

St Joseph's RC Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of this Spring term, It is a good time to regroup.

We are aware that there will have been parents who would have liked to attend, but for various reasons were unable to do so. We would like to reassure you that we will continue to work here at school to ensure that your children are taught internet safety in an engaging and thorough way.

For any help or advice please feel free to approach any member of the safeguarding team here at St. Joseph's.

Talking to your children...

As parents we are always told how important talking to our children is. Many of us think we are always talking, guiding, cajoling, telling off... you get the picture. However, do we talk to them enough about the one place we cannot always be there to keep them safe? Yes, we're thinking about online safety.

There is always a new story about staying safe when connected to the internet, about how a child or young person was targeted. In fact there is a national advertising campaign for young people about sharing photos. But how do you have that conversation?

It's worth remembering that younger children need more guidance, and here at St Joseph's they are taught an online safety lesson at least once a half term. However if you have older children, the conversation can be slightly different.



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- Keeping children safe online regarding sexting
- Online weblinks where more information can be found on the subject

The following websites are good sources of information:

<http://parentinfo.org/article/start-talking-pants>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/sexting/>

<https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/news-features-and-safety-tips/Pages/Talking-to-kids-and-Teens-about-social-media-and-sexting.aspx>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/The-New-Problem-of-Sexting.aspx>

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The Department for Education has issued new guidelines for keeping children, and the school online safety policy includes a section on sexting. Just to clarify, sexting is when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos to others, or sends explicit messages electronically. In England and Wales as of January 2016, if a young person is found to be creating or sharing such data, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed, but formal action is not normally taken.

When talking with younger children, using the PANTS acronym on the nspcc.org.uk website (the underwear rule) is a good starting point. Have a look at what the letters mean:

P	A	N	T	S
<p>Privates are private: anything covered by underwear is private and no one should ask to see or touch those parts. Sometimes it is important to distinguish when it is ok, for example like a visit to medical professionals;</p>	<p>Always remember your body belongs to you: no one else has the right to make someone do anything that feels uncomfortable. If this happens then a trusted adult should be informed'</p>	<p>No means no: everyone has a right to say no, even to a family member or someone they love. Again, sometimes children need to be overruled in order to keep them safe. Be clear if this is the case;</p>	<p>Talk about secrets that upset you: explain the difference between good (e.g. surprise parties) and bad secrets. Explain that adults should not make children keep secrets that makes them worried, frightened or sad. Help them to feel clear and confident about what should be shared and when.</p>	<p>Speak up, someone can help: ensure that they know they can talk to an adult they trust. This person will listen and can help to stop whatever is making them upset. Ensure they know they will not get into trouble. Also, make sure that they have access to a trusted adult and the number to Childline.</p>

It is worth remembering that these conversations should not be a one off. Frequent conversations will help to reinforce the message, and as your children get older, adapting the message for their age group becomes easier. If you are ready to talk about it, but your child is not, don't worry. The most important thing is that you should not force the issue because you don't want to worry them overtly. You could just try including talking about keeping safe generally in day to day situations as it is less like a lecture or an admonition.

Bear in mind statistics show that 90% of sexual abuse is committed by someone familiar with the child, and one in three children told no one at the time of the abuse. Please remember to always keep the lines of communication open and encourage them to share their feelings.

Source of information: NSPCC website – link on the previous page.

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