your child will be curious as they grow. They might search for content they are too embarrassed to talk to you about, don't understand or think they'll find funny.

Talk to them about what they might see if they were to type the wrong words or actively look for content on a search engine like Google. Make sure they know that whatever they have seen, if it's upset them or raised questions that they can always come to you.

What can you do to protect them?

As well as having the all-important conversation, there are some technical (and simple) things you can do to limit what they see:

- **Set Parental Controls.** Parental Controls software will enable you to filter out pornography and other inappropriate content. You can also use it to set time limits for using the internet and apply age restrictions for games they play. Most major Internet Service Providers, like Talk Talk, Sky, BT and Virgin Media, provide free parental controls, as do most devices and games consoles. Find out [more about setting them up](#) - it isn't as difficult as you might think!

- **Set the search engine (e.g. Google, Bing, etc.) they use to a 'safe' mode.** This means that the search engine will look to block any obvious adult content and not provide it in search results.

- **YouTube is particularly popular with primary aged children** but think about the range of content they can be exposed to on it. Distressing news stories and other adult content will often appear on YouTube so don't use YouTube as a TV. It is all too easy for children to click on related videos and end up watching something more adult so make sure you

supervise younger children using it. It is also advisable that you set YouTube search to 'safe mode'. You can find out how in the [YouTube safety centre](#).

Remember, parental controls and filters are just tools. They are not 100% accurate and are no substitute for open and honest conversations with your child.

What is CEOP?

CEOP is part of the National Crime Agency, a law enforcement agency. Children, and their parents, can make a report to CEOP if they are concerned about sexual abuse online. You or your child can do this by filling in a form on the CEOP website – www.ceop.police.uk.

CEOP reporting is designed specifically for children, so that they always have somewhere to go if they are worried. The form is simple and short.

When should I make a report to CEOP?

The first thing to do is to let your child know about reporting to CEOP. Make sure they know that it is a service they can use if they are ever worried about sexual abuse online.

Let them know that they can always talk to you in this situation, but that CEOP is there too. Most children only have positive experiences online, and will not need to ever report to CEOP. Nonetheless, it is reassuring for them to know that help is available should they ever need it.

CEOP is also there to help parents if they are concerned about their child. However, if you feel a child is in immediate danger, you must call the police on 999 straight away.

CEOP takes all reports seriously and will do everything it can to keep your child safe. In the majority of cases, when a child reports to CEOP, their parents/carers are informed.

As well as the reporting service, the CEOP [Thinkuknow website](#) has information and advice for parents and children. Take a look at the Parents website (www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents), then explore the children's websites with your child.

What happens when a report is made to CEOP?

If you or your child do make a report to CEOP, it will be read by a Child Protection Advisor. A Child Protection Advisor is a specialist social worker who works at CEOP. They have helped lots of children and parents in similar situations.

The Child Protection Advisor will contact the reporter and they will talk about how they will help. They will make a plan about how to make sure the child is safe.

CEOP works with lots of other professionals whose jobs are also to make sure your child is safe. This includes social workers, teachers, local police officers, and other people who support children.

Note that CEOP can only respond to concerns related to incidents around /that could lead to sexual abuse online. If you need help to support children with other issues online, please refer to previous newsletters for agencies to report particular issues to.

I hope you all have a good week, and keep safe. If you have any concerns at all as well as reporting them online, please alert us to them as well so we can look into them / investigate any site issues, this will help us safeguard other children and possibly alert other parents to potential issues. Please email us at admin@dalmain.lewisham.sch.uk

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Woodhall
Safeguarding & Behaviour Lead