

7 February 2024

Dear Parent / Carer

Over the next few days, we will be trialling new software to enhance our monitoring and filtering of web content that your child may access at school or at home through their school Gmail accounts. This is an enhancement on tools that we have had in school for some time and therefore provides even more protection.

Whilst we are reassured that this software deployment will not affect your child's personal use of their device at home and will work alongside your own broadband parental controls, if you do experience any problems with this software, please let us know as soon as possible.

Because our safeguarding software is only applied to your child's school accounts, the school cannot accept responsibility for monitoring and filtering any personal accounts a child may use on a device at home. We therefore thought it might be helpful to provide you with reminders on the types of monitoring and filtering that you can implement.

Parental Controls:

Activating broadband provider parental controls will help your child stay safe while they browse, study and interact online and will let you decide what your children can and cannot access online. They will also allow you to monitor their internet usage.

These are just some of the broadband providers that give customers free parental controls, which can be enabled at any time:

- BT
- Sky
- Talk Talk
- Virgin Media
- Vodafone
- Plusnet

These parental controls are powerful tools and we advise speaking to your child about them before implementing them at home.

What most parental controls offer:

Content filters: These are a common feature of broadband parental controls, helping to reduce the chances of children encountering inappropriate content online. Some content filters also allow you to set different age limits for different children, so your youngest are better protected from sensitive material.

Website-specific controls: Certain websites and internet platforms, including Google and YouTube, let you switch on a family-friendly filter. If you do this, it will block any content deemed unsuitable for children. This is a powerful tool to use alongside other broadband parental controls but older children may be able to navigate around this. This is therefore more effective with younger children.

Screen time limitation: Some broadband parental controls now let you set specific times for internet use. After this time, the internet gets turned off. You can also restrict access to certain websites at different times of the day with broadband parental controls.

Monitoring: Most broadband parental controls let you see exactly which sites your children have been visiting and how they've been using them.

Please bear in mind that if your child uses the internet regularly while on the move, public Wi-Fi probably won't have the same broadband parental controls activated like you have at home. The same goes for if your child is visiting a friend at their home. We therefore recommend discussing the importance of safe, responsible internet use with them, along with notifying other parents about what they're permitted to do online.

If you would like to read further about how to protect your child whilst they are online, [this Ofcom article](#) provides some helpful information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A Isted', written in a cursive style.

Mr A Isted
Deputy Headteacher