

Keeping our Children Safe

Springfield's partnership approach to digital device safety
Tuesday 10th September 2024



Acceptable Use - please read and sign

September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Springfield Community Primary School regularly reviews and updates all Acceptable Use documents to ensure that they are consistent with the school Online Safety and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies. We attempt to ensure that all students have good access to digital technologies to support their teaching and learning and we expect all our pupils to agree to be responsible users to help keep everyone safe and to be fair to others.

Your child will be asked to read and sign an Acceptable Use Policy in school that is tailored to their age. Please read this carefully with your child at home to support the key messages.

Please also read and sign the agreement below for you as a parent or carer and return to your child's class teacher.

Internet and IT:

As the parent or legal guardian of the pupil(s) named below, I grant permission for the school to give my child access to:

- the internet at school
- the school's chosen email system
- Google Classroom
- IT facilities and equipment at the school

I accept that ultimately the school cannot be held responsible for the nature and content of materials accessed through the internet and mobile technologies, but I understand that the school takes every reasonable precaution to keep pupils safe and to prevent pupils from accessing inappropriate materials. I understand that all internet and device use in school is subject to filtering and monitoring; I understand that all school-owned devices used outside of school may also be subject to filtering and monitoring, and should be used in the same manner as when in school.

Use of digital images, photography and video:

I understand the school has a clear policy on "The use of digital images and video" and I support this. I understand that the school will necessarily use photographs of my child or including them in video material to support learning activities. I accept that the school may use photographs / video that includes my child in publicity that reasonably promotes the work of the school, and for no other purpose.

Your child's Acceptable Use agreement - explained and signed in school and a copy shared with you

KS1

This is how I keep SAFE online:	✓
1. I only use the devices I'm ALLOWED to	
2. I CHECK before I use new sites, games or apps	
3. I ASK for help if I'm stuck	
4. I THINK before I click	
5. I KNOW people online aren't always who they say	
6. I don't keep SECRETS just because someone asks me to	
7. I don't change CLOTHES in front of a camera	
8. I am RESPONSIBLE so never share private information	
9. I am KIND and polite to everyone	
10. I TELL a trusted adult if I'm worried, scared or just not sure	

My trusted adults are _____ at school

_____ at home and _____

My name is _____

KS2

KS2 Pupil Online Acceptable Use Agreement

This agreement will help keep me safe and help me to be fair to others

- **I am an online digital learner** – I use the school's internet and devices for schoolwork, homework and other activities to learn and have fun. I only use sites, games and apps that my trusted adults say I can.
- **I am a secure online learner** – I keep my passwords to myself and reset them if anyone finds them out.
- **I am careful online** – I think before I click on links and only download when I know it is safe or has been agreed by trusted adults. I understand that some people might not be who they say they are, so I should be very careful when someone wants to be my friend.
- **I am private online** – I only give out private information if a trusted adult says it's okay. This might be my home address, phone number or other personal information that could be used to identify me or my family and friends.
- **I keep my body to myself online** – I never change what I wear in front of a camera and remember that my body is mine and mine only, and I don't send any photos without checking with a trusted adult.
- **I say no online if I need to** – if I get asked something that makes me worried or upset or just confused, I say no, stop chatting and tell a trusted adult.
- **I am a rule-follower online** – I know that some websites and social networks have age restrictions and I respect this; I only visit sites, games and apps that my trusted adults have agreed to.
- **I am considerate online** – I do not join in with bullying or sharing inappropriate material.
- **I am respectful online** – I do not post, make or share unkind, hurtful or rude messages/comments and tell my trusted adults if I see these.
- **I am part of a community** – I do not make fun of anyone or exclude them because they are different to me. If I see anyone doing this, I tell a trusted adult.
- **I am responsible online** – I keep others safe by talking to my trusted adults if a friend or person I know is being bullied or harassed or is worried or upset by things they read, watch or hear.
- **I don't do public live streams on my own** – and only go on a video chat if my trusted adult knows I am doing it and who with.
- **I communicate and collaborate online** – with people I know and have met in real life or that a trusted adult knows about.
- **I am SMART online** – I understand that unless I have met people in real life, I can't be sure who someone is online, so if I want to meet someone for the first time, I must always ask a trusted adult for advice.
- **I am a creative digital learner online** – I don't just spend time online to look at things from other people; I get creative to learn and make things! I only edit or delete my own digital work and only use other people's with their permission or where it is copyright free or has a Creative Commons licence.
- **I am a researcher online** – I use safer search tools approved by my trusted adults. I understand that not everything online can be believed, but I know how to check things and know to 'double check' information I find online.

I have read and understood this agreement. I know who are my trusted adults are and agree to the above.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

What is our approach?

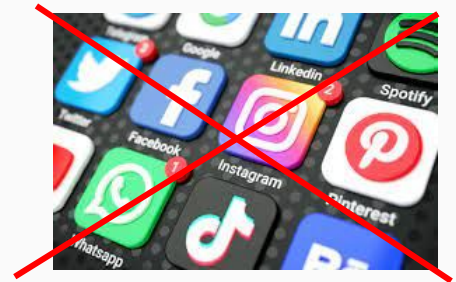
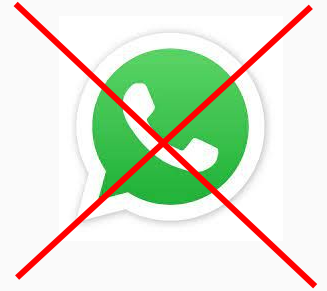
Our goal is to be **proactive** and to work in **partnership** with families to prevent the **detrimental** and **damaging** impact phone/ digital device ownership and use can have on children.

We aim to be a primary school where **NO** child 'owns' a mobile phone/ tablet or accesses a tablet device without being supervised.

We aim for **NO** child to participate in group chats on any platform.

We aim for **NO** child to have any personal social media account e.g. Whatsapp, Instagram, Tiktok, Discord etc.

We are striving for a culture of **support** and **solidarity** - where a shared approach makes it easier for each individual family.



Why has is there an updated approach at Springfield?


We are responding to a rapidly changing digital world and highly significant risks.

We are responding to emerging issues and our experiences with children and families at Springfield and in the borough.

We are acting on the advice of our safeguarding partners.

We believe wholeheartedly in an approach where adults take responsibility for ensuring children's wellbeing, mental health and physical safety are protected at all times.

Risks of mobile device use and unsupervised access to the internet and social media

 The Guardian

US surgeon general issues advisory on 'profound' risks of child social media use

Dr Vivek Murthy calls on tech companies and policymakers to take 'immediate action' to protect children's mental health.


2 weeks ago



Samaritans report reveals dangers of social media's self-harm content

More than three quarters of people surveyed saw self-harm content online for the first time aged 14 with some being as young as 10.

8 Nov 2022

 Financial Times

Smartphones and social media are destroying children's mental health

Something is going very wrong for teenagers. Between 1994 and 2010, the share of British teens who do not consider themselves likeable fell...

9 Mar 2023



Social media is driving teen mental health crisis, surgeon general warns

Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, long a proponent of mental health awareness, has issued a warning that social media use is a main contributor...

2 weeks ago



Risks of group chats - multiple platforms

(Whatsapp, Discord, Snapchat + gaming accounts and more)

Group chats with unknown members

If your child is added to a group chat, they have no control over who else enters the chat and has access to their mobile phone number. They can then receive direct messages and calls from a stranger. Someone may claim to be a friend of a friend or a child from a nearby school but your child has no way of knowing whether this is true or not.

Inappropriate content

Photos, videos, web links and voice notes can be sent over these platforms. There is no filter ensuring that the content your child sees is safe. Content that your child posts can be screen-grabbed or filmed and shared beyond the group they are in. The sharing of screen-grabs and films can cause significant distress. Unkind content may be shared in this manner, as well as content that is no longer in context.

Social exclusion and cyber-bullying

The group 'admin' controls who is allowed in the group. Your child can be excluded from groups which involve their friends in school. There may be pressure to be online at certain times or your child may feel anxious about being left out of certain conversations. This can have an impact on their happiness at school and at home. Some children send hurtful messages via WhatsApp that they would not say in person. These messages can be deleted so you may not see them on the thread later.

Risks of mobile device use and unsupervised access to the internet and social media

OFCOM'S 'CHILDREN AND PARENTS: MEDIA USE AND ATTITUDES' REPORT 2023

Each year, Ofcom – Britain's regulatory body for communications – produces an overview of children and parents' media experiences across the previous year. The latest version has just been released, and we've pulled out some of the report's most thought-provoking findings which relate to online safety ...

97%

of children had access to the internet at home in 2022

89%

of children played video games

25%

played with people they didn't know

22%

talked to people they didn't know



PARENTAL CONCERNS



Parents and carers most commonly worried about their child ...

75%

seeing age-inappropriate content

18

CENSORED

70%

being cyber-bullied online



70%

seeing pro-self-harm content



65%

giving out personal details to strangers



65%

having their data collected by companies



National Online Safety*

#WakeUpWednesday

What can you do at home?

Start a clear message early: children at Springfield do not own phones. They do not have social media like Whatsapp. We are proud of this because it helps to keep us all safe!

Supervise any access to a device. Even short moments of unsupervised usage present real risks.

Ensure NO shared device is accessed in a private space e.g. bedroom or with headphones on.

Apply filters and safety settings e.g. blocking YouTube and only allowing access to YouTube Kids.

Ensure ONLY adults know passwords to a device or any account.

Holding the line together makes it easier for each and every family.

Our Curriculum

We teach children valuable knowledge to help them to stay safe **in the future.**

- age limits and restrictions

- never sharing personal information online e.g. a name/address/photo

- never meeting strangers

- communicating kindly - all communication leaves a 'digital footprint'

- screen time limits

- not trusting all content online - knowing how to check the reliability of a source

- not being tricked by scams or tempted by in-app purchases

- strong passwords

They cannot be responsible for applying all of this learning independently now because they are far too young.

It is really important that these messages are echoed and applied at home for them to really have an impact.

We do not just want children to 'know' how to be safe. We want them to use this knowledge even in contexts where apps and devices are specifically designed to be addictive and to encourage less safe behaviour.

We have to work actively against the 'pulls' of the social media companies and the marketing of the devices.

We ask everyone to *hold the line* in the children's best interests

A child may say	We can say
I'm the only one without a phone!	Springfield is a proudly phone-free school. Most/ all of your friends do not have a phone. We are part of that community/team so you will not be having a phone. I know ... and ... also do not have phones. You don't have to like this rule but it isn't changing.
Please can I just use your phone to talk to my friends on Whatsapp or I'll be left out.	Whatsapp is not appropriate for primary aged children. As your parent/carer I'm keeping you safe by not letting you use it. Instead, you can...
I'm just going to play this game on the tablet. It has music so please can I use headphones?	Let me check exactly what is in the game and make sure there is no 'chat' function. I need to see the tablet flat on the table so I can see the game. You need the sound playing out loud on a low volume so I know what you are doing.
I need to do some research for home learning. Please can I Google it?	You can search it with me. Let's look on Curriculum Visions together - it's safe and reliable.

Myth Busting

Myth	Reality
<p>My child will be isolated because they are not on social media.</p>	<p>We have received more reports of isolation as a result of using social media because children can leave their friends out digitally e.g. blocking from a group/ creating a new group.</p> <p>Children without social media/ phones can more easily be reassured that they are not left out because they just don't have a device.</p>
<p>My child needs a smartphone to be safe.</p>	<p>In so many ways, phones create dangers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-cyber bullying-damage to self-esteem-body image concerns-isolation-contact from strangers-hidden peer pressure-theft-road safety

Safety for Y6 transition - using 'brick' phones/non Smart Phones instead

Some secondaries are proactively taking this route.

Access to calls and texts - 'I've arrived safely at school.'

Cheaper to buy and run.

No social media access.

Less valuable - lower theft risk.

Less addictive.



Safeguarding

iREPORTit

The iReportit App has launched! **This free app allows the public to easily and anonymously report terrorist/violent extremist content online.** With increased internet usage initially due to the national lockdown, there has also been an increased opportunity for members of the public to be exposed to disturbing material. Now **using this app, content can be reported and removed, therefore countering the online presence of violent extremists.** All content reported is reviewed by specially trained officers and appropriate action taken. Community strength and cohesion, both in physical and digital spaces, is vital to a strong and powerful society. Empowering the public with the tools like this, help stop violent extremism taking root and is a crucial part of this.

For more information please go to #iREPORTit on Twitter.



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.