INTERNET SAFETY

Information for Parents and Carers

There have been incidents recently highlighted by the media that have raised enquiries from parents, as to HOW they can protect their children whilst on the internet. This information has been collated to give parents a reference for sources of useful advice and support. Our children have access to the internet via school, friends and libraries and even via mobile phones, so this information is important even if you may not have internet access in the home. All students at Highcliffe undertake extensive Internet Safety sessions each year.

Whilst we seek to protect our children, it is important to keep the risk in perspective, as there are benefits to the use of the internet. It is really a case of taking simple, sensible steps along with parental/carer vigilance, to minimise the risk, and equip our children with the knowledge and skills to keep them safe from harm.

There are various useful websites that give excellent advice and information.

www.childnet-int.org has the following internet safety rules for ages 8-14 and other useful information for parents and carers.

SAFE: Staying safe involves being careful and not giving out your name, address, mobile phone number, school name or password to people online
MEETING someone you have contacted in cyberspace can be dangerous. Only do so with you parent/carer's permission, and then when they can be present.
ACCEPTING e-mails or opening files from people you don't really know, or trust can get you into trouble – they may contain viruses or nasty messages.
RELIABLE: Someone online may be lying about who they are, and information you find on the Internet may not be reliable.
TELL your parent or carer if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk is linked to CEOP website and provides internet safety advice for parents, carers and young people regarding Chat and instant messenger, blogs and forums, mobiles, games, internet grooming, etc.

www.iwf.org.uk is the UK hotline for reporting illegal content on the internet.

www.ceop.police.uk is the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre and works in the UK. CEOP also provides an online service for reporting concerns.

www.kidsmart.org.uk has games teaching online internet safety and has downloadable guides.

However, if a child is in DANGER please contact the police IMMEDIATELY.

These are just some of the many sites available, so you can see there is plenty of excellent information and guidance available to parents, carers and young people. Spend some time having a look at the guidance and discuss it with your child to come up with appropriate suitable safety rules. We need to equip them with the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe from harm.

Over recent months, some broadband companies have started to implement new 'family filters' and it is well worth investigating what your provider is able to offer.