



BREDON
SCHOOL

Safeguarding Bulletin Michaelmas 2023 ~ Issue 01

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to our newsletter from the Safeguarding Team at Bredon School. Our aim is to provide you with the latest support and advice which could affect you and your children's lives.

Online Safety Act

The UK Government has announced that the Online Safety Act has now received Royal Assent putting rules to make the internet safer in the UK into law. The Act initiates Ofcom's new powers and places legal responsibility on tech companies to prevent and remove illegal content and stop children seeing harmful content.

For further information regarding the recent press release, please click on the below link:

[UK children and adults to be safer online as world-leading bill becomes law](#)

Source: NSPCC and the UK Government

AI Child Sexual Abuse Imagery

The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) has published a report on artificial intelligence (AI) generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM) online. The report looks at the prevalence of AI CSAM and discusses the abuse of AI technology. Findings from IWF data show: in September 2023 the IWF investigated 11,108 AI images which had been shared on a dark web child abuse forum; of these, 2,978 depicted child sexual abuse; and 1,372 of these images depicted 7- to 10-year-olds. Recommendations include: the Ministry of Justice should commission a review of the laws that apply to the removal of this content online; and there should be proper regulatory oversight of AI models before they go to market.

To read the AI report, please click on the below link:

[Research Report: IWF research into how artificial intelligence \(AI\) is increasingly being used to create child sexual abuse imagery online](#)

Source: NSPCC and the Internet Watch Foundation



FRAUD UPDATE FROM WEST MERCIA POLICE - ECONOMIC CRIME UNIT

WHO ARE YOU REALLY TALKING TO?

The internet is a fantastic innovation and has, in many ways, made life more convenient, provided more choice, and for many, made it easier to meet and communicate with friends old and new. Social media platforms, online dating sites and apps abound, as do chat facilities when people are doing other things like online gaming. Can you still remember the time before we had Facebook and other social media sites, when we had to meet people in person or write letters? It was all well and good when someone lived locally or even in the UK, but much more challenging if they were abroad. The key things about meeting up, however, was that we knew who we were talking with because we could see them, right there in front of us. If it was a phone call, we could hear their voice.

The internet has changed all of that because these days, we just don't know who we're talking to.

Although many people who we meet and strike up conversations – or relationships – with online are genuine and just want to enjoy our company and friendship, there are many people who have been scammed by Fraudsters and Identity Thieves who gain your trust online over a period of time as they engage with you as “friends”.

Then comes the “Sting” – the request for money arises as they suddenly appear to be a victim, needing help to pay for a sick relative, to pay for a journey, or one of many other apparently plausible requests. So now you are asked for bank details or even Gift Cards to send money to someone you have never even met! On top of that, they may have inveigled more personal and confidential details from you.

These criminals, all of whom are very convincing, can be individuals or organised crime gangs, and can be physically located anywhere in the world, be it here in the UK, Europe, Africa, Asia or beyond. They can appear more genuine by posting profile photos of other people (who might have an attractive appearance or even resemble celebrities), and increasingly, using AI (Artificial Intelligence) to generate fake voices, scripts and even video chats.

How can you protect yourself or a vulnerable friend or relative?

- It is very difficult to tell the difference between someone seeking genuine friendship and a criminal
- Ask yourself why that person wants to create a friendship with you, and what are their motives
- When it comes to the crunch and the request for money starts to appear – do not comply, never send money to someone you have never met however convincing the reasons for the payment are
- Never feel embarrassed or ashamed to ask a trusted friend or relative for advice
- Report the attempted scam to Action Fraud

Take Five to Stop Fraud

STOP: Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

CHALLENGE: Could it be fake? It's OK to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

PROTECT: Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud

ALWAYS REMEMBER:

- Avoid disclosing security details
- Emails, Phone Calls and Texts may not be authentic
- Always make direct contact with any organisation by using a genuine phone number
- Stop and Challenge any unexpected requests
- Protect others by reporting Fraud and Scams

If you've fallen for a scam, report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or via actionfraud.police.uk.

Scam Text messages can be forwarded to 7726 to help phone providers take early action and block numbers that generate spam on their networks.

Forward Fake Emails received to report@phishing.gov.uk

10 top tips for safely using SMARTWATCHES

Kids love gadgets, and smartwatches – available to buy from as little as £20 online – make a tempting gift. As with any type of mobile technology, though, smartwatches can pose risks to children unless they're used safely. Receiving unwanted calls, cyber-stalking and distracting a young person when they're crossing the road are all known risks associated with smartwatches. However, these devices can bring plenty of benefits for children and parents alike – so let's examine the pros and cons of smartwatches.

AVOID CHEAP OPTIONS

A quick search online yields a torrent of cheap smartwatches for kids, costing as little as £20. It's wise to avoid this bargain basement tech: it tends to deliver a poor experience with inferior battery life, and it's hard to have faith in the software's safety. There have been cases of smartwatches being hacked to track or contact children; stick to known brands who have a reputation to protect.

CONTROL CALLING

Many smartwatches have the facility to make or take calls. As with a phone, you may want to restrict who your child can call – or be called by. On Apple Watches, you can select trusted contacts who are allowed to ring your child, while other watches' controls vary hugely. Some need to connect to a linked phone for calls, so you may be able to block unknown contacts via that device instead.

BWARE HIDDEN COSTS

For a smartwatch to allow calls independently (that is, without being connected to a phone via Bluetooth), it will need its own mobile data plan. This might take the form of a tiny SIM card that you slot into the watch – or an eSIM, where the physical card is replaced by software settings. Either way, this will incur an additional monthly cost that you'll need to factor into any buying decision.

ENABLE FAMILY SHARING

Apple Watches aren't cheap, but they do offer superb safety features – allowing parents to control calls, messages and emails on the device, as well as a location tracking system that can send alerts if kids wander beyond pre-set boundaries. Their SOS function enables children to contact emergency services instantly if they're in trouble, which simultaneously also alerts parents and carers.

MAKE THEM COOL FOR SCHOOL

Some schools have banned smartwatches, as pupils have been using them as substitute phones. If your child's school does permit them, some devices can be set to prevent distractions in class. For example, Apple's Schooltime feature turns their watches into ordinary time-keeping devices during school hours. The display changes in this mode, showing teachers that it isn't being used for other purposes.

BE MINDFUL OF BEDTIME

Many smartwatches offer sleep tracking, which some (usually older) children use to justify wearing them to bed. However, that also presents a temptation to message friends or check social media late at night, even if their phone is downstairs. Unless there's a valid reason not to, you could encourage your child to remove the watch in the evenings and ensure the charger stays in a different room.

TRACK ITS LOCATION

Both Apple and Android devices have apps which allow you to track a smartwatch's location. They can also initiate an audio alert – avoiding those cushion-hurling panics when a treasured device can't be found at home. If you're planning to track your child's location via their watch, make them aware of that in advance. You could even make it a condition of them getting the watch in the first place.

THINK 'SAFETY FIRST'

Smartwatches are often worth hundreds of pounds, which can make young people wearing one a target for thieves. Advise your child to keep the watch hidden in public (when possible) and not to resist if muggers demand their watch. If you manage to track a stolen device, pass that information to the police: location data isn't always accurate, so you could end up wrongly accusing someone.

STORE MEDICAL INFO

Devices including the Samsung Galaxy Watch and Apple Watch can store the owner's medical details (such as their blood group and any pre-existing medical conditions), potentially giving emergency services access to vital information in a crisis. These devices also have 'hard fall' detection, which sends a text message to selected contacts along with a map showing the wearer's location.

USE THEM AS MOTIVATION

If you're worried your child's spending too much time slumped on the sofa staring at screens, smartwatches are great fitness trackers and can be a powerful incentive to get moving. Some devices will alert the wearer if they've been inactive for a long time and encourage them to do some exercise. Many watches record the user's daily step count and measure other health metrics.

Meet Our Expert

Barry Collins has been a technology journalist and editor for more than 20 years, working for titles such as the Sunday Times, Which?, PC Pro and Computeractive. He's appeared regularly as a technology pundit on television and radio, including on BBC Newsnight, Radio 4 Drive and the ITV News at Ten. He has two children and writes regularly about internet safety issues.



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iNEQE Safeguarding Group

iNEQE Safeguarding Group believe in empowering people to stay safer through education and the use of innovative technology.

As a leading independent safeguarding organisation they are unique in so far as; whilst they are first and foremost safeguarding specialists, they also have an advanced in-house software development capability. The company delivers safeguarding solutions to a wide spectrum of clients, including both public and private sectors across the UK, Ireland and beyond.

Their team of online safety experts has been alerted by their Safer School partners regarding the use of an anonymous chat website by children and young individuals. This platform, Emerald Chat, positions itself as "the new Omegle" but, similar to other risky platforms, it encourages interactions with strangers. After conducting thorough assessments, they have determined that Emerald Chat is unsuitable for use by children and young people. It features harmful and age-inappropriate content, including explicit imagery and language.

For further information regarding Emerald, please click on the below link:

[iNEQE: Emerald Chat Warning](#)



Online Life and Offline Life is Just Life

The NSPCC share advice about online safety. For many of us, we see our online lives and offline lives as different, but children are growing up with technology and the internet and for them there isn't a difference; online life and offline life is just life.


Technology can move at an extraordinarily fast pace, and it can be difficult to know how to start talking to your child about what they're doing online, who they might be speaking to or discussing the potential risks and issues.

Talking regularly with your child is the greatest tool to help keep them safe online. Talking regularly and making it part of daily conversation, like you would about their day at school, will help your child feel relaxed. It also means when they do have any worries, they're more likely to come and speak to you. But it can also be easy to become overwhelmed with the different technology, the language that children use, the huge number of games and apps which are available and the potential risks.

A core part of the NSPCC's 10-year strategy is to ensure children are safe online. To help achieve this they've teamed up with the LEGO Group to help promote their fun, free Build & Talk activities. The six 'adventures' help parents and caregivers talk with their children about key online safety topics through the joy of LEGO play.

LEGO® Build & Talk

How it works



Easy to start
Open the activity on your tablet or phone (a bigger screen will do better). Grab your LEGO® bricks and find a quiet, comfy place to sit together.

Just follow the story
Read the story aloud to your child. You'll find hints on what they need to build as you go along.

Start talking
Use the suggested questions and conversation prompts to start chatting about digital safety and wellbeing.

For further information regarding the Lego build and talk strategy, please click on the below link:

[Lego Build and Talk](#)

BLACK FRIDAY: Are they bargains or scams?



Whilst “Black Friday” is a relatively new event in the UK, it did not take long for criminals to seize another opportunity to defraud unsuspecting members of the public of their hard earned cash.

- In the heat of the moment, it can be hard to tell if it is a bargain or a scam, especially in the run up to Black Friday!
- Criminals may try to trick you into purchasing goods/services that don't exist by advertising them at too good to be true prices.
- Protect your money and information by only using retailers you trust, or authorised sellers named on official websites when shopping for deals online.
- Beware of Phishing emails that appear to come from reputable retailers with “too good to miss” offers, never click on links in emails from unrecognised senders
- Check out the security of the Website by looking for the https:// in the website address and the padlock symbol which should be in the address bar, and not in the body of the site, as confirmation of a website's security
- Fake websites can copy mainstream online retailers and enticing buyers with unbeatable prices, always stick with well-known, reputable retailers online
- Some online sellers may be selling counterfeit products at Black Friday prices.

SPOTTED AN ULTRA-LOW PRICE FOR A SOLD-OUT GAMES CONSOLE? #TAKEFIVE - IT COULD BE A SCAM.



- Does the offer sound too good to be true? Are they refusing to provide you with additional photos? Do they want you to pay up front by bank transfer?
- Only use the secure payment method recommended by retailers and auction sites, where possible, use a credit card for purchases over £100 and up to £30,000 as you receive protection under Section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act.

Safe Driving for Life

Safe driving for life is a comprehensive website that offers valuable advice and resources for individuals who are learning to drive. The website provides guidance on passing learner tests and finding a suitable driving instructor. It aims to promote safe and responsible driving practices by equipping learners with the necessary knowledge and skills to become confident drivers.

With a focus on safeguarding, the website ensures that parents can access reliable information to support their children throughout the learning process. It offers a range of practical tips, educational materials, and interactive tools to help learners prepare for their driving tests and develop good driving habits.

By utilising the resources available on this website, parents can actively participate in their child's journey towards becoming a safe and responsible driver.

For further information [click here](#).

Best wishes,



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