



Birches First School

Believe, Grow, Succeed



19th November 2019

Dear parents,

The internet is an amazing thing and it is now hard for us as parents to imagine/remember life without it! For our children, they only know a world in which the internet exists. The internet brings many positives into our lives. It brings new knowledge and opportunities, opens up new possibilities and connects people. However, as we know, unfortunately the internet also brings risks.

As a school we have made an ongoing commitment to online safety and it is embedded in our Computing curriculum as well as being included in our cross curricular learning. Regular discussions in class remind children of the importance of keeping themselves safe online and how to do so. However, it is not always easy for children to recognise when they may be at risk. This week we have been made aware that a pupil is believed to have been engaged in communication by an adult posing as a child on an online platform.

We are aware that many children play the game Roblox and many parents may allow them to do so believing them to be safe. However, some parents may not be aware that this game carries risk and does, in fact, include a 'private chat' facility; enabling children to be contacted and communicated with, without parent's knowledge.

Fortunately, in this case parents were able to intervene and address this with their child and take measures to prevent further risk. It is their hope (and ours as a school) that this worrying incident can help to raise awareness and understanding, therefore preventing other children in our school community and beyond being at risk.

Here are some suggestions to help keep your child safe;

- Monitor closely what your child is doing when accessing the internet, either on a phone, tablet or laptop.
- It is recommended that parents only allow children to go online in shared family places e.g living rooms (not in bedrooms where they are unsupervised).
- Check your parental controls on all devices - do you know what your child is able to access?

- Check for 'private chat' facilities or areas that may give adults the opportunity to make contact with children.

Please also follow the following link to view a parent's guide to Roblox.

<http://www.birches.staffs.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Roblox-Parents-Guide-V2-081118.pdf>

Best wishes,

Mrs J Ferretti
Acting Headteacher.