29th June 2020

Dear parent/carer,

**ICT support**

The Internet is a wonderful and powerful tool for everybody, not just children, to learn about and engage with the world at large. It has become ubiquitous, enabling an increasing amount of everyday equipment and appliances to operate more efficiently and quickly. It is used not just by laptops, mobile phones, tablets and iPads but also televisions and audio equipment. Even fridges, washing machines, toasters and the lights in our house can now be linked to the Internet. It is so common-place that it is easy to forget what life was like it without it and view it as a benign tool, always there for us to use without fear or favour. However, it can also be disturbing and frightening, offering images, services and other inappropriate goods to the more vulnerable amongst us; especially children. With this mind, the following links may be of assistance to help filter out these unwanted intrusions.

<https://www.safesearchkids.com/kids-search-engines/>

This is a handy tool for children who want or need to use a search engine. Alternatively, search for "kiddle google" for a link to a child friendly search engine. These can be bookmarked for easy access.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/> and

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/parental-controls/>

are both excellent articles, from a respected source, giving more general advice for Internet Safety.

For older children (but still under 13)

<https://support.google.com/families/answer/7103338?hl=en>

could be useful for them to have an element of control and freedom.

For more specific help and guidance, your Internet Provider will have a section on their Homepage explaining how you can set up Parental Controls which can usually be set to your own needs and wishes.

On a more general note, it is worth remembering that Facebook, Tik Tok and Snapchat have an age limit of **13.** For Whatsapp the age limit is **16**. Twitter are more circumspect. They do not ask for an age when signing up but deep down in their Terms and Conditions they say:-

Our Services are not directed to persons under 13. If you become aware that your child has provided us with personal information without your consent, please contact us at [privacy@twitter.com](mailto:%70%72%69%76%61%63%79@%74%77%69%74%74%65%72.%63%6f%6d). We do not knowingly collect personal information from children under 13. If we become aware that a child under 13 has provided us with personal information, we take steps to remove such information and terminate the child's account.

The following may be of use if your child has Tik Tok:-

<https://social.techjunkie.com/what-age-tiktok/>

The social media apps listed above are the most commonly used by children. There are, however, a multitude of different apps available. If your child is using one you have not heard about or even if you just want more information about any of them, please use your search engine for more information. Derbyshire Police have growing concerns recently over the following:

* Grindr

         Tik Tok

         Phetlife- World of Warcraft

         Instagram & Snapchat

The NSPCC also have concerns over the use of **zoom** and the number of increased reports of meetings being bombed with sexual abuse images.

We would also like to offer further support to any parents needing any help with computers/filters and keeping children safe at home whilst they are online. Mr Shaefer has offered to be available to parents during this time who may want to email him with ICT related issues for some advice , his email is alan.shaefer@st-elizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk

Take care and God bless,

Amanda Clemens

Acting Headteacher