



Summerfield School

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Headteacher Ian Fraser

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Dear Parents and Carers,

It has come to our attention that some of our children have been affected by the Momo feature that is currently circulating via platforms such as WhatsApp and You Tube. Children have been exposed to graphic content which is incredibly distressing. National Online Safety - a group of online safety experts that provides advice for schools - has issued seven useful tips that all parents should be aware of in order to protect their children.

- 1. Tell them it's not real** just like any urban legend or horror story, the concept can be quite frightening and distressing for young people. Whilst this may seem obvious, it's important for you to reiterate to your child that Momo is not a real person and cannot directly harm them. Also, tell your child to not go openly searching for this content online as it may only cause more distress.
- 2. Be present** it's important for you, as a parent or carer, to be present while your children are online. This will give you a greater understanding of what they are doing on their devices, as well as providing you with the opportunity to discuss, support and stop certain activities that your child may be involved in.
- 3. Talk regularly** as well as monitoring your child's activity, it's important for you discuss it with them too. Not only will this give you an understanding of their online actions, but those honest and frequent conversations will encourage your child to feel confident to discuss issues and concerns they may have related to the online world.
- 4. Device settings and parental controls** Ensure that you set up parental controls for your devices at home. This will help to restrict the types of content that your child can view, as well as help you to monitor their activity. In addition to this, it's vital that you are aware of your device and account settings to ensure your child's utmost safety. For example, on YouTube you can turn off 'suggested auto-play' on videos to stop your child from viewing content that they have not directly selected.
- 5. Peer pressure** Trends and viral challenges can be tempting for children to take part in; no matter how dangerous or scary they seem. Make sure you talk to your child about how they shouldn't succumb to peer pressure and do anything they are not comfortable with, online or offline. If they are unsure, encourage them to talk to you or another trusted adult.
- 6. Real or hoax** As a parent it is natural to feel worried about certain things you see online that may be harmful to your child. However, not everything you see online is true.



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7. Report and block You can't always rely on parental controls to block distressing or harmful material. Due to this, we advise that you flag and report any material you deem to be inappropriate or harmful as soon as you come across it. You should also block the account/content to prevent your child from viewing it.

I hope this information will help you to be aware of this current type of 'cyberbullying' and that we can continue to work together to keep our children safe online

Yours faithfully,

Ian Fraser
Headteacher