

Beyond the classroom

S is for Safe

This advice has been created to support the work being done in school and provide advice for parents and carers or residential staff to support young people with making safe and responsible choices online.

What is safe sharing online?

When you talk about the safe sharing of personal information, images and videos online, the same set of rules should apply to offline contact with strangers. If your child has befriended someone online but never met them in real life then, explain that this person is effectively a stranger.

Safe sharing means that you only ever share personal things about yourself or others online with people you know in real life, such as your family or friends.

We should always ask permission before sharing the personal information, images or videos of other people online, even if they are our friends and family and we think they won't mind. Encourage young people to come and ask you if they are ever unsure.

Starting a conversation with young people to find out what they're up to online is always a good starting point. Childnet's guide to talking about life online can help you to do this: www.childnet.com/resources/lets-talk-about-life-online.

What should young people not share online?

- ☒ Images and videos which show their current or frequent locations, e.g. school or home address.
- ☒ Images and videos of other people which they don't have permission to share.
- ☒ Images and videos they find online which might upset or worry someone else.
- ☒ Personal information belonging to them or others with strangers online.
- ☒ Nude or underwear images of themselves or others.

What is OK to share online?

- ☒ Images or videos of themselves which do not contain personal information, like obvious references to their location.
- ☒ Images and videos of others they have permission to share online.
- ☒ Images and videos they have found online which they have checked won't upset or worry someone else.
- ☒ Limited personal information belonging to them can be shared on online profiles or when buying something online. Only share what is needed and make sure the website address begins with https and displays a padlock symbol. This means their information is safe.
- ☒ Personal information of others which they have permission to share.

What does the law say about young people sharing nudes or underwear photos?

Some image sharing can be inappropriate or even illegal for young people to do and can carry consequences with it. Sexting is an example of this. Sexting is where someone sends a sexually explicit image to a friend, partner or someone else. This would include nude or underwear photos.



What does the law say about young people sharing nudes or underwear photos? (Continued)

Creating or sharing sexually explicit images or videos of under 18s is illegal, even if the person doing so is a child themselves. A young person is breaking the law if they:

- Take a sexually explicit image or video of themselves or someone else under 18.
- Share a sexually explicit image or video of themselves or someone else, even if it is shared between two young people under 18.
- Save or store a sexually explicit image or video of themselves or someone else, even if they were given permission to do so by the young people who created it.

As of January 2016 in England and Wales, if a young person is found to be sexting the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed but that taking formal action isn't in the public interest.

Crimes recorded this way are unlikely to appear on future records or checks, unless the young person has been involved in other similar activities which may indicate that they're a risk. Find out more about [**legislation on child abuse images**](#).



Understanding online friendship

Online friendships can be a particularly tricky concept for children with additional needs to grasp because of the many different types of people we can speak to online. We may engage with our friends and family online as well as people we have never actually met before. This engagement can happen in the same online spaces and it can be difficult to differentiate between the two, e.g. in games and over social media.

However, even if a young person has been chatting to someone online for quite a while and it feels like a real-life friendship, they should not share any personal information, images or videos about themselves or others.

Whilst chatting about the game or something online is ok, sharing personal things about themselves and others with this person is not ok.

It's always a good idea to establish who young people are communicating with online and to remind them that if they have not met someone before then they cannot necessarily trust that person.



How do we make sure the internet is a safe space for young people who have special educational needs?

To help minimise any potential risks for young people with additional needs, ensure that they have set their accounts to private.

The UK Safer Internet Centre provides information about how to do this: [**www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/social-media-guides**](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/social-media-guides).

Secondly, you can also set up parental controls on your home WiFi, mobile phone networks, online services (YouTube, Netflix etc.) and at device level.

You can find out how to do this by visiting the Internet Matter's parental controls and privacy settings guides: [**www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/**](http://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/)

Safe sharing at a glance

Remember if you don't know someone in real life, they are a stranger.



Set any social media profiles to 'private' and make sure you only accept friend or follow requests from people you know and have actually met before.

Make sure accounts are secure by choosing a strong password. This should contain a mix of capital letters, symbols and should be around 10 characters.



If you are ever asked to share your personal information online, then check with a trusted adult first.

Check that personal information isn't hiding in your images and videos before you post them online.



Always ask permission before sharing someone else's personal information, images or videos.

Never share nudes or underwear photos online of yourself or others.



If somebody is asking you again and again to share your personal information or a nude/underwear photo, and is not taking no for an answer, then ask a trusted adult for help. It's not OK for someone to put pressure on you online.

Beyond the classroom... Online Safety Agreement

This activity has been designed to extend the learning about safe sharing beyond the classroom and ensure the same online safety guidance is being reinforced and implemented in all aspects of a young person's life. Similar to our conversation starters, young people will be able to explore safe sharing online by taking the lead in conversations with parents and carers or residential care staff.

On the following page you will find an online safety agreement template which can be used to establish safe and responsible use of technology and the internet when at home or in residential care. This template is an adaptation of our **Childnet Online Safety Agreement**.

Online Safety Agreement

S is for Safe - Keeping personal information about yourself and others safe online

What is safe to share online?

(Tick or cross which ones you would and wouldn't share)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full name | <input type="checkbox"/> Where your friend lives | <input type="checkbox"/> A photo with friends | <i>Add some of your own here</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Address | <input type="checkbox"/> Favourite band | <input type="checkbox"/> A photo of your friends to others | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School name | <input type="checkbox"/> Your friend's password | <input type="checkbox"/> A photo you find online | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone number | <input type="checkbox"/> A photo of you in your school uniform | <input type="checkbox"/> A nude/underwear photo of yourself | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home phone number | <input type="checkbox"/> A photo of yourself | <input type="checkbox"/> A nude/underwear photo of someone else | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current location | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your password | | | |

Who can I share this with?

This could be groups of people like 'teachers' or exact names

What should I do before sharing something that belongs to someone else?

What should I do if someone online asks me for my personal information or an underwear or nude photo?

Who can you talk to if you are worried about something or someone online?

If I'm worried about something or someone online I can talk to...

Our top tip for safe sharing is...

Signed by:

Date: