St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School

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

WAKE UP WEDNESDAY

Safer Internet Day 2026

National Safer Internet Day is being held across the UK on 10 February this year and SMRT will be upholding this with a range of tutor activities and assemblies that help students to get to grips with the dangers of the internet. The theme of this year is focused on AI and how to navigate your way through a range of AI tools, the dangers these pose and the opportunities they present.

Elements of this update include extracts from The Southwest Grid for Learning and the UK Safer Internet Centre.

Artificial Intelligence and Online Safety | SWGfL

Supporter registration - UK Safer Internet Centre

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing the way we engage with technology. With AI constantly evolving and improving, it can be daunting to understand its strengths as well as its limitations. There are plenty of examples of AI out there with varying purposes, from chatbots to self-driving cars, and as such, the world of AI can be confusing to navigate at times.

What is Artificial Intelligence?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems. These processes include learning, reasoning, and self-correction. There are some really advanced AIs that can understand human speech, pictures, and even talk like a human. AI has been talked about a lot recently, but it was first introduced in the 1950's as part of machine learning, where scientists created intelligent computers and robotics that could learn from humans to increase their ability and accuracy.

With AI being talked about more and more, people have become concerned about how it will work and impact our use of technology. As with a lot of new innovations though, it's important that we don't worry. AI works by using special rules and patterns, much like how our brain works. It learns

from lots of data and makes decisions based on what it has learned. The more data it gets, the better it becomes at making decisions, just like humans get better with practice.

What is the Impact?

It might feel like AI is rapidly becoming part of our day-to-day lives as we begin to rely on it more and more. Many companies are also integrating new AI tools into their well-established services to support with efficiency. However, it's important to understand that AI has been part of our technology for a long time. Think about your personal devices such as your phone, home assistants and computers, they all use forms of AI to help personalise their responses and results to you. Although it may seem new, AI has already made significant impact across the world for many years.

More recently, AI has been used more frequently and has been included across larger scale models to support with areas such as content creation and assistance. However, despite the innovative qualities and impressive use, there are still concerns about how we can safely navigate these spaces.

Artificial Intelligence in Schools

With so much potential available, the use of AI tools in schools is consistently being debated. In March 2023, the Department for Education released a statement around the use of 'Generative Artificial Intelligence' and signposted towards the Joint Council of Qualifications to guide teachers in how to manage AI use in assessing work. While there is a white paper in motion for how the Government will regulate AI, schools may be taking their own approaches towards uses and restrictions. Needless to say, as the world is still adapting to AI, schools must be prepared for evolution and change.

AI Safety in Schools

Top Tips for parents and carers for parents and carers:

AI technology is increasingly part of all our lives, so this Safer Internet Day we are starting a conversation about how to use it safely and responsibly. Use these top tips to help keep you and your loved ones safe online.

Enjoy going online together and talk regularly about your family's online lives

The internet is amazing and can help us all to access information and entertainment. Spend time online with your child to understand how they are using technology and talk together about the good and the bad parts of being online. Talk about your own experiences and find other

opportunities to get the conversation started, like stories in the news. Make sure your child knows they can talk to you about anything that they see or experience online.

Understand where AI technology is being used and the impact it can have

From summaries on search engines, to voice assistants and photo editing tools, AI powered features are being added to many of the apps and devices we use day-to-day. Look out for information and warnings notifying you where AI technology is in use or where content has been created using AI. Help your child to recognise these too. Remember, AI can make some tasks simpler but may also collect data about you and your family, or share unreliable information, so consider how to use it safely and responsibly.

Recognise what safe and responsible use of technology looks like

To use technology, including AI, safely and responsibly, it's important to reflect on the potential impact it can have on yourself and others. How does your use of technology make you feel? How can you use technology with kindness and respect for others? Does your use of technology benefit you or help you build skills? How might it affect you now, and in the future? Ask these questions of your own internet use, as well as your family's.

Stay informed with free resources

Young people have told us about the incredible ways they're using AI, but also about their worries for what it means for the future. Issues such as the environmental impact of AI, what it means for job prospects, and the threat of deepfakes can seem scary but remember, you don't need to have all the answers. Stay informed using free resources like those produced for Safer Internet Day and talk to your child about their concerns about new technology – you can always work together to find more information.

Know where to go for help if something goes wrong

Like any technology, using AI comes with risks. Some AI tools, like ChatGPT, have built-in reporting features where you can raise issues such as inappropriate or harmful content. Many social media platforms also allow you to report content you suspect has been created with AI. Additionally, AI generated content can break the law. If you see illegal images that show child sexual abuse (including AI generated images), you should report these to the IWF and on the platform where they are being shared. If someone creates an image of you or your child using AI these can also be reported on the platform where they are being shared, and AI generated nude images can be reported to Stop NCII (for images of adults) and Report Remove or Take It Down (for images of under 18s).

Tik Tok Concern

Please be aware that there has been a recent concern raised by national agencies about TIKTOK accounts specifically targeting vulnerable young people and encouraging them to self-harm. These accounts are not based locally but are concerning enough for the police to be investigating. If your child has access to TIKTOK, please regularly check what they are accessing.

Advice regarding TikTok accounts is included in this link:

https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/apps-and-platforms/social-media/tiktok/

Additional resources and guidance for parents and carers

Government guidance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online

https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/resource/what-i-wish-my-parents-or-carers-knew-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers-on-managing-childrens-digital-lives/

NSPCC:

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/

Barnardos:

https://www.barnardos.org.uk/get-support/support-for-parents-and-carers/child-abuse-and-harm/keeping-children-safe-online

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