



Learning Together, Learning for Life

Dear Parents and Carers,

HOMEWORK: To complete the Digital Family Agreement on the reverse

Each year, children are spending more time on devices. Here is some information about principles for keeping safe online that we ask you to discuss with your child as part of this week's homework, which is to **complete the Digital Family Agreement**. A blank one can be found on the reverse of this letter and an **example of a completed one can be found on our website**. Once completed, please **return to your child's class teacher by Friday 20th September**. Please **do not stick this in** your child's Homework Book.

Instead of focusing solely on the amount of time your child spends on screens, think instead about what they are doing online, and whether this represents a quality '**digital diet**'. *How does their online activity impact on their physical and mental wellbeing?* The Children's Commissioner's '**Digital Five a Day**' framework has five things to think about each day to help put that into practice (see our website for more information on this).



While completing the Digital Family Agreement, speak to your child and agree some **basic boundaries**, such as **screen-free times of the day** (e.g. during mealtimes, during lessons at school etc.) or **screen-free locations** (e.g. in bedrooms), **when devices should be switched off** for the day (e.g. what time in the evening?) and **where devices should be kept at night-time** to avoid their addictive pull.

We know how important it is to children that they use technology (apps and games) to stay in touch with their friends. However, the **age restriction for all popular social media apps is 13 yrs.** (including WhatsApp, Tiktok, Snapchat etc). Sadly, sometimes the online contact that children have with each other on games and apps, can become unkind and harmful (e.g. bullying, inappropriate language/images being shared, children being excluded etc.). Using devices to communicate can make people feel invincible and forget the real-world impact of their words and actions.

Therefore, please help us to reinforce the following messages.

- Social media apps are for over 13 yrs so shouldn't be used before this age
- Messages can be seen and copied. Don't say anything to others or use language that they wouldn't like to hear themselves, or that wouldn't be said face-to-face in school
- Look out for their friends and stand up for them if others are unkind
- Report to a trusted adult if something happens that is upsetting or worrying
- Never get undressed online
- Don't take or share photos or videos of people without their permission
- Do not accept friend requests or talk to people they do not know and have not met face to face
- Be sceptical about being added to large group chats where you don't know most of the members. These could relate to scams or inappropriate content.

To help support children in controlling their digital diet, it is essential that you look at and set up the parental controls on all apps (as well as the device itself) with your child. Information on how to do so is available on our website.

If children are worried about something online, they should be reminded to talk to you or to any staff at school. They may feel more comfortable talking anonymously to Childline (0800 1111). And as a parent, you can also contact the NSPCC advice line on 0808 800 5000.

Thank you for your support - do let us know if you have any questions or concerns. There is lots more information available about online safety on our website and via [parentsafe.lgfl.net](https://www.parentsafe.org.uk/).

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Online Safety Lead