

## Welcome to this week's SMRT Safeguarding Update...

### Online Safety

We hope that your child or children have had a positive week in school and are enjoying re-connecting with many of their friends. We know that new Year 7 students have started to make friends and are enjoying their new subjects.

However, if there are any worries or a student feels they haven't settled, please contact the school and let us know. Our pastoral teams will be able to help introduce them to other people and alert their tutors that they may need to support them in addressing any of their concerns.

As you will be aware from the news and through social media, there has recently been a shooting in America that has resulted in the death of Charlie Kirk, a right-wing influencer. This has been a topic of conversation for many students in schools across the country and it has come to our attention that a few students are accessing videos of the killing on their phones, outside the school. Please be aware that these videos are graphic, upsetting and widespread online. As a response to this, we have created some resources for tutor times next week that give some advice to students regarding what they are accessing online and what comments they are making in group chats or in wider community forums. The main message is what they see cannot be unseen and discussion about the harms of accessing age-inappropriate material.

Please could you check in with your child about this topic and/or monitor their phone use regarding this particular issue. While not being accessed or viewed in school due to our no phones policy, we have a duty of care to alert you to this concern and provide pastoral support to the children who are accessing this material.

We know that in general, as students connect with each other, there are often new online friendships, chat groups and social media sites that they start to explore. This can be daunting for children (and adults!) and have some additional risks attached. We recommend the website [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org) as a good source of information and advice.

While we will be sharing further online safety information over the course of the year, the ABC online safety checklist has proved invaluable for many parents and carers. Please use this direct link: <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/abc-online-safety-checklist> or the content below for more information and advice.

## All ages

### Activate



Turn on [broadband filters](#) for basic protection on devices in the home.

☐

Manage [SafeSearch](#).

☐

Password-protect app stores to limit downloads.

☐

[Update parental controls](#) as their online activities change.

☐

### Balance



Set a good example with your own screen use.

☐

Create screen-free zones at home.

☐

Switch off devices an hour before bedtime.

☐

Encourage children to take breaks (for example every 20 mins).

☐

Charge devices outside bedrooms.

☐

Use screen time tools to help manage how much time they spend online, e.g. [Google Family link](#) for Android or [Screen Time](#) for Apple.

☐

Set digital boundaries and routines together ([Family Agreement](#)).

☐

### Check



Review the [minimum age requirements](#) for the apps, games and platforms for your child wants to use.

☐

Discuss [online risks](#) and strategies to tackle them.

☐

Ask children what they like to do online and why.

☐

Show them how to report or block inappropriate content on [platforms they use](#).

☐

Share your concerns about their online safety.

☐

[Talk regularly](#) with your child about their online life in casual settings (like over dinner or during a walk).

☐

## Ages 11 – 13

### Activate



Create child profiles on platforms they use.

☐

Limit chat and data sharing on online games like Roblox and Minecraft.

☐

Limit smartphone features to essential apps only.

☐

Review privacy settings on social media together.

☐

Use family or parent modes on platforms with social features to supervise use, like TikTok Family Pairing (13+ only) and Roblox Allowed Experiences.

☐

### Balance



Encourage children to explore a range of different types of media.

☐

Help them balance active (creating) and passive (watching) screen time.

☐

Help them review how much time they spend on devices (based on the tools you use) to help them learn balance.

☐

Encourage them to be selective about what they do online.

☐

### Check



Check if apps are right for their age and maturity level.

☐

Talk about ways to deal with online reputation, screen time use and cyberbullying.

☐

Ask them to show you how they use their apps and discuss safety measures.

☐

Ask them what they share online and how it makes them feel.

☐

Discuss ways to protect their privacy on different platforms.

☐

## Ages 14+

### Activate



Review [privacy settings](#) on social media together. ☐

Use family or parent modes on platforms with social features to supervise use, like [TikTok Family Pairing](#) and [Snapchat Family Centre](#). ☐

### Balance



Show them how to [use screen time tools](#) to check their device and app usage. ☐

Encourage them to be selective about what they do online. ☐

Empower teens to watch and follow a range of content types to avoid falling into [echo chambers](#). ☐

### Check



Ask them to show you how they use their apps and discuss safety measures. ☐

Ask them what they share online and how it makes them feel. ☐

Discuss ways to [protect their privacy](#) on different platforms. ☐

Together, review how to [report users and content](#) on the platforms they use. ☐

As always, if you have any immediate concerns about safeguarding issues, students, or the school site, please get in touch via:

[safeguarding@smrt.bristol.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@smrt.bristol.sch.uk)