Strangers on the internet

Bullying on social networks
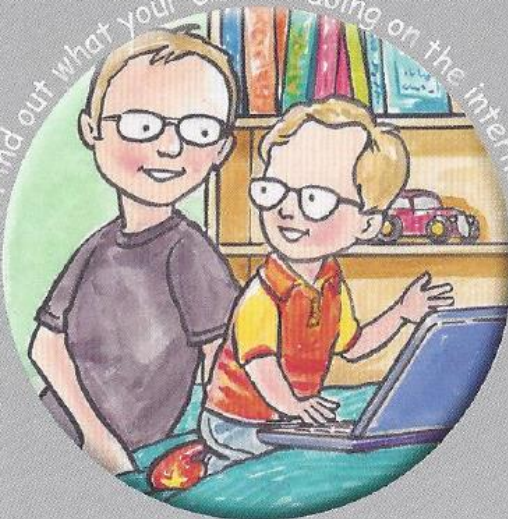
Helping your child to
'Stay Safe Online'
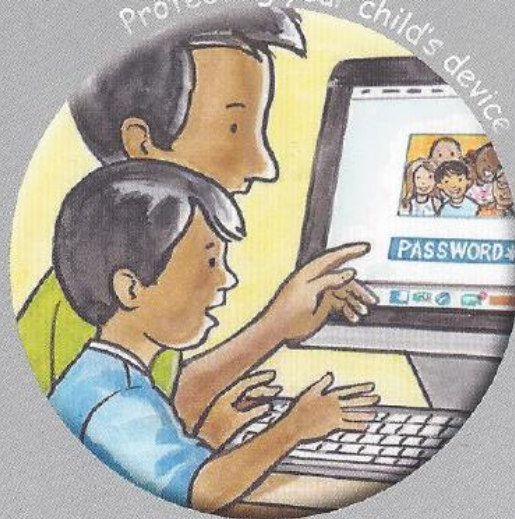
Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy

Parents often ask us for advice about helping to keep their child safe online. To help, we have written this guide for you and your child.

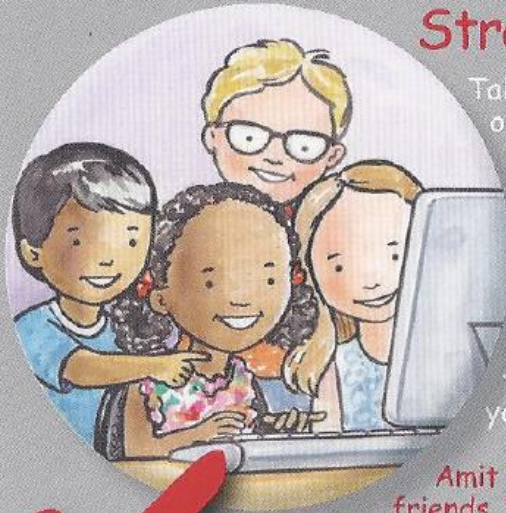Find out what your child is doing on the internet

Protecting your child's device

PASSWORD

There is now so much publicity and concern about inappropriate content on social media that parents often ask us for advice about helping to keep their child safe online. To help, we have written this guide for you and your child. Children are using electronic devices more and more, and following these steps will help you make sure that they are doing so safely and are aware of the potential risks.

Please read this leaflet through with your child and talk about the issues it raises. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns and we will help.
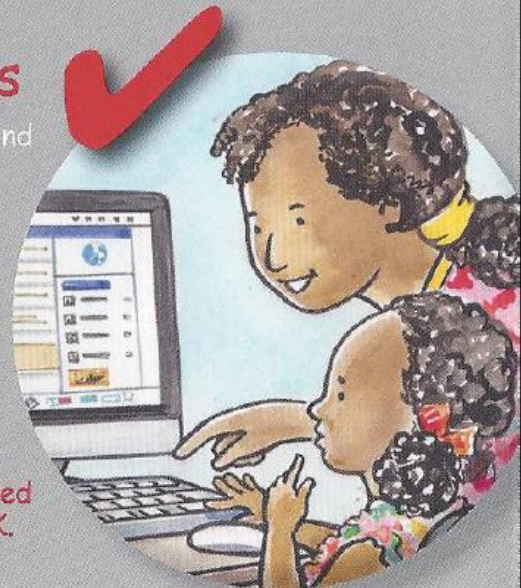
Strangers on the internet

Talk to your child about people that they meet on the internet. Tell your child to treat people on the internet the same way that they would treat strangers in real life. They may not be who they say they are. Even if your child regularly plays online games with them, they are not a real friend. So your child should not give out any personal information such as their address and phone numbers and they should not meet them unless it is under your supervision.

Amit is playing an online game with some school friends. They have a friend who they met online when they were playing their computer games. They know that he is not the same as a real-life friend so they do not chat to him and they never tell this internet friend any information about themselves.

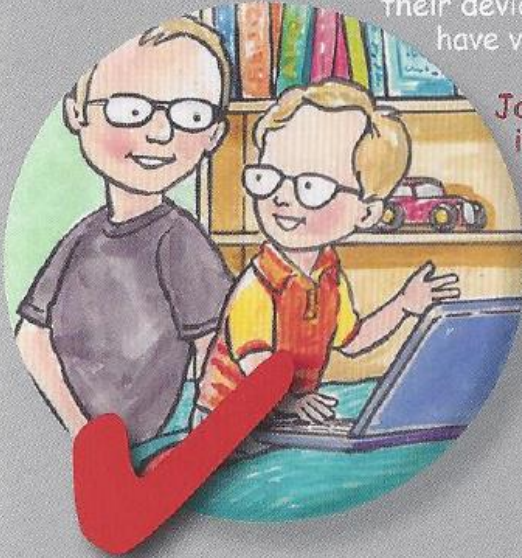## Bullying on social networks

Unfortunately, sometimes children can be unkind to each other on social networks. It is very upsetting as so many people can see it. Talk to your child about this and encourage them to tell you, a teacher or another grown-up they trust, if anyone is putting mean and unkind things about them on the internet.

Someone has said something unkind about Sasha on a social network site. She is very upset and she has told her mum straight away. Her mum knows what to do and she has promised Sasha that she will sort it out and it will be OK. Sasha now feels a lot happier.

Find out what your child is doing on the internet

It is too easy for children to find inappropriate material on the internet. So you need to keep an eye on what your child is doing online. You can make this easier by having their devices in a busy part of the house so you can see what they are looking at. Make sure that devices have parental controls on them so you only give access to age-appropriate content. It is also a good idea to regularly check 'history' on their devices so you can see what pages they have visited.
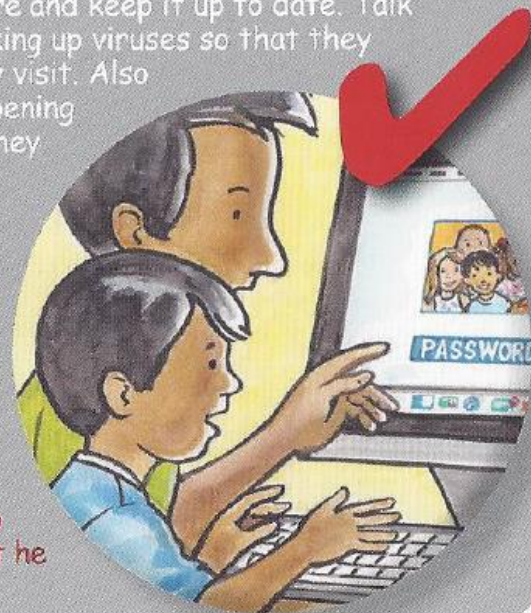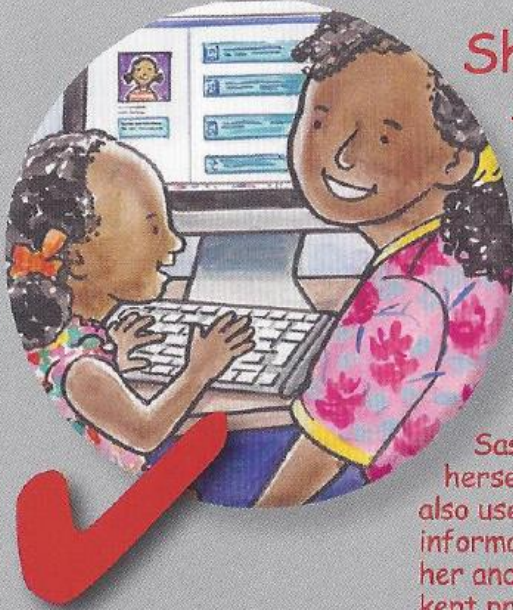
John is looking on the internet to get information for his homework topic. His dad is checking what he is looking at, and enjoying finding out what John has been learning. John enjoys sharing this with his dad and they now often do research together.

Protecting your child's device

There are so many ways that viruses can attack or access your computers and other devices. It is really important to protect all of your devices with anti-virus software and keep it up to date. Talk to your child about the risks of picking up viruses so that they take care about sites that they may visit. Also talk to them about the danger of opening links or attachments to emails, as they may carry viruses too. Where they have passwords, talk to them about keeping them secure (but share them with you) and choosing passwords that are difficult for anyone else to guess.

Amit's dad has made sure that all the devices in their house have anti-virus software and it is up to date. Amit has set up a password to access a website so it is secure, but he has also shared it with his dad.
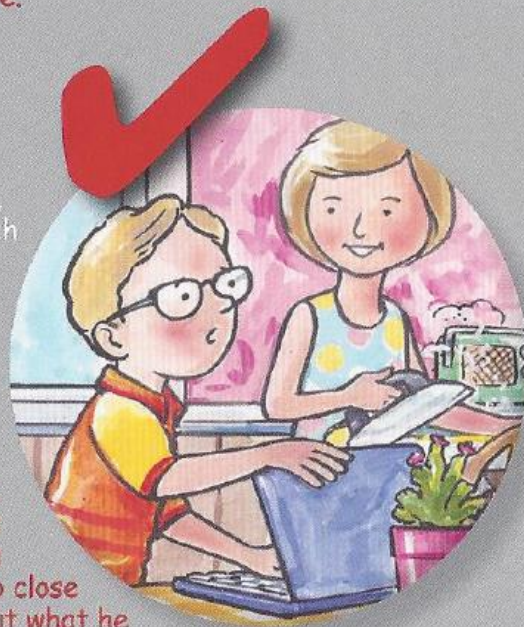
Sharing information on the internet

If something is shared on the internet, for example on a social network, you have limited control about who sees it and how long it stays on the internet. Talk to your child about this and encourage them to think carefully about any videos, pictures or opinions that they may post online.

Sasha is setting up some information about herself on a website that her school friends also use. She is talking to her mum about what information she would like people to know about her and what she and her mum think should be kept private.

Dealing with upsetting content

Despite all the safeguards you put in place, your child may come across something which is frightening or upsetting online. If this happens, tell them to shut the device down or walk away, and speak to you or another grown-up straight away. Reassure them that they will not be told off if this happens to them.

John has clicked on a link that has led him to something upsetting. As he only uses his devices in the family areas at home, he can tell his mum straight away. She tells him to close down the device and has a chat to him about what he has seen and makes him feel less worried about it.

Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy
Mere Close, Off Mere Road, Leicester, LE5 3HH

Telephone: 0116 2624418
Email: office@sacredheart.leicester.sch.uk
Web: www.sacredheart.leicester.sch.uk

Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy