Viruses, hacking and your computer's security

Computers are such an important part of our every- day lives now, so it is important to keep them healthy. Get Safe Online provide lots of information on the risks posed to your computer's security and also how you can protect your computer from viruses, hacking and other horrible stuff!

- Visit www.getsafeonline.org for further information.

If you are ever concerned about any aspect of e-safety please approach a member of staff who will be able to point you in the direction of advice and support.

The 5Ps

Keep in the know about e-safety and follow the 5Ps for parents.

1. **Positive** - Stay positive about social networking sites. Strike a balance between educating children to behave safely and trusting them to get on with it.

2. **Privacy** - Make sure children know how to use privacy settings. Explain the importance of keeping information private and not sharing everything with everyone. Check they know all their online friends. If they don't, delete them.

3. **Photos** - Check that any photos posted are suitable. Photos can easily be copied, changed or circulated.

4. **Postings** - Establish ground rules about what is and isn't acceptable to say - about themselves and others.

5. **Parents**- Encourage children to tell you about inappropriate contact that makes them feel uncomfortable. Offensive images or messages can be reported to the police via the CEOP website: www.ceop.gov.uk/reportabuse

An E-safety Guide for Parents

White Hall Academy, Melbourne Road, Clacton on sea, Essex CO15 3SP

Tel: 01255 422825

An E-safety Guide for Parents

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As with the real world, there are risks online and it's important that we teach our children about them. Below are a few:

- Cyberbullying
- Grooming
- Inappropriate Websites
- Overuse/Addiction
- Viruses, hacking and security

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is when someone uses the internet or technology to bully someone else. Because we use the internet and technology everywhere, this type of bullying can affect young people not just at school, but at home as well. It can sometimes be hard to identify who the bully is because they can block their number, email, or post things on websites anonymously. The nature of this bullying means it can have a large audience, many of whom may not even realise they are being bullies. This kind of bullying can be evidenced. With bullying before this technology it could be one person's word against another's, but with cyber- bullying you can save texts or print out emails / IM's / Webpages. This can be used as proof to catch the bully.

If your child has been cyberbullied, make sure that they:

- Do not respond to the bully.
- Block contact with the bully.
- Save relevant communication, such as texts, emails or webpages.
- Report the incident either to the website or service provider, school or, if it is persistent harassment, to the police.

Grooming

In essence, this is a process used by people with a sexual interest in children to attempt to engage them in sexual acts either over the internet or in person. Sadly, these people do attempt to make contact with children over the internet. This may be in social networking sites, chatrooms or games. They could be pretending to be someone else, or showing an interest in them. It is important that children understand that people like this exist and that they should never do anything online or offline that they are uncomfortable with. Grooming is a process of manipulating a child to gain control over them; as a parent or carer you should be approachable so that if your child is concerned about something, they know they can talk to you. If you are concerned about someone's behaviour towards your child, you can report this directly to CEOP. Young people can also report directly to CEOP.

Inappropriate websites

The internet is open for anyone to post material on it; therefore, sometimes your child may see things that they wish they hadn't, or are inappropriate for their age. Parental controls can help reduce the risk of your child seeing age inappropriate sites. However, no parental filters are 100% effective and inappropriate material can always slip through the net. You should encourage your child to tell you if they have seen anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or upset so that you can help them. If you think the content might be illegal, like sexual images of children and young people, you can report it directly to an organisation called the Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk.

It's their job to make sure that things like this are taken off the internet.

Overuse/ addiction

With limitless information, endless games and the ability to escape from the real world, young people's relationship with the internet can become unhealthy. This can be a problem when a young person's online behaviour diverts and distracts them from other activities – this might be school work, seeing their friends or even sleeping and eating.

The amount of time young people spend playing games can become unhealthy. If they are gaming against people around the world, they may want to be involved in activities that take place at unsociable hours and may find it difficult to stop. The fact that other players are real people can put pressure on young people to take part as they don't want to let their gaming friends down. Young people can be someone else online.

Therefore, if they are unhappy in the real world, they may want to spend more time online. As a parent or carer you should be alert to the amount of time they are spending online and aware of the issues that might be causing a dependency.