

# LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2

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## THEME OF *Online Safety* THE WEEK

Dear Students,

Working from home can be strange, but Miss McMillan, Mrs Bond and Mrs Pope all hope you've been enjoying your lessons! With school and entertainment all moving into the virtual realm, it's more important than ever to know how to stay safe online. That's why we've compiled a list of top tips for protecting yourself - whether you're taking part in online lectures, conducting research, chatting with friends or playing games.

### PRIVACY IS KEY

Whether you use Instagram, Snapchat or TikTok, make sure to set your account to private. This means that only the people you choose can access your profile. Your social media, game and music profiles often contain lots of little clues that people could use to find out plenty of things about you. A selfie with friends could reveal the school you attend or the area you live. Add the people that you know and trust, but make sure strangers are kept in the dark!

### KEEP PASSWORDS SECRET

Most accounts set up online require log-in details. Choose a strong password that would be hard for someone to figure out or for a computer to crack. Avoid personal details such as your birthday or pet's name as these are easily guessed. Never give out your password, even to friends. Something posted as a joke on your account could easily have negative consequences, such as upsetting others or getting you into trouble with your parents, carers or teachers.

### AVOID STRANGERS

Socialising online is a great way to keep in touch with friends and family and stay entertained - especially now! However, it's important to be wary of strangers. Online, you can't always tell who you are talking to or if people are who they say they are. If you do encounter people you don't know, use the same caution that you would in real life. Don't ever share personal details and alert an adult if you are pressured to talk about yourself. Never arrange to meet up with someone you only know online.

### THINK BEFORE YOU POST

Information can stay online for a long time, especially if somebody screenshots or shares it. In 2014, Justine Sacco - a director of communications - tweeted an insensitive racial joke just before boarding a plane. At the time of posting she had just 170 followers. By the time she landed just a few hours later, she had become the recipient of tens of thousands of angry tweets and was the number one worldwide trending topic on Twitter. Sacco was fired from her job and struggled to find another; a cursory Google still produces hundreds of negative articles about her tweet, years after the original post. Always remember that once you post something, it becomes very easy to lose control of and is likely to stay online for a long time. Don't post anything you wouldn't want your family, teachers or future employers to see.

### PROTECT FRIENDSHIPS

One of the hardest parts of lockdown is not being able to see your friends. The internet is a great way to keep those friendships going until you can see each other again, but navigating friendships online can be trickier than in person! Be mindful of wording in messages - it's much easier for a comment or joke to be misinterpreted when it's written down. Always think about how something might make others feel before you publish it & remember there is a real person on the receiving end that may feel hurt or excluded. Be kind wherever you can!

### SHUT DOWN CYBERBULLIES

Bullying can happen anywhere, including online. Many sites give you the option to report & block bullies; if you are made to feel unsafe, use these features & tell an adult. Threats & abusive messages are clear examples of cyberbullying but others aren't as obvious: liking posts designed to make someone feel bad is also bullying. If you're in a group where bullying is happening, stand up for the person being bullied, tell a trusted adult and encourage others to stop. It only takes one person to make a change!

### TAKE A BREAK

The internet is a brilliant resource for schoolwork, entertainment and connection with the people you love. However, it's also important to strike a healthy balance. Make sure to spend some time away from the screen every day to pursue your other interests and enjoy the world around you - practice your football skills, create an amazing piece of art, write a story, play with your pets, learn a dance or do something fun with your family.

### LIBRARIAN'S CORNER

We all have different ways of having fun online. Here are a few of ours!

As anyone who's taken part in Alternative Games Club will know, DHS's **Miss M** is a huge fan of games! Recently, she's been playing **Legends of Runeerra**, a strategic online card game.

At CHHS, Mrs B recommends **Monument Valley**, a beautiful logic game that's simple and charming. LCH's Mrs P enjoys a round of the classic word game **Scrabble** - & beating her friends online!