



Hinchingsbrooke School

Inspiring excellence
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E Safety Update February 2014

At Hinchingsbrooke we recognise that the internet on our computers, tablets and mobile phones is a fantastic place to learn, have fun and talk to people. More and more of us are using these devices to keep in touch with friends and family. However, there are ever-changing risks and dangers and everyone should know how to stay safe and protect themselves from these when online. The following sections highlight some current issues along with some helpful websites and resources. Please help keep your children safe on line.

Two key issues affecting students in most secondary schools around the UK are:

1.Snapchat

Originally designed for adults, Snapchat is a smartphone app which allows users to text picture messages to their friends. However, the image can be set to disappear 1 to 10 seconds after it's opened.

For children innocently using Snapchat the fun part is that the images disappear. Some young users take this as an opportunity to take part in inappropriate activities where they then send images to others. There are growing concerns because data or images sent out across the internet or mobile devices can be retrieved or screen grabbed using most modern phones. So the image doesn't "disappear". This means that images can be saved and distributed more widely.



Please discuss the dangers with your child.

2. Ask.fm

Students and parents across the country are being warned about the dangers of some social networking sites such as Ask.fm. These websites can put teenagers at risk of receiving anonymous, negative and hurtful comments.

Ask.fm has been reported on the news lately with stories highlighting serious bullying and inappropriate behaviour. The website allows the users to post their name, photographs and personal details and then post comments or questions on their profile pages that can allow anonymous users to post feedback and comments without revealing their identity. Therefore inappropriate and sometimes hurtful comments can be posted which can cause stress for users.



Unlike more popular social networks Ask.fm is at the early stage of setting up privacy controls and functions which allow users to report abuse instantly.

Please make your child aware of these dangers. As with many aspects of technology, new apps and dangers are constantly being developed and evolving. We recognise and understand how difficult it can be for parents and carers to keep up to date on all the important e safety issues. The following websites have been identified as excellent resources to help support parents and students at Hinchingsbrooke:

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/>

<http://www.vodafone.com/content/parents/get-started.html>

<http://consumers.ofcom.org.uk/2011/04/managing-your-media-protecting-your-children-in-a-digital-world/>

http://www.connectsafely.org/wp-content/uploads/snapchat_guide.pdf