



Bessemer Grange Primary School

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Dear Parents / Carers,

As today is Safer Internet Day we have been sharing with the children ways that they can stay safe online and how to behave responsibly when using tablets, home computers and smart phones.

The best way to keep your family safe online, and to understand your children's internet use, is to use the internet together. Active engagement and conversations with your children is key. Take some time to explore the games and services that your child is using, and look out for any safety features that may be available. This will give you a better understanding of the different ways that your child is engaging with technology and help you to feel more confident.

Creating and reviewing rules and boundaries may be a useful step, which might include time spent online, sites that can be visited, and behaviour expected: remember, what's right and wrong offline is also right and wrong online. Some strategies that can help manage time online include agreeing time limits or using time limiting tools (sand timers, stop watches, alarms etc.); designating weekly times to use the internet/computer/tablet together, or removing portable devices from your child's bedroom at night to avoid tiredness. Do try and keep screen time limited and if possible make it interactive. For example, watch a family film and discuss the outcomes and narrative of the story at the end. If using computer games try some active and sociable games such as those with the Wii or Kinect.

There are many different online games available to children. Gaming may be the very first way that your child encounters life online. Some games however are for adults or older audiences and contain images, content and language that is not suitable for children. Therefore, it is important that the games your children play are of the correct age rating. Like film classifications, these ratings are determined by the game's content, and all video games sold in the UK are clearly marked with age ratings set by PEGI (Pan European Games Information). Some online games may also be age rated or be classified 'PEGI OK.' Familiarise yourself with the different PEGI icons so that you are aware of what type of game you are buying or your child is accessing online.

We will be having a parents' workshop delivered by experts from the NSPCC in the near future and once a date has been confirmed we will let you know.

I hope that this information is useful to you and that it enables you to have a better understanding of what your child does and how you are able to help them online.

Best Wishes,

Ned Symes

Computing Coordinator