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# Internet Safety

**Following our last Internet Safety Day, the following information was made available to us which we would like to share with you.**

The most obvious way of protecting your child while he/she is on line is to have the device they are using visible to you. All staff were amazed at the number of pupils accessing age-unsuitable content while they were on-line. The facilitator said that many pupils had played over 18 games! Amazement was also expressed about **HOW MUCH TIME** was being spent on line. A survey completed in school shows the evidence of this. As a consequence of this, staff feel that it is important that you speak to your child about the dangers of being on-line and accessing inappropriate content. You should be aware of who they are ‘chatting’ to when online. Some parents allow their children to earn ‘screen tokens’ which can be exchanged for a specific time using any sort of screen.

Most screens emit a blue light. **Blue light** can help elevate your mood and boost awareness, but chronic exposure to **blue light** at night can lower the production of melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep, and disrupt your circadian rhythm. Screens should not be used for up to two hours before sleeping to ensure that your child can get a proper night’s sleep. There is ample evidence in school that some pupils are not getting adequate sleep. It is most obvious on a Monday morning. The consequences of this on a child’s ability to concentrate and learn in school are very serious.

If your child has a smartphone, you must be a smartparent! For Apple phones and pods, you can use **Restrictions** to control what your child can do on the device. Just go to Settings>General>Restrictions and select Enable restrictions. Follow the instructions from there. Feel free to ask more about this at school if you are unsure of what to do!

For Android phones you will need to set up a new user profile before any changes can be made. To do this, open Settings>Device>Users>Add new user or profile. Tap New profile, put in name and select OK. You are now able to access the Apps list.

A better option for ‘Android’ parents might be to install an App (e.g.Norton, Kaspersky). These may cost a little but will give you basic control over phones and tablets.

Your child may want to access the Play Store. To enable parental controls in the Play Store, open up the store and click on the three horizontal lines. Scroll down to Settings>Parental controls, and switch the slider to **On**. Follow the instructions from here.

**Searching on Google:** Google is a great resource for learning but it's also full of inappropriate content. To restrict Google, you can enable SafeSearch filters. It is not perfect but it is a step in the right direction. Be warned: SafeSearch only applies to Google and not to other search engines.

In school it is intended to upgrade our Internet Policy and our Acceptable Use Policy to ensure that it is fit for purpose. A school camera will also be purchased to ensure that any photos taken will not be on personal phones. It is hoped to review all we learned this week on Safer Internet Day in February.