

# Safeguarding Newsletter



time is too much for children. As mentioned above, it is important to consider how your child is spending their time online and how it is affecting them. I would advise that you involve the child in the discussion around screen time and make it clear that you are setting limits to protect their wellbeing. They might even agree with you, and it will be much easier to maintain their limits if they are involved in the decision. Remember, once you have agreed upon a limit, stick to it consistently and you'll find it will get easier every day.

### 3. Look out for signs that screen time is having a negative effect.

Keep an eye on how your child's screen time may be affecting other areas of their life. If they're spending time doing other things and getting enough sleep and exercise, then it's likely that they already have a healthy balance. If they are no longer doing things they used to enjoy, or are becoming increasingly reluctant to come away from their device or game, it may be time to intervene. Talk to your child about what they're doing online and get them to think about how it makes them feel when they spend time doing these things. You never know, they may actually agree that staying up late gaming is making them too tired the next day, or that trying to perfect the latest TikTok dance is not great for their self esteem, or that sunbathing on Minecraft is not as fun as actually going outside....

### 4. Have quality family screen time together

Although it is good to set aside time when the family is not using screens - outdoor activities, chats at meal times, day trips at the weekend - this doesn't mean that you can't also get involved in using screens together. If you know that your child enjoys playing games online, organise a family gaming night or let them plan something for the whole family to get stuck into. If you take a real interest in what they like to do online - whether it's the influencers that they rate, or the latest downloadable content (DLC) on their go-to game, they're more likely to come to you if something goes wrong, or they make a mistake along the way.

### 5. Set Parental Controls

It is not as difficult as it seems to set parental controls on most electronic devices. A few clicks can really make a difference and ensure that the children aren't able to access any unsuitable content. Google the website [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org) and you will find a comprehensive guide for setting parental controls for all internet providers, phones, tablets and gaming consoles.

Access our school website to find links to helpful websites filled with tips and advice about keeping your children safe online.

<http://www.district.st-helens.sch.uk/>

For more serious concerns during the summer holidays, visit <https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

## Keeping Children Safe Online

I think it's fair to say that the end to our school year has been anything but ordinary! With children spending so much time away from school, and away from their friends, the internet has played a massive role for them recently. It has provided an opportunity for children to continue their learning and keep in touch with their teachers via Class Dojo, and I'm sure in lots of cases they have been able to play and communicate with their friends online. Nevertheless, I am sure many parents (myself included) are concerned that their children are spending far too much time online. Here are 5 handy tips that may put your mind at ease and help us take care of our children's wellbeing.

### 1. Don't panic.

Not all online activities are equal: doing something creative or learning new skills are both very different from mindless scrolling on social media. Being online might be allowing them to socialise in a positive way - or maybe they're just doing something that they really, really enjoy. If there are real benefits, then the amount of time they spend doing it becomes important. You know your child better than anyone: as long as screen time isn't interfering with schoolwork or other activities, and isn't having a noticeable effect on their mood, then try not to obsess over the numbers.

### 2. Think carefully about limiting screen time

Sadly there is no magic number when considering how much screen