Headteacher: Miss S Reed

5 February 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

Safer Internet Day 5th February 2019

The Government have provided guidance to both schools and parents about how to stay safe online. As it is Safer Internet Day I feel it is important that we share this with you again, to support you to ensure that all of our children stay safe when they are online. We all need to keep up to date with online safety as technology changes and children becoming more confident with using and exploring the internet. At school we have been, and will be continuing to talk about online safety with our pupils to look at this very important but challenging need to safeguard children further.

Advice for parents and children about online computer games and apps

The following are some things that parents may wish to consider teaching their children about using the internet safely:

- *Make sure you use the privacy settings (parental guidance settings on children's devices should be in place).*
- *Always respect others – be careful what you say online particularly what pictures or videos you upload. Once a picture is shared online it cannot be taken back.*
- *Only add people you know and trust to friends/followers lists online. When talking to strangers, keep your personal information safe and location hidden. You cannot see who is behind the other screen. People are often not who they say they are when chatting online.*
- *If you see something that makes you feel uncomfortable tell an adult immediately.*

Social Networks - many children have spoken about having and using ***Facebook/Snapchat/WhatsApp*** and other social networking sites. *However, most sites have a minimum age restriction**, usually age thirteen***. *Parents should talk to their children about the reasons behind the age restriction as they are there for a reason. Accessing such sites too early can expose children to unnecessary bullying or viewing inappropriate content.*

Set boundaries: **Supervise children's internet access and set boundaries** *about what they can and cannot do online is to create an agreement with them. If a child breaks the rules, restrict internet access for an agreed period of time.*

Cyberbullying *is bullying that takes place using technology. Whether on social media sites, through a mobile phone, or gaming sites, the effects can be devastating for the young person involved.*

Many children also speak about playing online games on the X Box or PlayStation or a phone, some of which involve games with age ratings that make them unsuitable for young children. It is also extremely important that the 'chat' function within games should be deactivated for young children. This can be done using the settings function. Using the device in airplane mode can also restrict external interactions.
Children also spoke about having computers and mobile devices in their bedrooms with no direct adult supervision. Children will be having lots of opportunities in the classroom and assemblies to discuss their online behaviours through the curriculum. Please support your child and the school by considering how they access the internet, when and with what support and put measures in place to ensure that they are safe at all times.

Mrs Baker
IT Subject Leader