Tuesday, 27 February 2018

Subject: Online Safety and Cyber Security

Dear Parents/Carers,

At a recent meeting of Head teachers within our cluster, we heard a presentation on Cyber Safety which was led by Darren Peters who works for the safer cyber team at Gloucestershire Constabulary. Darren shared information about current concerns regarding the online safety of primary aged children and how easily they can be targeted through the devices that they use. He asked that all Head teachers share this information with parents and carers in their schools.

In the last newsletter, I shared www.internetmatters.org which is a useful website offering information about support groups which can help parents with online safety. The NSPCC and O2 also have an advice line which can support parents with parental controls and filters on devices. The telephone number is 0808 800 5002. O2 also offer instore advice to any parents, whether they are customers or not.

Some other resources which may be useful to parents include:
- The Gloucestershire Constabulary website, https://www.gloucestershire.police.uk
  Select the 'Staying Safe' link and then 'whilst online' tab to access further information and advice.
- The Thinkuknow website www.thinkuknow.co.uk offers advice and resources for young people, their parents and carers, teachers and trainers as well as a reporting tool.

Darren shared concerns about apps which are popular with children including **ooVoo** which is a downloadable video app. It lets you make video calls, voice calls and send texts to family and friends free of charge. Once the free app is downloaded and an account is set up, unknown adults can contact children through it.

The Think U Know website has instructions about how to set privacy settings on apps such as these. It is so important to make sure you know who your child is talking to online and to be aware of how cameras on laptops and ipads / phones can be used to remotely watch the user.

At school we will continue to teach children about being safe on line and we use all the recommended schemes of work to ensure children have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they are bullied online.

Here are a few things you can do at home:
- Talk to children about the APPs, and online services they use regularly. Find out who their online friends are and who they are chatting to on games and through messenger services. Read any parent help guides – they are often freely available if you carry out a quick search online.

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- Chat with children about what to do if they see/read something that they feel uncomfortable with. Make sure you know how to gather information /copies of messages to support you in reporting any information.
- Keep online enabled machines in family rooms and common areas. Turn on filters and age content restrictions where possible. Set up 2 step authentication where available to restrict purchasing new apps and software
- Be aware if children are signing up and joining sites that are age-restricted as these are not deemed suitable for younger children.

The police would like parents to follow them on Twitter and/or Facebook to keep up to date with any new information:

@glossafercyber

Facebook Page

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Musty
Headteacher