

**SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2022**

Welcome to our first Safeguarding newsletter. We hope that you will find it useful and informative.

**Safeguarding Leads.**

Safeguarding is an integral part of school life and it is the responsibility of all involved in the lives of children to ensure that they are safe.

We have three Safeguarding Leads in school at this time – you can contact any one of them to discuss any safeguarding concerns or questions that you may have.

Name	Role	Safeguarding Role
Mr. B. McGregor	Head Teacher	Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs J. Davies	Deputy Head Teacher/ SENCo	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mrs B. Cartwright	F2 Class Teacher	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Keeping your child safe online**

**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February** is Safer Internet Day. With more and more children, from an increasingly younger age, spending time online, it is important that we as parents and teachers, keep up to date with the ways in which we can keep children safe online.

Useful links and advice for parents include:

Safer Internet: [saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers](http://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers)

Parent Zone: <https://www.parents.parentzone.org.uk/>

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

Each month National Online Safety produce a selection of information posters for parents – we will be looking to share some of these with you in each of our newsletters.

The first is guidance for parents on age-appropriate content.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

"Inappropriate" means different things to different people. What's acceptable for one age group, for example, may be unsuitable for a slightly younger audience. Online, young people can chance upon inappropriate content in various ways – from pop-up ads to TikTok videos. The increasingly young age at which children become active in the digital world heightens the risk of them innocently running into something that they find upsetting or frightening. Trusted adults need to be able to help children be aware of what to do if they're exposed to age-inappropriate content.

**WHERE IS IT FOUND?**

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

Age-inappropriate content is easily accessible through many social media platforms. TikTok, for instance, is hugely popular with young people but is arguably best known for clips featuring assumed dancing or profanity. Some social media users also express their anger at promote eating disorders and self-harm, which could cause lasting damage to a child's emotional and mental health.

**GAMING**

Gaming is an enjoyable source of entertainment, but many popular titles can expose children to inappropriate material such as violence, horror, gambling or sexually explicit content. Playing games unsuitable for their age risks normalising to children what they are seeing. Some games also include in-game chat, where other (usually older) online players often use language that you probably wouldn't want your child to hear or repeat.

**STREAMING**

The range of video streaming services available online means that users can find almost anything they want to watch, on demand. Children are therefore at risk of viewing TV shows and movies which contain nudity, drug and alcohol abuse, explicit language and extreme violence. Unfortunately, these streaming platforms can't always determine that it's not an adult who's watching.

**ADVERTS**

Online adverts frequently include age-inappropriate content, usually gambling and nudity or partial nudity, although adverts for alcohol or e-cigarettes are also common. Some search engines also feature adverts that are responsive to your search history, so if you've recently looked up a new horror movie, shopped for lingerie or ordered alcohol online, then the ads appearing on screen could reflect this the next time your child borrows your device.

## 18 Advice for Parents & Carers

**TALK IT THROUGH**

Embarrassment or fear of getting into trouble can make it difficult for children to talk openly about age-inappropriate content they've watched. Remind your child they can always come to you if they're troubled by something they've seen online, without worrying about consequences. Before offering advice, discuss what they saw, how they felt and how they came to find the content in question.

**CONNECT, DON'T CORRECT**

If your child's been particularly distressed by exposure to content that wasn't suitable for their age, it's important to offer guidance to prevent them from repeating the same mistake – but it's equally vital to help them deal with the emotions that the situation has raised. You could tell them about any similar experiences you might have had at their age, and how you dealt with it.

**BLOCK, REPORT, CONTROL**

After discussing the problem, you and your child can take action together. This could include blocking any inappropriate sites and reporting any content which violates a platform's rules. To further safeguard your child online, set up parental controls on internet-enabled devices that they use. This will significantly reduce the chances of your child being exposed to age-inappropriate content in future.

**GET SPECIALIST HELP**

Age-inappropriate content can potentially have a negative impact on a child's mental health, which is sometimes displayed through changes in their behaviour. If the problem becomes more severe, you might consider reaching out to a mental health professional or an expert in the field who can provide you and your child with the proper support.

**STAY CALM**

Even though it is obviously difficult to stay rational in a situation where your child has been put at risk, it's essential to think before you react. Your child may well have hesitated to open up to you about watching inappropriate content for fear of the consequences, so being calm and supportive will reinforce the notion that it would be easy to talk to you about similar issues in the future.

**Meet Our Expert**

Cayley Jorgensen is a Registered Counsellor with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, and she runs a private practice offering counselling to children, teenagers and families. Her main focus is creating awareness and educating the community on the mental health pressures of today's world, as well as resources and techniques to understand and cope better.

**NOS National Online Safety**

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.nos.org.uk/resources/parents/carers/age-inappropriate-content/>

[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) @natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

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### Out and About – keeping safe

With the lighter nights approaching, more children are walking home from school and are out and about after the school day. Take some time to remind your child of some simple but important safety measures:

- Use the green cross code to cross the road
- Stay off your mobile phone when you are crossing the road.
- Always let someone know where you are and where you are going.
- If you are out on your bike – be mindful of others and wear an appropriate helmet.