Beyond the classroom

R is for RESPECT – be kind online

Beyond the classroom is designed for parents, carers and residential staff to help support the work being done at school to enable young people to take positive action online.

What do we mean by respect online?

Respect online refers to the preferable way we should behave, treat others and conduct ourselves online. The general rule of respect online is to treat others the way you'd like to be treated, just as you do offline. Whilst the internet can be a great place to voice opinions, for example, through social media or gaming platforms, we all have different views and sometimes this can cause conflict.

The anonymity of the internet can make some people believe they can say or do whatever they want online and sometimes this might be unkind, which can cause upset or distress. Equally, comments can be misinterpreted or taken the wrong way and what one person finds amusing may not be considered so by someone else. Young people with SEND might struggle to understand how their online actions could affect other people. Helping young people to learn what respect means online is an essential skill for them to enjoy their time online.

How can I help young people to be respectful online?

1. Find out what they like to do online

Ask them what they like to do online, for example, what social media or games they use, followed by why they enjoy those things and how they like to be treated by other users or players whilst using them. If you need some help to get the conversation going, Childnet's '**Let's talk about life online**' offers some great guidance with this.

2. Communicate what is meant by respect online

The best place to start is to talk about what respect means in an offline context. Ask them what they think the word means and how it makes them feel to give and receive respect. If necessary, give examples such as the way they would speak to someone they care about or the kindness they show their friends. In an online context, respect is demonstrated by the way we communicate. This could be things you message and share or the way you react to a situation.

3. Talk about difference and difference of opinion

We might not have the same opinion as other people online, which can lead to conflict. Dealing with conflict is always difficult, but online conflict can be particularly challenging as it is directed through a device rather than face to face. Explain to your child that it is okay to disagree online, if the interaction is respectful, but that if a conflict becomes unkind or upsetting, they should speak to an adult they trust. For more on this, visit Childnet's **Hot Topic on Supporting Young People with SEND Online - Conduct**.

4. Give them ways to respond if someone is being mean to them online

Bullying online (or cyberbullying) is never acceptable and causes a great deal of distress. Talk through or demonstrate what action they can take if someone upsets them online. Keeping the evidence and telling a trusted adult straight away is the first and most important step in making it stop. For more advice or help, visit Childnet's **Need Help?** page for parents and carers.

What is respect online?

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☑ **Being kind and supportive to friends**

Always treat friends online the same way you would offline. Being a kind and respectful friend will make both of you feel good.

☑ **Only sharing images and videos with permission**

It's important to always gain consent from others before posting something about them online.

☑ **Understanding boundaries**

Not everyone finds the same thing funny. Always STOP and THINK whether it might embarrass or upset someone.

☑ **Doing something nice for somebody else online**

Creating or sending something nice online makes people feel happy. This will make you feel happy too.

☑ **Avoiding peer pressure to join in**

Never feel pressured to join in with cyberbullying. A good friend would never make you do something you didn't want to do.

☑ **Taking control of your actions**

Avoid posting when you are angry or upset. If you see an argument online, stay calm and wait before doing anything. If you reply you might make things worse.

☑ **Reporting something mean**

If you see someone being bullied online or in need of help, be an upstander and go and tell an adult you trust straight away.

☑ **Making unkind comments about someone else**

Saying mean things about or to someone is never okay. It can be very upsetting for the person on the receiving end.

☑ **Retaliating to a comment online**

If someone says something that you don't agree with or that makes you angry, avoid commenting back as this might make the situation worse. Leave the chat and take some time out to calm down.

☑ **Sharing something about someone else online without permission**

The other person might not want you to share something about them online, so always ask permission before sharing anything about someone else.

☑ **Sharing a funny or embarrassing picture of someone**

This might embarrass or upset the person. Always check and ask if they are happy for you to share it.

☑ **Believing you can say whatever you want online**

Hiding behind a screen does not give us the right to behave in a different way to the way we would behave offline. Avoid the temptation to respond in haste, especially if someone has made you angry or upset.

☑ **Insulting people online**

If you wouldn't say something to someone offline (to their face) then don't say it online. Always be respectful and don't use bad language or insulting words towards someone else.

❤️ Respect at a glance

Be a good friend online and treat others with kindness and respect.

Always ask permission before sharing images and videos online about someone else.

Take control of your actions. If you wouldn't say something offline to someone, don't say it online.

Avoid peer pressure and never join in with something that could upset someone else.

Be an upstander and speak up if you see someone being bullied or needing help online.

Don't retaliate to a mean or angry message as this could make the conflict worse. Take a moment to think if a reply is necessary.

Remember that we are all different and not everyone will find the same thing funny online.

STOP and **TELL** an adult you trust if anyone is ever mean to you online. Cyberbullying is never okay and the sooner you tell someone, the sooner someone can help.

Online Safety Checklist

R is for Respect – be kind online

❤️ **Ways I can be kind online...**
(This might include telling someone you trust, making a report online or blocking someone.)

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If I see someone being bullied online I will...

If someone is bullying me online I will...

The people I will go to for help, are...

🏠 **HOME:**

🏫 **SCHOOL:**

👤 **OTHER:**

My pledge of respect

★ I will be kind, supportive and respectful to my friends online.

★ I will STOP and THINK and respond respectfully online.

★ I will always tell an adult I trust if someone is being mean to me or my friends online.

Signed: _____   Date: _____