

Online Safety Bulletin

...online safety update



February 2019

In preparation for Safer Internet Day 2019 students have had assemblies about social media use and the positive and negative experiences that they can gain from them. They were taught about the teenage brain development and how this affects the way young people respond to social media. If you would like to find out more, I would thoroughly recommend two books by Nicola Morgan 'Blame my Brain: The Teenage Brain Revealed' and 'The Teenage Guide to Life Online'.

Heads of Year are reporting a number of incidents appearing through the use of WhatsApp, whilst it may appear to be a harmless messaging app, the action of publishing thoughts and opinions to large groups can create conflict in both adult and teenage worlds. It is worth noting, that as of May 2018, WhatsApp has raised its EU age limit to 16. If your children are using the app, it would be worth sharing the following articles about etiquette from the [Independent](#) and the [BBC](#).

Finally, our new anti-bullying app, 'Toot-Toot' is up and running, with a number of students using the service. Please encourage your child to use this if they have any concerns about bullying, but want to remain anonymous. Alternatively, if you have a general concern about the online behaviour of our students, or indeed any ways that you can help, do not hesitate to contact me on lhayne@georgeabbot.surrey.sch.uk.

Below are our cyber principles:

George Abbot Cyber Principles

Conduct	Students need to be aware of the impact that their online activity can have on both themselves and other people, and the digital footprint that they create on the internet.
Content	Some online content is not suitable for children and may be hurtful or harmful.
Contact	It is important for children to realise that new friends made online may not be who they say they are and, that once a friend is added to an online account, you may be sharing your personal information with them.
Commercialism	Young people's privacy and enjoyment online can sometimes be affected by advertising and marketing schemes, which can also mean inadvertently spending money online, for example within applications.

National News Update

Screen Time Guidance

Government health advisors have issued advice about managing screen time at home. There are several clear steps for parents, which the Chief Medical Officers say will help keep children safe and healthy.

These include:

- not using phones and mobile devices at the dinner table - talking as a family is very important for development
- keeping screens out of the bedroom at bedtime
- talking as a family about keeping safe online and cyber-bullying and what children should do if they are worried

- not using phones when crossing a road or doing any other activity that requires a person's full attention
- making sure children take a break from screens every two hours by getting up and being active
- policing their own use too - parents should encourage quality family time and never assume their children are happy for pictures to be shared

This is, however, just guidance and you as a parent will know what is healthy for your child. For more information see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-47150658>

Instagram vows to remove all graphic self-harm images from website

The head of social media platform, Instagram, has vowed to remove all graphic self-harm content from their platform. Whilst they are agreeing to remove content 'quickly and responsibly', it may help if young people also report any inappropriate images so that they can be removed quickly. For more information see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47160460>. Guides on how to safely use Instagram and Snapchat are included below.

Online Gambling

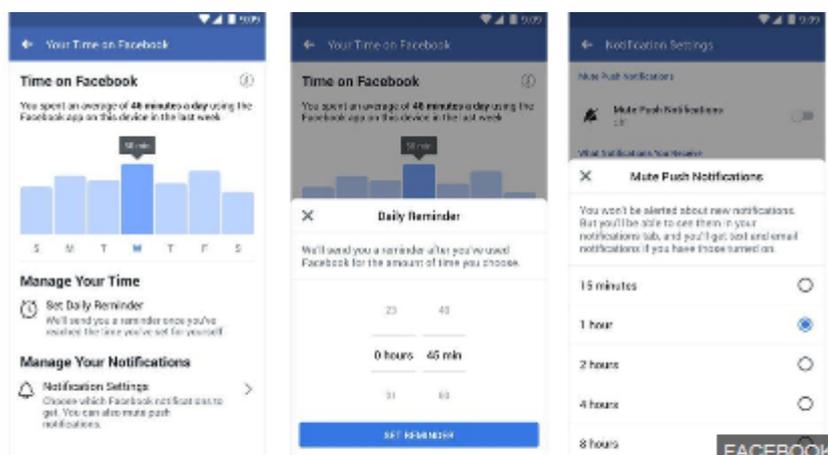
Has your child asked for virtual money (v-bucks) or money to buy skins on games like Fortnite? You might want to check that these haven't been used to bet with. Parentzone recently revealed a report showing that 1 in 10 UK children aged 13-18 is betting online in casino or bookmaker-style sites. Teenagers gamble their online virtual items called 'skins' which they have acquired through their video games. Unlike most regulated online gambling sites, these sites do not enforce rigorous age verification.

The recommended approach would be to show an interest in the games your child is playing, they may then open up to you about activity like this. For more information see: <https://parentzone.org.uk/gambling>

Time Limits on Facebook and Instagram

Facebook and Instagram are releasing a new tool to limit how much time people spend on their apps. The announcement follows concerns that excessive social media use can have a negative impact on mental health. Users will now be able to check how much time they've spent scrolling, set a reminder for when they've reached their allotted time, and mute notifications for a period of time.

However, some say it doesn't go far enough. "I wouldn't say it's a radical change or that it's going to really change a lot about the way that most people use Facebook or Instagram", Grant Blank, from the Oxford Internet Institute.



You can access the tools on the settings page on either app by tapping "Your Activity" on Instagram or "Your Time on Facebook" on Facebook

Useful Parent Guides (netaware)



<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/instagram/>



<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/snapchat/>



Tik Tok

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/tiktok-all-you-need-know/>



<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/whatsapp/>