

Dear Parents/Carers

A new school year is upon us and we would like to start it with some useful e-safety tips.

First, remember to set parental controls on home computers, PlayStations, Xboxes and Nintendo Wii's.

Many of the games on popular consoles such as X-Box, PlayStation or Nintendo Wii, allow players to chat to other gamers through the internet, get involved in role plays and build social networks. Social networking through online gaming is becoming increasingly popular: you may have heard of Minecraft and World of Warcraft; these let a large number of users interact within a virtual world. Some of these games also have websites that allow you to build characters, create an avatar (a second identity) and live in a virtual world.

Keeping your child safe: Apply the same ground rules to gaming as you do to any other internet use. Some online games have a facility that lets you report anything suspicious, so encourage your child to be aware.

Don't let your child use games with age registrations. The **Pan European Game Information** (PEGI) is a European video game content rating system established to help European consumers make informed decisions when buying video games or apps through the use of age recommendations and content descriptors. If a game says suitable for over 18's, it usually has this warning for a reason. Music, movies and games often feature over 18 content, such as explicit lyrics or sexual images.

Older children may have access to mobile phones. Remember these have clever things called content filters that block websites and commercial content that is inappropriate for under-18s, in line with approved standards.

Are you aware that lots of broadband operators offer parent control options? Keep computers in family areas rather than bedrooms. Keep talking to your children about what they are doing and who they are talking to online.

The above advice has been paraphrased from EE's advice for parents, but remember CEOP, the Child Exploitation Online Protection (CEOP) website [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk) or [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) and [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com) have for more

information and guidance about staying safe online. Don't forget to also have a look at our E Safety pages on the school website. [www.collegeroadschool.co.uk](http://www.collegeroadschool.co.uk).

Finally, later this year you will receive copies of the magazine 'Digital Parenting' produced by Vodaphone, as we have subscribed to this to help you to empower your children to become more confident and resilient online. In addition, it gives you lots of useful information and e-safety advice for your family.