

## Safety Online

Dear Parents and Carers,

18<sup>th</sup> May 2016

As part of our role in keeping children safe all children in school take part in internet safety sessions. Throughout school children look at ways of ensuring that they understand the risks of using the internet and how they can keep themselves safe. The internet in school is protected and filtered so children surf safely.

However as it is easier than ever to go online using computers, tablets, phones, Play Stations and X Boxes, it is natural that some parents have some concerns about how to keep their child safe at home. As a school we are also aware that children are playing games that are leading to inappropriate play at school. There are a number of simple things that can be carried out at home to keep children safe.

Games have ratings on them just like films.



These are to help you as a parent to decide whether the game is suitable for your child. These are not to show how difficult the game is but how old the child should be to play the game. Games such as Grand Theft Auto (GTA) and Call of Duty (COD) have ratings of 18, because they contain violence and images that primary school children should not see. Another concern for child safety is that these games allow online play. As the game is rated for adults other people playing the game may think that anyone they are playing is also an adult which may lead to inappropriate language being heard.

Facebook requires users to be 13 years old to register an account. If children lie about their age or if an adult helps them to create an account this is breaking their terms and conditions and the account can be suspended. By creating an account with a false age children are exposed to online advertising that may not be appropriate for their real age. By having a false age on the account people may talk to your child believing that they are older than they actually are.

### What can I do?

As well as talking regularly to your child about what they do on the internet the most effective way to ensure their safety is to monitor what your child is doing. The simplest way to do this is to encourage them to use the tablets, computers, game consoles etc in shared spaces in the house rather than in bedrooms. I also suggest that you play the game first before giving it to your child so that you can decide if you think it is suitable for them.

If you have any concerns please feel free to contact me for further information

Paul Kilner

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