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## Lunsford Primary School

14 May 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you that we have recently become aware of issues in relation to the online safety of pupils concerning children using YouTube. We have had several reports of younger children accessing and viewing unsuitable and inappropriate videos. Whilst there is no age restriction for watching YouTube videos, it is recommended that all children up to the age of 8 use the YouTube Kids App which is designed for child friendly video viewing. For children over the age of 8, we recommend that restricted view mode is used which is a privacy setting that helps to filter out inappropriate or offensive content that you would not want your child to see.

We have also become aware that a growing number of Lunsford children have their own YouTube channel and have been uploading their own videos. Users must be age 13 or older to have their own YouTube account, enabling them to subscribe to other channels, like videos, post comments, share their own content and flag inappropriate content. When a video is uploaded to YouTube, the automatic default is set to public so anyone on the YouTube site, even if they aren't registered, could potentially view the video. This can easily be changed by adjusting the privacy settings on the account. Similarly, to other social media platforms aimed at teenagers and adults, YouTube also has a private messaging function where users can send each other messages and videos

If your child has their own YouTube channel, it is important to be aware of what they post and who can view it. We would recommend you have a conversation with them to understand what might or might not be suitable for them to share. Are you and your child comfortable with the idea that a video could be seen by anyone all over the world? Does the video contain identifying features – school uniform, your house, or local area – which might enable a viewer to trace them? If the videos contain other people, your child should ask their permission (and their parents) before uploading them.

It can be very difficult to keep ownership or control of a video once it has been posted on the internet. The video may be copied or reposted without your knowledge and it can then become difficult to remove every copy online. We recommend starting a supportive, ongoing discussion with your child around their digital footprint and what kind of content they are sharing.

If another YouTube user posts a video of you or your child, or shares your personal information, without your consent, you can request this content to be removed. Detailed instructions on how to do this are available [www.youtube.com/intl/en-GB/yt/about/policies/#reporting-and-enforcement](http://www.youtube.com/intl/en-GB/yt/about/policies/#reporting-and-enforcement)

Online safety is an important part of keeping children safe at Lunsford Primary School and is taught to all pupils. Our curriculum empowers children to understand and be aware how they can to stay safe and behave appropriately online but we can only be successful in keeping children safe online if we work with you.

Your help is needed to talk to your children about how they can keep themselves safe and behave appropriately online. It's important that we are all vigilant when children are using the internet and act to ensure they are protected from people who may pose a risk to them. Children can accidentally or deliberately be exposed to illegal, unwanted or unpleasant content, comments or activity online and there are steps you can take at home to minimise this risk.

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## Websites to visit for more information:

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) – Visit the “Parent/Carer” Section and use the “Click CEOP” button to seek advice and report online abuse

[www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com) – Visit the ‘Know It All’ Section for an interactive guide about online safety

[www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org) – Free up-to-date Security advice including using complex passwords and managing hacked accounts

[www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org) – Information from the four largest internet service providers (BT, Sky, Talk Talk and Virgin)

[www.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety) - NSPCC’s Share Aware campaign provides information for parents about popular social media sites, apps and games.

[www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk) – Parents guides to safety tools on popular devices and signposts report mechanisms for some websites.

[www.kent.police.uk/internetsafety](http://www.kent.police.uk/internetsafety) - Guidance from Kent Police

If you are worried that your child is at risk of harm or criminal offence has been committed then you can report your concerns to the Police or Children’s Social Care. Please do not notify suspicious profiles of your actions, as this could enable them to delete material which might be required for any Police investigations. You can contact Kent Police via 101 or 999 if there is immediate risk or report online abuse to CEOP by visiting [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk) and using the “Click CEOP” reporting button.

You can also contact Kent Children’s Social Services on 03000 41 11 11, or email [social.services@kent.gov.uk](mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk).

The School Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Lomax) and I are available to discuss any help you may need or concerns that you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Mr G. Anscombe  
Head teacher

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## Follow the “Gold”en Rules

### Ground Rules

- Discuss together as a family how the internet will be used in your house. Consider what information should be kept private (such as personal information, photos in school uniform etc) and decide rules for making and meeting online friends. Ensure your children know the risks of accepting friends' requests from strangers online and make sure you know what your child is doing online much like you would offline.
- Discuss using strong passwords with your child so they understand how they can protect their online accounts- talk about keeping passwords safe e.g. not sharing them with anyone or use the same password for several accounts. If your child's account is “hacked” or compromised then make sure they change their password and report any concerns or suspicious activity. For more advice on using strong passwords visit <http://tinyurl.com/Getsafeonlinepassword>
- Consider locating your child's computers and laptops in a family area but be aware that children access the internet on mobile phones, games consoles and tablets so can't always be supervised.
- Be especially aware of settings rules relating to your child's use of webcams and any applications or devices which allow voice or video chat. Childnet have useful information for young people about using webcams safely: [www.childnet.com/young-people/secondary/hot-topics/video-chat-and-webcams](http://www.childnet.com/young-people/secondary/hot-topics/video-chat-and-webcams)

### Online Safety

- Install antivirus software, secure your internet connection and use Parental Control functions for computers, mobile phones and games consoles to block unsuitable content or contact from unknown people. Research different parental control software and tools available for your home and select the tools which are most suitable to you, your child and the technology in your home. Visit sites like [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org), [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org) and [www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/a-parents-guide](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-and-resources/a-parents-guide) for safety information and advice about parental controls on consoles and devices and how to report concerns.
- Make sure you read any parental guidance and safety recommendations (including age requirements – most popular social networking sites and apps are only for users aged 13+, 16+ or 18+) for any apps or websites before allowing your child to use them - visit [www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)
- Always remember that parental control tools are not always 100% effective and sometimes unsuitable content can get past them, so don't rely on them alone to protect your child.

### Listen

- Take an active interest in your child's life online and talk openly with them about the things they do. Talk to your child and ask them to show or even teach you how they use the internet, learn which websites or tools they like to use and why. Learning together with your child can often open opportunities to discuss safe behaviour online.
- To start a conversation with your child you could tell them that you understand that some young people share images and videos online and that you're interested to know what they think about it and how they think they can keep themselves safe.

### Dialogue – keep talking

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- Ensure that your child knows that once a picture, video or comment is sent or posted online, then it can be very difficult to remove as other people can forward it and share it with others, without them even knowing.
- [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com) and [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) has some really useful tips and ideas for parents/carers about starting conversations about online safety
- Always ensure your child knows how to report and block people online who may send nasty or inappropriate messages or content. Encourage your child not to retaliate or reply to cyberbullying and to keep any evidence.
- Make sure your child knows it's important that they tell an adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable.

Remember, the internet is an essential part of young people's lives and provides them with tremendous opportunities. The vast majority use it without coming to any harm so it's essential to be realistic: banning the internet or web sites often will not work and it can make a child feel less able to report a problem or concern, so education around safe use is essential.