A positive parent's guide: Empowered online

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Everyone valued • Every day an opportunity • Every moment focused on success

What we already know.

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99%

Online Daily

Of UK children aged 12–15 go online regularly; 79% own smartphones by age 10.

59%

Harmful Content Exposure

Teens report encountering unwanted contact, deepfakes, or toxic feeds monthly.

68%

Fear of Reporting

Teens hide online mistakes fearing parents will confiscate their phone.

What we are doing as a school to keep your child safe online.

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Annual Filtering Audits

Schools must test and evidence filtering effectiveness on all school devices annually.

Generative AI Risks

New duties cover AI-generated nude/semi-nude imagery, deepfakes, and chatbot interactions.

Leadership Oversight

Designated Safeguarding Leads directly monitor digital alerts and coordinate with parents.
Our PDW curriculum is designed to educate and empower our students online.

And this evening!
Coming together as the adults in the young people's lives is so important to ensure that we create safety !

A balance of opportunity & safety

The presentation this evening is to provide you with guidance NOT anxiety. We know that digital spaces offer learning, creativity and connection.

We shall be discussing:

- **Positive engagement:** creative outlets, learning tools and social bonds
- **Legal protections:** What the law now does for accountability and age verification
- **Open Dialogue:** How to hold trust based conversations
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Digital parenting: sharing a language

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As a school we follow the 4Cs framework. Understanding and using this language at home will support the safety and education of your children.

1. CONTENT RISK
Exposure to age-inappropriate material, hate speech, self-harm, or AI-generated deep fake.

2. CONTACT RISK
Unwanted interactions with unknown adults, online groomers, or simulated AI companions.

3. CONDUCT RISK
Peer-on-peer abuse, sharing nudes/semi-nudes, cyberbullying, or online gaming toxicity.

4. COMMERCE RISK
In-app loot boxes, predatory micro-transactions, phishing scams, and commercial tracking.

We believe that categorising them in this way helps identify and resolve worries faster.

Content risk: What they see

Current concerns relate to synthetic media, AI distortion, extreme content rabbit holes, the auto playing of violent content.

Contact risk: Who they talk to

Current concerns relate to: Companion AI chat bots- those that can mimic emotional intimacy, voice cloning and grooming in virtual spaces.

Conduct risk: How they behave

Current concerns relate to: Young people creating AI images, cyber bullying via anonymous apps, automated harassment loops.

Commerce Risk: What targets money

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Current concerns relate to: AI patterns urging micro spending, deceptive subscriptions

Evidence based guardrails

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1. **Automatic bedtime locks:** Using Google family link or Apple screen time to enforce an automatic shut down.

2. **Not storing or saving cards to devices:** Require parent pin authorisation for all downloads. 72% of accidental spend occurs via unprompted cards.

3. **Central charging station:** Charge devices overnight in the kitchen or a hallway. Preventing late night messaging and sleep disruption.

Real life example

Maya (15) started watching fitness videos to support her BTEC coursework. Her feed then became filled with extreme dieting posts and AI altered deep fake body images- this caused her significant anxiety.

Parenting solution

Her parents taught her how to reset her algorithm preferences through the ‘ not interested button’ and removing non verified accounts from the default settings across all social media apps.

Of course we can always remove the phone but we can also teach positive strategies at appropriate moments.

Additional safety methods

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1. **Private accounts:** Ensure social media profiles are set to private. Ensure the location sharing (snap map) is off to prevent tracking.

2. **AI awareness:** Discuss at home how AI image generators create deepfakes and non consensual images. Ensure your children know where and how to report illicit photos.

Trusting conversations

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Remind your children that if they make a mistake online, see something upsetting or receive an inappropriate photo that they speak with you or us at school.

Worrying data shows that 68% of teens withhold safety concerns due to fears of device bans.

Practical conversation starters

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1) What's the funniest thing you saw online this week?

2) Can you show me how your favourite app works?

3) Have you ever felt annoyed or overwhelmed by your social media feed?

4) Do you know what to do if someone asks you for a photo or makes you feel uncomfortable?

Final messages

72% of children cite their parents as the number one source of truth and help for online safety (Ofcom)

Families with open dialogue have 3x less likely to hide digital distress or abused contacts (Children's digital wellbeing index)

Families using the same guidelines and support as in school report an 85% drop in screen time disputes (KCSIE 2026)