Dear Parents and Carers

As part of **Safer Internet Day** (6th February), which fell inside Children's Mental Health Week, we have been talking in school about having open conversations with grown-ups surrounding what we have been doing online, or when using technology.

Online safety is a major concern for parents as more and more children are using the internet, social media and video-sharing platforms regularly. Safer Internet Day, organised by the UK Safer Internet Centre (UKSIC), seeks to 'promote the safe, responsible and positive use of digital technology for children and young people'. It aims to encourage children and young people to talk openly about their online experiences and emphasise how important it is for parents and carers to listen to them.

Online safety is a discussed regularly in our school and we find that many of our children young are knowledgeable in both dangers and safety measures. Conversations at home about online life shouldn't be one-off events, but more an ongoing dialogue that takes place naturally so that they know they can talk to you about any issues that occur without fear of being punished and with minimal embarrassment.

*Ask them if they talked about Safer Internet Day at school. If so, find out what they learned and if their school has given them any strategies for staying safe online.

*Play the confused parent – asking your child for their help, perhaps in creating your privacy settings on an app shows them that you value staying safe online and can reassure you that they know how to use settings like this. It's also a way to initiate a conversation about what settings they have in place to protect themselves.

*Go online together – finding a website to visit, a game to play or online activity that you can do together can break down barriers to talking about online interactions. Ensuring your child's online life isn't conducted in secret and that they can be open about it is key to helping them navigate potential difficulties, so getting online together can establish that ease of communication.

Remember...

It's easy to become overwhelmed and frightened by the stories of online dangers to children and young people. While it's important to be vigilant about online safety, remember that the internet also provides lots of positive opportunities for children to socialise with peers, find new interests, share their current hobbies and achievements and learn more about topics they are studying in school.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes

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Computing Lead

Some useful links

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rl_gZTQ9F7w

https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2024