Parents Guide to Keeping Children Safe on the Internet

This information supports sensible Internet use by children to promote safety. Children are very vulnerable when using the Internet and it is vital that adults work together to help them develop the skills needed to keep themselves safe. **The speed the internet changes means that it is impossible to prevent children from inadvertently or deliberately accessing inappropriate materials.**

Use of the internet at school is always for educational purposes and with an adult present. The risks to children are higher through use of the internet out of school.

- It is advised that primary aged children should only use the Internet when there is a responsible adult present to supervise.
- Parents and carers should use all parental controls available to them to ensure safe internet browsing. *Broadband providers usually offer support with this.*
- Every individual in a family should have their own login and password.
- Children must be taught never to give out their address, phone number, share personal information or photographs or arrange to meet someone whilst online.
- e-mails, messages in forums and text messages should be polite, appropriate and sensible. No one should send or post messages which cause upset or distress. *Please note: the school will take action where there is an indication of cyberbullying even when it occurs outside school.*
- Children need to know that rude or offensive messages should always be reported to an adult immediately (or as soon as possible).
- If children see anything offensive, or that makes them feel uncomfortable, they should know to show it to an adult and discuss how they came across it.
- The school may check computer files and monitor the Internet sites visited on school equipment.
- Parents and carers should always make sure that web sources are reliable and information is accurate and teach children the need for this.

Social Networking : The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) states that state that children should be aged 13 or over to have a social network account. It has become an increasing common issue for primary aged pupils to be using Social Media (eg: Facebook; Skype; Twitter; Instragram; and Snapchat). Even more concerning is that they often have 'open' profiles and little supervision. Open profiles allow **anyone** to access information about the account holder and to contact them. Social networking sites are commonly used by adults looking for inappropriate access to children.

Unfriendly and unwelcome comments through social networking sites cause extreme distress. Social networking cannot be accessed in school but we may still take action if an inappropriate or threatening situation arises that involves pupils from the school.