

Dear Parent/Carer,

Copyright, Plagiarism and creative commons

As the answer to almost any question can be found at the end of a mouse click, and with more and more cases of copyright infringement in the news, it may be a useful to have a conversation with your child about this.

Copyright in brief is a legal right which determines how an original piece of work may be used by others. This can be anything ranging from a photograph to a music score. Typically, we can assume that if you have not made something yourself then you should be asking the permission of its creator to use it. We can see examples of copyright infringement in action when YouTube videos are removed from the site due to a song being used without the artist's permission. This gets even more complicated when there is money involved.

In education copying and pasting any information including text and images off the internet without referencing (including the web source and author) can lead to **plagiarism** (*the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own*) which can have serious consequences. **Plagiarism can seriously affect the grade that your child is awarded for GCSE or A Level work** so it is important we educate our children about the need to be wise about their use of the internet and other sources when researching for information.

To minimise the risk of breaching copyright or plagiarism there are steps which we can take.

- Be original – create it from scratch yourself if you can!
- Always reference where you have got information from, including images. Include the web address, date and author if known.
- Use information as a reference point and write you own work in your own words.
- Use search engine filtering to find images/information which are labelled for re-use.
- Find resources which are licensed for creative commons.

Creative commons in short is a license a creator can apply to their work to allow you to use it without having to obtain their permission first. It does however follow specific rules which I have outlined below. The symbols will appear under the work or if on a website normally situated towards the bottom of the page or if it has it the copyright section of the site. It is always worth checking!

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If you have any questions regarding the information above or any other E-safety topic, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

Mrs Hutchins