E-safety Update – December

Dear Parents and Carers,

Season's greetings to you and best wishes for the up and coming year. This week I came across the term **scare or prepare?** As a parent myself and a keen lover of technology I understand the challenge of keeping our children up with the pace of change but also making sure they are aware of the dangers which they may face. Getting the balance right can be tricky so I would like to share with you some guidance I came across on the subject.

In my first draft of this email I was planning on talking about specific apps which had been in the news lately including Fortnite, Facebook and YouTube. Although our young people may be interacting with these apps on a daily basis I will share the reasons for me not talking about specific apps below and encourage you once again to take a holistic approach to online safety with your child and keep having conversations with them about their online life.

If I were to mention names of specific apps of website I run the risk of some parents/carers believing that blocking or banning that particular app will solve the problem. Sadly this is not the case as other apps and websites are being developed on a daily basis and it would be impossible to keep up and block them all! At the same time we also want to be encouraging our children to explore technology in a safe manner so removing access does not support this. Naming names could also give free publicity to whatever apps or websites we are hoping our children may avoid. Telling a teenager something is off-limits or dangerous is practically and invitation for them to download it to have a look for themselves.

During Christmas your child may get access to new technology so it is important to spend time talking openly them about their online lives-the good, bad and the ugly! If you don't know what they are using is or how it works ask them to show you and if they don't know make time to learn together. I believe strong communication is what will help them stay safe from the real dangers which are out there.

With this in mind let's remember why the internet is such an amazing resource. We are able to find answers to questions we have instantly. We can watch tutorials to learn almost anything and we can contact loved ones across the world at any time and even see their faces- which is especially magical at this time of year.

As always if you have any questions or concerns about E-safety please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

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