



SAFE

Keep your personal information safe

The internet is a wonderful place to share information and photographs, it's a place to communicate with friends, to discover new information and to play games. Whenever a young person is interacting online they need to always think at the back of their mind, who am I sharing my personal information with? There are types of information that is not appropriate to share with everyone online (eg. with strangers), and there is other information that one can freely share with anyone. It is challenging for learners with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) to differentiate between what information is OK to share online, and what information is not OK to share.

Due to the vast range of platforms young people might be using on the internet (for example, online games, social networking sites, online forums) it's imperative that we are reinforcing the message to young people about where they could be sharing their personal information and how not to do it. If they wouldn't give away certain information to a stranger on the street, then they should not be delivering this piece of information to someone they don't know online either. In the same way that they shouldn't give out their personal information to a stranger on the street, they need to be mindful about what information they're sharing about themselves and with whom.

The internet does come with an added ambiguity however, as we are aware that a lot of young people are using the internet to communicate with people they don't know. Young people with ASD need to be supported in some way to differentiate not only what a stranger is online, but also what personal information is.

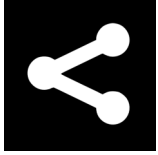
This section has been developed to help generate discussions about what personal information is and how to keep it safe.



What is personal information?

Personal information includes full name, home address, the name of your school and passwords. Sometimes, young people are unaware that they are sharing personal information on social networking sites and games forums for example. Make sure you discuss with your pupils what services and social networking sites they may be using to find out whether they are using platforms to share information.

If you know that your pupils are sharing personal information on social networking sites (for example, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), familiarise yourself with that service's privacy settings and show your pupils how to implement these themselves.



Sharing content online

Young people love to share content online. Whether that is information about themselves or of others, it's really important that they understand what they're sharing online and how it can impact themselves and their friends.

For example, if they are posting a photograph they need to make sure they're asking the question – '**am I sharing any personal information in this photograph?**' If it is a photo of themselves or their friends in school uniform, or outside a recognisable location (eg. their school) then they could be sharing more information about themselves than they think. All of these photographs is them delivering some kind of personal information. It's also important to mention that young people should ask the permission of their friends before posting any personal information about them online, and to respect that friend's decision if they do not grant permission.

You can read more advice on being kind online in the '[RESPECT](#)' section of this guidance.