

What you can do

- Limit use of technology to set hours and in areas shared by the family
- Use technology designed to safeguard children, these can be parental controls provided by your internet service provider or built into most mobile operating systems such as IOS or Android
- Sit with your children and use social networks with them. Go through settings and show them how they can make their profiles or content private to only those who they give access to. Demonstrate how things they may think are private are sometimes not.
- Explain to your child why they should never meet or arrange to meet another friend or stranger they've met online. There is no way to verify who this person is, unless you are present with them.
- Educate yourself about potential dangers. The following section lists a number of useful places to get information.
- Show support, develop trust and be open with them so they feel comfortable about coming to you with any concerns if they need to. This especially applies to cyberbullying. Watch out for changes in their behavior as you would for any forms of bullying

Useful websites for parents

The schools website has a lot of useful information including links to useful websites.

Please visit

richardavenue.co.uk/safeguarding

Other useful websites:

stopbullying.gov.cyberbullying/what-is-it/

childline.org.uk/get-involved/childline-social-media/

net-aware.org.uk/

saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/social-media-guides

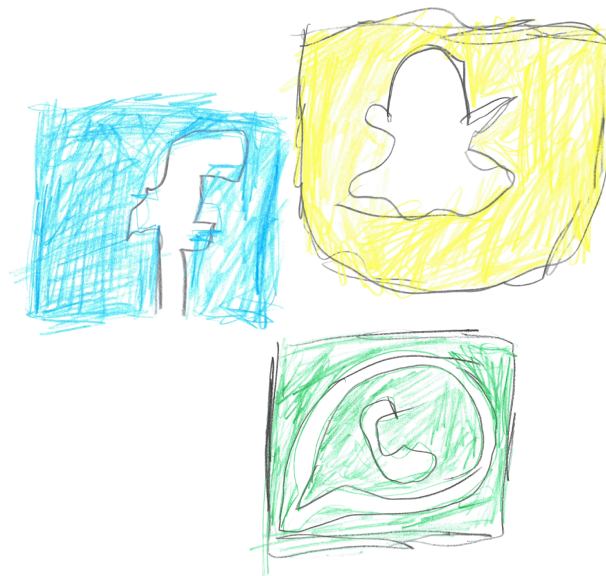
Or you can contact the school directly for more information:

T: 0191 553 6053

E: raps@schools.sunderland.gov.uk



Social Media



Advice for Parents and Carers

Social Networks

Social networking is a valued and prevalent aspect of life. It influences how we communicate and is integrated in such a way that it becomes difficult to detach yourself from it. Take your mobile phone, for example, people rarely text one another anymore and instead rely on social networks such as Facebook and Whatsapp to communicate. Removing yourself from these services can often mean falling out of contact with a group of your friends. For children this is a big deal. We know how it is at a younger age to want to fit in and be accepted and today this means engaging with social networks.

Popular Social Networks

When most people think of social networks they probably think of Facebook. But today the choices of how we present ourselves and communicate are varied by the uses of media and language.

Other social networks include and are not limited to Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube, Whatsapp and Twitter. Through these mediums children can share chats, photos, videos, music and more.

Feeding Creativity

It's worth remembering that social networks, as well as opening up lines of communication, can also be a very powerful tool for creativity. For instance, something like YouTube, which is a video based social website could be used by children to communicate their ideas as video logs (vlogs) or as short movies, in both cases children would have to consider the content they put out and the aesthetic. Another example would be Instagram to showcase a child's photography skills and/or interests with others. Both can be a real form of motivation and skill building exercise. When it comes to such things children are only limited by their imaginations.

Risks to Children

As with any online activity there are risks associated with children using them. You should be aware that a lot of these social media sites stipulate a minimum age of 13-14 to be able to use them. But this is difficult to regulate. Potential risks include:

- **Cyberbullying:** as your child can communicate online, bullying can also take place online. Usually in the form of texts, chat or comments.
- **Contact with strangers:** children online can be contacted by anyone. Often we don't know the intention of the person contacting them.
- **Misuse of personal and private information:** online profiles can blur the divide between public and private. Often information or data they think is safe can actually be open for all to see.
- **Hard to supervise:** most of these sites can be accessed from mobiles, tablets, computers, consoles etc.