

## Positive online behaviour and the safe use of social media

With the majority of us now learning and working from home, we are all spending more time online and using electronic devices. In the current situation technology is proving to be hugely valuable for education, as well as being a social lifeline. As a result, many families are relaxing rules about the use of technology and the amount of screen time. However, concerns remain about the risks associated with social media and children's online behaviour.

### Positive online behaviour

When online it is essential that we all demonstrate positive behaviour and children are supported and encouraged to establishing good habits when using the internet or social media platforms.

*The word netiquette is a combination of 'net' (from internet) and 'etiquette'. It means respecting other users' views and displaying courtesy when posting your views to online discussion groups.* - BBC

In the same way that etiquette is a code of polite behaviour in society, 'netiquette' is a code of positive behaviour on the internet. This includes the use of email, social media, online chat, web forums, website comments, multiplayer gaming, and other types of online activity.

With our increased reliance on the internet it is important that children are reminded of the importance of being kind and respectful while working online and using social media. It worth establishing the habit of 'pausing before posting' and reminding children that once something is shared over the internet or on social media it might not be possible to get it back. A good question for children to ask themselves is whether they would be happy for their parents, teachers or future employers to view their online activity.

To support netiquette at Thamesmead the school values, Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), Charter for Behaviour and Behaviour for Learning Policy continue to be applied during remote learning.

### Thamesmead School Charter for Behaviour

- **Respect each member of the school community**
- **Respect everyone's right to learn**
- **Respect the learning environment**
- **Respect the school's reputation**

However, how we maintain and demonstrate these expectations as a community while learning remotely are proving to be very different compared to the normal school routines. Please support the school by discussing online behaviour at home encouraging children to practice good 'netiquette' when using the internet. One way of doing this is reminding them of the *THINK* approach before posting online.



## **The safe use of social media**

This period is a great opportunity to learn about what children are doing online. Increased access and reliance on electronic devices will often prompt children to use new social media platforms and apps both for school and entertainment.

[Parent Zone](#) has expert reviews of all the popular social media platforms and apps. Parent reviews are available on the [NSPCC website](#) and [O2's Net Aware Guide](#).

## **Parental controls and social media**

Parental controls are an essential tool to protect children online. They are not infallible – and there is evidence to suggest that too much reliance on them can be counterproductive. However, it is recommended that they are installed on all devices used by children.

For detailed guidance on setting up different controls, see the [Parent Zone's Parent Guides](#), and an online tool from [Internet Matters](#), these provide videos and instructions to help set up a personalised list of the controls used on different devices, apps and networks.

## **Social media online safety activities**

Every fortnight, [Thinkuknow](#) (the online safety education programme from the NCA-CEOP), release a set of short online safety activities to share with children between the ages of three and 16. These activities can be completed as a family, helping to develop a positive, supportive and collaborative approach to online safety.

[Click here for home activity packs for children aged 11-13](#)

[Click here for home activity packs for children aged 14+](#)