Is it age-appropriate?

Age ratings on games, apps, social networking sites and films are a good guide to whether they are suitable for your child. Some games let children play and chat with anyone in the world. This means they might come across offensive language and bullying. It is easy to pretend to be someone else online so your child needs to know that they should not share personal information online that could identify them or where they are.

Facebook and Instagram and many other social networking sites usually have a minimum age limit of 13 years old. However, there are sites aimed at younger children that have social networking features such as chat enabled so your child could be chatting online without you being aware of this happening. Ask your child to show you what websites they like to use and ensure your child is aware of how to keep safe online. Check the internet history if you are worried what websites your child is accessing.

Help your child to be aware that they should not share their personal information online, e.g. their real name, password, phone number, address, email address, pet names, friends or family names and their school.

Downloading

If anyone in your home is downloading music, TV shows or films, it is essential that it is through a secure and legal site such as i-Tunes. Spotify and Netflix both allow unlimited streaming and are legal. It is illegal to download most films, songs and games without paying for them. You will be held responsible for any illegal downloads that your child may make. Downloading content from illegal sites may also expose your device to viruses and spyware which may allow remote access to your device or may gather data about you.

Privacy

Child-friendly apps can be fantastic if you choose the right ones. Apps may share the users location and many apps send information about the device and user to a third-party. Even free apps usually have in-app purchasing so be careful that your child cannot access the internet when playing on these and run up a large bill without realising it. Make sure your device needs a password to download an app and that your child does not know this password. Chatting apps such as Skype can be really useful to contact family and friends but it is really important that you know who your child is talking to online and what they are talking about.

BRADDAN PRIMARY SCHOOL
Isle of Man
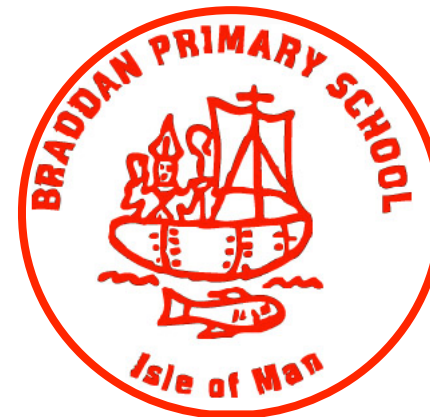
Safer Internet Day
11th February 2020

Safeguarding children in a digital world

Be involved and in control

Ensure your child is in the same room as you when they are online so that you can see what they are doing. Use airplane mode on your device when your child is using to ensure that they can't make any unapproved purchases or interact with anyone online without your knowledge. If you are happy for them to access the internet, then choosing safe, fun and educational games such as Reading Eggs or My Maths is a good way for them to start using the internet. The Safer Schools app is a great resource for information on how to stay safe online too.

Agree boundaries

Many parents worry about how much screen time their child has each day watching TV or playing on tablets, phones or other electronic devices. Having set rules about access time (when and for how long) can make it easier for you to manage screen-time and to monitor what your child is doing online. Be clear with your child what they can and cannot do online and what information they should not be sharing online.

Use Parental Controls

Most internet-enabled devices allow you to set parental controls so you can manage what content your child can see and how they interact with others online.

For advice on how to set up parental controls on different platforms and devices, use the online tool on this website to access helpful videos and step by step instructions:
https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/interactive-guide/

Use Passwords

Set passwords on your internet enabled devices and don't share the passwords with your child. If you keep them out of reach until you are happy for them to access the internet, then you will know when, where and how often they are accessing the internet. Talk to them about the importance of passwords not being shared and why you have them.

Search Safely

Did you know that your child can use safer search engines such as swiggle.org.uk or Kid Search?

Google has a SafeSearch filter that can be activated to help block explicit or inappropriate images.

You can also activate '**safety mode**' on Youtube. You will need to sign in and then scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on '**safety**' to open a drop down menu. Select '**on**' and then '**save**.'

User Accounts

Set up user accounts for your children that are separate from your own password-protected account. For young children, set their homepage to a child-friendly website like CBeebies or another suitable website. Chat to older siblings about them being careful and responsible when younger brothers or sisters might be looking at what they are doing online. Talk to them about how they can keep their younger siblings safe online and be a good role model.