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21st November 2024

Dear Year 5 Parents/Carers

We are writing to invite you to an important **Online Safety Parent Information Meeting** on **Monday, 2nd December 2024, from 6:30 PM to 7:15 PM**. This virtual meeting will be held on **Microsoft Teams** and delivered by **Sarah Dufton, Digital Police Community Support Officer from Derbyshire Constabulary**.

Sarah Dufton will also be visiting school on **Wednesday, 27th November**, to deliver online safety workshops to our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. These sessions, alongside the parent meeting, are part of our ongoing efforts to ensure all pupils grow as responsible digital citizens and develop the skills to keep themselves safe online.

This initiative comes in response to several concerns raised this term by pupils about inappropriate language being heard during break times and lunchtimes. Upon discussion with pupils and through targeted work with them, we have identified that some of these issues potentially have stemmed from pupils accessing inappropriate content online, at home, that is unsuitable for their age and stage of development. Unfortunately, some of this content, including gaming and video material, is being repeated or acted out during break times, which has caused upset among other children.

By offering these workshops, we hope to highlight the impact of accessing such material and work collaboratively to support our children in making safer online choices.

Pupils have shared that they are accessing gaming platforms such as **Fortnite** and **Among Us**, as well as short video content like **YouTube Shorts**. As we highlighted in our recent safeguarding newsletter, Shorts pose specific risks:

- ‘Shorts’ are short, engaging video clips similar to TikTok or Instagram Reels, designed to go viral.
- These videos can expose children to harmful or inappropriate content, often tagged misleadingly to it, making it hard for children to disengage.
- We have seen the impact of such exposure in school, with sexualised or inappropriate language being repeated.
- The function is highly addictive, encouraging prolonged screen time.
- This platform is largely unregulated with in-built algorithms to share similar content.

We strongly encourage parents to take the time to explore these platforms and ensure your children are accessing age-appropriate content.

We understand how challenging it can be to balance monitoring children’s online activity while allowing them to feel socially included and interact with their peers.

As parents, we all face the difficulty of navigating this digital landscape and ensuring our children stay safe while also enjoying age-appropriate online activities. This parental session on **Monday 2nd December** aims to provide practical advice and support as we work together to safeguard our children.

By working together, we aim to equip our children with the tools and knowledge to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly, protecting them from harm while fostering a safe and supportive school environment.

We hope you can join us for this important session. A link to the Teams meeting will be sent to you nearer the time. Please indicate your wish to attend using this link [Online Safety Support Session for Parents/Carers](#) and an email with the link to the meeting will be sent nearer the time.

For your information, I have attached a copy of the recent Safeguarding Newsletter that has a section dedicated to 'Keeping Safe Online'. If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs E H Britten

Headteacher