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"Barnabas, the Encourager"

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Dear Parents

INTERNET SAFETY AND ONLINE GAMES

I am writing to remind you of the importance of checking what your children are accessing when they are online and the consequences of them playing on games with unsuitable content.

Five Nights at Freddy's

It seems that many children are playing on the 'Five Nights at Freddy's' Games. There does not seem to be an age limit for these games and they vary in their content. Some of the content and characters can be very frightening for children of primary school age. Some children are talking about the characters in these games at school and role playing these games in their play at breaktimes. This is leading to some children in school being frightened both at school at home. In order to ensure all children feel safe in school, role play games involving characters from these games are not allowed to be played in school.

Children have been spoken to about this and the reasons why they shouldn't play these games. Please support us by talking to your children at home about this, if they are aware of these games. I would recommend that you have a close look at the full range of the games to check whether the content is suitable for your child.

Parental Controls

Some parents have told us that children have managed to download unsuitable games and materials from the internet even when parental controls are in place. Some apps also look like they are aimed at children but they are not (children have told us there is currently a car game that has swearing in it!). Please be aware that many games/ apps do not have an age limit so many get through your parental controls. As children get older they may try to search for content that they have heard about from older children and find ways round the controls.

Recommendations are that parents should be fully aware of what children are accessing online, even when controls are in place.

Below are some links that will give you further information about how you can help keep your child safe online.

General information for Parents –

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>
<https://parentzone.org.uk/advice/parent-guides>

Parental Controls

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Parental-controls/>
<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/interactive-guide/>

Violent Games

Please be aware that children do often act out in real life what they play on computer games. This can lead to children being violent towards others in terms of their language and actions. It is helpful to have conversations with your child about the fact that the games are pretend and this behaviour shouldn't be played out in real life.

Games /Apps with Online Chat Rooms

A reminder to be aware whether the games and apps that your children are on have this facility – on some games/ apps this isn't always obvious. Do you know who your children are communicating with?

What we are doing in school?

Our computing curriculum includes age appropriate lessons in every year group on internet safety, including cyber-bullying.

In addition children will be doing some activities to mark 'Safer Internet Day' on 6th February with the theme 'Create, Connect and Share Respect: A better internet starts with you'.

Key messages that we teach the children can be seen in the attached posters.

If you have information about this subject that you think would be helpful for us or other parents to know about please let us know so that we can share this, working together to keep all children safe online.

Yours sincerely

Miss K Boardman
Headteacher