



Monday 14th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the Christmas break approaches and with more and more use on technology to keep in touch with friends and family, it's vital that children continue to remain safe online.

The [Online Safety page](#) of our school website contains most of the information that you will need, and it's regularly updated too with all the latest guidance and advice (www.grimoldbyprimaryschool.co.uk/online-safety). However, below are some key reminders:

- Be transparent and talk to your child about what they're doing online – ask them what they like and dislike about certain apps or websites that they're using. Don't try and be covert about it because this can severely damage trust.
- [Thinkuknow](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) (<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>) is the online safety education programme from the National Crime Agency. They offer free advice and guidance for both children and their parents.
- Make sure that children have a trusted adult to talk to at home or on the phone if they have worries or concerns (especially if they've seen something inappropriate or frightening online). You can also remind them that [Childline](#) is available to call (**0800 1111**) at all times. Remember: some children find it difficult or awkward talking to their parents about their online worries – don't take it personally!
- Set up parental controls where needed. So many devices, apps and games have parental controls, and these are generally simple to access. However, if you're stuck, you will always be able to find a guide online or on YouTube.
- Tik Tok accounts can be paired to allow parental monitoring (<https://www.tiktok.com/safety/resources/for-parents?lang=en&appLaunch=web>) and this is essential as it's so difficult to shield inappropriate content on platforms such as Tik Tok.
- As I've always said, it's not about parents understanding how to use all the latest apps and devices. The essence of online safety remains the same and the important question of 'do I know what apps or games my child uses online?' is the main one to ask.

Finally, as apps and games become more technologically advanced and realistic, it's useful for parents to understand PEGI ratings and what they mean. If a game is PEGI rated as a 7, it can still contain scary scenes and very mild forms of violence. I strongly recommend using the [PEGI website](https://pegi.info/page/pegi-age-ratings) (<https://pegi.info/page/pegi-age-ratings>) to become more familiar.

Have a wonderful Christmas break and keep yourselves safe!

Yours faithfully,

Stuart Spendlow
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