



# Online Safety Advice for Parents & Carers



*This leaflet offers practical, reassuring tips that address the concerns raised by families in our recent survey.*



OF FIVE ASHES, FRANT, MARK CROSS AND MAYFIELD CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

**WITH GOD'S LOVE WE GROW AND LEARN TOGETHER**

Executive Headteachers: Mrs J Challis and Miss J Warren

## 1. Keeping Children Safe from Strangers, Scams & Unsafe Chats

### What worries parents:

Strangers contacting children, unsafe chat functions on games, scams, and manipulative behaviour online.

### What you can do:

Keep games and chatting apps in **shared family spaces**, not bedrooms.

Teach your child:

- Never reply to messages from people they don't know.
- Tell an adult straight away if something "feels wrong, weird, or upsetting."
- Use **parental controls** to restrict chat functions or limit them to approved friends.
- Remind them never to share personal information—no names, school, photos, or locations.
- Help them practise simple responses such as "I can't talk to people I don't know online."

## 2. Protecting Children from Inappropriate or Harmful Content

### What worries parents:

Accidental exposure to unsuitable videos, images, or adult content; misleading information; deepfakes.

### What you can do:

- Turn on **SafeSearch** on all devices. You can use 'Swiggle' as a safer search engine <https://swiggle.org.uk/>
- Use child-friendly platforms (YouTube Kids, BBC iPlayer Kids, etc.).
- Check PEGI age ratings on games.
- Show children how to close a tab and get help if they see something upsetting.
- Talk openly about how images and videos can be edited, fake, or misleading.

## 3. Managing Screen Time, Meltdowns & Healthy Balance

### What worries parents:

Addiction, difficulty turning devices off, screen-time behaviours, sleep issues.

### What you can do:

Create family routines such as:

- No screens during meals
- 1 hour tech-free before bedtime
- Device-free bedrooms
- Use timers your child can see—this makes transitions easier.
- Plan "off-screen" activities to make stopping more appealing.
- Praise healthy choices ("I love how you stopped when the timer went off!").
- Model balance—your own habits matter too.



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## 4. Building Your Child's Critical Thinking Skills

### What worries parents:

Misinformation, children believing everything they see, AI-generated fake content, lack of critical thinking.

### What you can do:

Ask questions like:

- "Who made this?"
- "Is it trying to make you click something?"
- "Could this be edited or fake?"
- Look at content together and talk about emotional impact.
- Help your child understand when AI tools may give answers that are wrong or invented.
- Encourage checking information against trusted sources.

## 5. Understanding AI & Using It Safely

### What worries parents:

Deepfakes, persuasive chatbots, environmental impact, over-reliance for homework.

### What you can do:

- Treat AI like a calculator for ideas, not a replacement for thinking.
- Supervise any use of AI tools - especially for younger children.
- Talk about why AI sometimes makes mistakes or creates false images.
- Teach children to fact-check before believing anything generated by AI.
- Use age-appropriate AI tools only (if at all) and discuss privacy.

## 6. Supporting Emotional Wellbeing Online

### What worries parents:

Online comparisons, influencers, bullying, children feeling left out, photos affecting self-esteem.

### What you can do:

- Remind your child that people only post the "perfect bits"—not real life.
- Talk regularly about kindness online and how to message respectfully.
- Encourage them to speak to a trusted adult if someone is unkind
- Praise your child for showing kindness online and offline.
- Delay social media until they show maturity and emotional readiness.





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## 7. Knowing What Your Child Uses Online

### What worries parents:

Not always knowing what apps do, children using technology at friends' houses, hidden features in apps.

### What you can do:

- Ask your child to show you their favourite games and apps—be curious, not critical.
- Set apps so your approval is required before downloading.
- Keep devices where you can glance at screens.
- Use family-sharing or child profiles to monitor activity safely.
- Stay alert to device use outside your home (playdates, clubs, travelling).

## 8. How School Helps - and How You Can Use That Support

### Parents asked for:

Regular guidance, information about apps used in school, assemblies, sessions for families, reassurance about filters.

### How we support you:

- Regular newsletters explaining apps, trends, games and risks
- Clear communication about online tools used in school
- Strong filtering and monitoring on school devices
- Assemblies and lessons teaching online kindness, digital footprints, fact-checking, and AI understanding
- Parent information sessions

### You can:

- Ask us if you're unsure
- Let us know if you need help with parental controls or device setup.
- Share concerns early so we can spot patterns or support your child.

## If Your Child Sees Something Worrying Online

- Stop** – turn off the screen or put the device down.
- Press Pause (breathe)** – remind themselves they are safe.
- Tell** – speak to a trusted adult straight away.

## Useful Links for Parents

- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)
- [NSPCC / Childline](#)
- [Internet Matters](#)
- [National College](#)

If you have any further questions or need additional support, please reach out to someone at school or speak to a member of the DSL team.



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