



# St George's School Bourton

A Church of England School

*work together, play together  
learn together ... shine!*

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Dear Parents,

Please take the time to read this communication

Having attended a Safeguarding course last week there were a number of items raised during a presentation by the Safe Schools & Communities Team regarding E Safety which I would like to share with you.

As everyone is aware the internet is an amazing source of information for research, shopping for the 'best deal' and social interaction etc. However, it also sadly can have a more sinister side. Our computer-confident young pupils can inadvertently place themselves in a dangerous position if their online activities are not closely monitored by parents. We were told a number of 'horror' stories last week which endorsed the need for care.

There have been many cases of youngsters accessing websites that were not appropriate for their age and unfortunately parents had not realised the risk these sites could present. Youngsters were contacted by persons who then proceeded to 'groom', bully or influence them through the 'chat' facility as the site security settings had been missed by the youngsters and not checked by parents. One such case involved an 8 year old girl who uploaded and posted a video of herself dressed-up and miming to her favourite popstar. Innocently she expected it to be enjoyed and shared with her friends but it was actually uploaded to a public account as the particular website had a feature that allowed the content to be shared. Consequently the video was accessible to anyone using the site. Parents and child were horrified when they found out.

Listed below are a selection of the more popular websites children have been known to use and some comments I hope you will find informative to help you protect your child.

Name	Age group	Comments
Slither.io	3 years +	Content is fine. Can be played online. No chat facility. SAFE (but user names may be rude).
Minecraft	7 years +	Content is mostly fine but it has the ability to allow contact with other players even in the pocket edition. May have risks of grooming and bullying. NOT RECOMMENDED TO BE PLAYED ONLINE BY YOUNG CHILDREN
Minecraft Realms	7 years +	Can be played online for a subscription from £2.99 per month. Only invited players can play.

PokemonGo	3 years + GPS active	Safety issues that your location service has to be on and routes may mean crossing roads, walking down alleyways not usually used. Meetings with strangers who are following the same route or congregating at particular places. Under supervision can be great fun and informative about the area.
Instagram/Facebook  (Instagram is owned by Facebook. It does not state a legal lower age limit but be sure to read the Terms and Conditions VERY CAREFULLY).	PG 13+	Access can be by unknown persons. Inappropriate content may be posted. Images and videos may be shared. Instagram is more likely to be used by U-Tubers. WARNING: A group may be set up, later other people may be invited to join but beware the newcomers will have access to the information on line about <u>all</u> group members.
Snapchat/KIK	PG 13+	Both sites allow the sharing/altering of images and playing of videos. There are Aps available to record Snapchat. Not all of the screen is always immediately visible and this portion can contain stories etc that have inappropriate content for under 13 year olds. Young people think they can delete inappropriate images from Snapchat but these can be traced by police.  KIK - not popular with young people but is known to have been used by individuals for 'grooming' purposes. ASK why, if your youngster is using this site.
Spotify	PG 13+	Explicit lyrics. Inappropriate advertisements. Chat facility.
Musical.ly (This site is known to be very popular with younger girls of 8 years +)	PG 12+	Explicit lyrics. Sharing content facility which allows contact from anyone.
ooVoo/Skype	3 years +	Video calling. Possible communication from unknown persons can lead to exposure to inappropriate content/contact NO YOUNG CHILD SHOULD HAVE THESE ON A TABLET AS THEY MAY EASILY ANSWER THE CALL. <b>Beware</b> these apps are sometimes pre-loaded on a tablet.

### YouTube

An excellent online visual encyclopaedia to help us learn anything but it is very easy to upload videos to this site and as we all know it is VERY public. Unfortunately it can also attract less desirable characters who tempt children to participate in live-streaming so they can make personal contact... another opportunity for grooming, bullying etc.

There are some very popular 'celebrity you tubers' who the children like to follow. Sometimes the content is not suitable for younger children and they are not always the best role models for our children to aspire to.

The websites listed below are recommended by the police and well worth a visit as unfortunately there will always be some devious individuals using the internet whose purpose is to seek out and exploit the vulnerable and naïve.

Useful contacts if you want advice or to report an issue

<https://www.iwf.org.uk>

Internet Watch Foundation

Should you encounter inappropriate material on the web this may be reported to this site.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

A great website to help children learn about internet safety.

<https://ceop.police.uk>

Child Exploitation & Online Protection Centre - internet safety

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk>

<https://www.childline.org.uk>

On a more positive note:

YouTube Kids

Recommended by Safe Schools & Communities Team. It's free, simple to use and full of family-friendly videos.

Please check very carefully the security settings on ANY website your child may wish to use.

**PLAY SAFE and PLAY HAPPY**

and enjoy the Easter holidays.

With regards

Mrs Hibberd (Deputy Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding)