

WELCOME



We are delighted to bring you our latest edition of the online safety newsletter as we begin a new term filled with learning, and opportunities for growth. The digital world plays an increasingly significant role in our children's lives—whether they're using it for homework, gaming, or staying connected with friends. While the internet offers a world of possibilities, it also presents unique challenges that require a thoughtful, proactive approach.

Our children are growing up as digital natives, meaning they are often more familiar with new platforms, apps, and trends than we are. While this familiarity brings confidence, it's important that us, their guardians and teachers, provide the right balance of freedom, guidance, and support. Just as we teach road safety and the importance of kindness in real life, helping children build strong digital habits is essential for their overall well-being.

This newsletter aims to provide practical insights into the ever-changing digital world, covering popular apps, games, and social media trends that young people are engaging with. Our focus is on helping you navigate key challenges, such as managing online peer pressure, identifying misinformation, and fostering emotional wellbeing in an increasingly connected world. By staying informed, you can support positive online habits, create meaningful conversations, and help your child make thoughtful, safe choices online.

Online safety is a shared responsibility between home and school, and by working together, we can help our children enjoy the benefits of technology while staying protected from potential risks. At St. Benedict's, we are dedicated to equipping our students with the skills they need to navigate the online world responsibly, and we are committed to providing you with the resources to support them every step of the way.

Kind regards,

Mr J Crosthwaite
Associate SLT
Teacher of Computer Science



IN THIS EDITION WE EXPLORE:

- Safer Internet Day 2025
- Deepfakes and Misinformation
- Promoting Positive Online Wellbeing
- Online Bullying
- Online Safety Tips
- Resources for parents/ carers
- Help and support

SAFER INTERNET DAY 2025

EMPOWERING POSITIVE CHOICES ONLINE



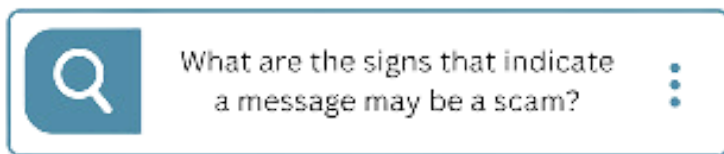
Mark your calendars for Tuesday 11th February 2025!

Safer Internet Day is a global event dedicated to making the internet a safer, kinder place for everyone—especially young people. This year's theme, *'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online'*, is all about teaching children how to spot misleading information, make safe online choices, and support others who may be vulnerable to online scams.

With the increasing sophistication of online fraud—from phishing emails to fake competitions and "too-good-to-be-true" offers—it is essential that young people understand how to protect their personal information and act responsibly in the digital world. At St. Benedict's, we're proud to take part in this important initiative.

To celebrate Safer Internet Day, we have planned some activities:

- Assemblies and Discussions: Focused on spotting red flags in online messages, emails, and social media posts.
- "Spot the Scam" Tutor Challenge: An interactive activity where students will analyse real-life scenarios to identify phishing attempts, fake giveaways, and suspicious requests.



Sent from a public domain such as Gmail, Yahoo, or Live, but claims to be from a business or well-known organisation



Sent from a contact but does not match how they normally talk to you



Claims to be from a financial institution or a well known entity and requests your personal information



Contains too many grammatical or spelling errors



Someone asks for financial help (e.g. so they can pay debts or visit you)



Includes a link to an address or an attachment you are unsure about



Gets your name wrong (e.g. refers to you as my dear)



Says you have inherited money or possessions from someone you've never heard of



Says you need to claim money or prizes for a lottery

Useful Resources for Safer Internet Day

- National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC)
- Thinkuknow: Online safety advice.
- Safer Internet Day UK Page: [Click here to learn more about the official Safer Internet Day 2025 campaign.](#)

DEEPFAKES AND MISINFORMATION

WHAT ARE THEY? HOW DO I SPOT THEM?



Deepfakes and Misinformation

What are Deepfakes?

Deepfakes are videos or images that use artificial intelligence (AI) to create highly realistic but fake content. For example, a deepfake video can make it seem like someone said or did something they never actually did. [Watch the video to see a deepfake.](#)



What is Misinformation?

Misinformation refers to false or misleading information that is spread, regardless of intent.

- Types of Misinformation:
 - Clickbait headlines: Sensationalised headlines designed to attract attention but often mislead.
 - Fake social media posts: Content shared to deceive people or spread rumors.
 - Hoax websites: Entire websites created to push false narratives.

How do I spot them?

- 1 Glasses may disappear or reflect differently
- 2 Features are positioned incorrectly or move
- 3 The hair and skin of the person looks blurry
- 4 The audio doesn't match the video
- 5 The background may not make sense
- 6 The lighting looks unnatural or strange

Deepfake challenge - real or fake?



How do I protect myself?

You can protect yourself to some extent by making your social profiles private. This way only your friends and followers can view your content.

Not only does this limit the availability of your images online in general, but it significantly increases the potential of finding the attacker if someone does create a deepfake of you.

POSITIVE ONLINE WELLBEING

SOCIAL MEDIA AND SELF IMAGE



Promoting Positive Online Wellbeing

What is Self-Image?

Self-image refers to how someone perceives themselves, including their appearance, abilities, and value. Social media often amplifies these perceptions by presenting a highly curated version of reality—filled with filters, "perfect" photos, and highlight reels of people's lives.

Social media often shows a "highlight reel" of people's lives—exciting holidays, achievements, and carefully edited photos that look perfect. This can make young people feel like their everyday lives don't compare. Filters and editing tools can change how someone looks, making it harder to tell what's real and what's not. Over time, seeing these perfect images can make people feel less happy with how they look or what they have.

Another reason social media affects self-image is the need for "likes" and comments to feel good. When posts don't get as much attention as expected, it can make users feel disappointed or anxious. Relying on online feedback for confidence can cause people to feel less sure of themselves in real life. That's why it's important to remember that social media only shows part of the story—it's not a true picture of someone's whole life.

Positive Online Wellbeing Checklist

- I take regular breaks from social media.
- I follow accounts that make me feel good about myself.
- I know that likes and comments don't define my worth.
- I understand that what I see online is often filtered and edited.
- I focus on my strengths

A FAMILY ONLINE SAFETY CONVERSATION

If you are a parent or carer why not ask students to tell you the answers to these questions?

Who are your favorite people to follow on social media? Why?

What do you think makes someone popular online? Does that seem fair or realistic?

Do you think people's online posts show their real lives? Why or why not?

What do you do when you see someone posting something mean or negative online?

What makes you decide to like, comment on, or share a post?

What kind of posts make you feel inspired or happy? Are there any accounts you follow that make you feel good about yourself?

REPORT IT. DON'T TOLERATE IT.

ONLINE BULLYING



Last year, we launched our *Safety Hub* app. The app (available within Microsoft Teams) is available for all pupils in the school. Currently, we have sections in the app that cover advice and guidance on:

- Mental Health
- Abuse
- Social Media
- Drugs and Alcohol (including smoking and vaping)
- Exam Stress
- and a 'Help Me' section.

HELP ME

Pupils can use this to ask for help with any safeguarding issue including bullying. If a pupil doesn't feel they can speak to a member of staff in person they can use this app and the message will then be sent to a member of the safeguarding team who will work to resolve the issue with the pupil.



BACK TO SCHOOL ONLINE SAFETY TIPS

FOR PARENTS/CARERS AND STUDENTS



Be cautious with your profile

Be careful not to give out too much info on your social media or gaming profiles.

Details like your full name, address or school's name could all help strangers to actually find you offline. A trusted adult can help you make your profiles private – so only your family and actual friends can contact you.



Keep it 'real' with online friends

Everyone enjoys adding friends and followers on social media. It's important, though, that the people you interact with online really are your friends. If they're just random people you've connected with to increase your contacts, you don't know if they could be trolls or bullies (or worse).



Report offensive in-game chat

If you game online with your mates, you'll know things can get competitive and heated on the in-game chat. Playing against people you don't know (especially if they're older) raises the risk of offensive comments and even threats.

Our advice? Find out how to block or mute them.



Be smart with screen time

Too much screen time, especially just before bed, can affect your quality of sleep. Losing sleep, or not sleeping well enough, messes with your concentration and energy levels. Try muting notifications so you don't get pinged late at night: you'll feel fresher and more focused the next day.



Manage online relationships wisely

Most people chat to their friends online. Just be mindful that once you send a pic or message (even if it's private), you no longer control who else might see it.

Messaging someone you've never actually met – and who might not be who they say – is definitely best avoided.



Learn to spot fake news

If you're looking into a topic for homework or a project, be careful not to get taken in by fake news: content that's deliberately created to mislead people. Check the story with credible sources, like the BBC or Sky News. Trust your instincts, too – if it seems too unbelievable to be true, it's probably fake.



[To view more guides like this, click here to visit the online safety section of the school website.](#)

HELP AND SUPPORT RESOURCES FOR PARENTS/CARERS



The screenshot shows the school's website with a navigation menu including Home, Latest News, Our School, Curriculum, Parent Information, Sixth Form, SEND, and Important Information. The 'Online Safety' page is highlighted in red. Below the header, there is a 'Click below to read our latest Online Safety Newsletter:' section with a 'STAY SAFE WITH ST BENEDICT'S AUTUMN 2024 NEWSLETTER' link. A 'WELCOME' section follows, containing text about digital safety and a 'NEXT' button. A 'Parent Awareness' section mentions informal events and provides links to CEOP and Thinkuknow. A 'National Online Safety' section provides a link to the National Online Safety website. A 'Screen Time Advice' section links to MyTutor. A 'Video Guides' section features a video player for 'Cyber security A guide for parents and carers' and a Thinkuknow link. A 'Parent/Carer guide to...' table lists various social media and gaming platforms.

Parent/Carer guide to...			
Sadfishing	LiveMe	Rumble	Online Grooming
TextMe	Hoop	YouTube	Looking After Your Wellbeing
Overwatch	Rumble	Live Streaming	What is a Strong Password?
Wizz	Telegram	EA Sport	Whatsapp
Omegle	Loot Box's	Wink	Rec Room
BeReal	Steam	Fortnite	League of Legends
Fifa 23	Twitch	TkTok	Tellonym
Sendit	The Metaverse	Like	Amigo
Instagram	Yubo	Chatroulette	VPNs
Discord	Sexing	Repika	Online influencers

THE SCHOOL WEBSITE

The online safety section of the school website has a wealth of resources which are designed for parents / carers. Here is a summary of the resources available:

Parent/Carer guide to a series of social media apps - we explain what they are, who they are aimed at, what the benefits and dangers are and age limits.

Links to websites on online safety topics.

How to sign up to the **National Online Safety service**.

Video explainer guides on topics such as cyber security, social media, online gaming, sharing images and video.

School **policy and procedures**.

How to report non urgent worries or concerns to the Police about online safety issues.

OUR ONLINE SAFETY POLICY
You can view our online safety policy by clicking here.

HELP AND SUPPORT

RESOURCES FOR PARENTS/CARERS



Dear Parents & Carers,

The online world is posing an ever-increasing risk to children, and it is important that schools, parents, and carers work together to take an active role in teaching children about online dangers. Learning how to act safely when using the internet is an incredibly important part of safeguarding our children.

I am pleased to make you aware that we have partnered with a company called National Online Safety, who provide resources for parents and carers on all aspects of online safety.

The resources include online video resources and weekly guides covering a range of topics, including:

- Online Relationships
- Fake Profiles & Social Bots
- Online Bullying
- Online Grooming
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Sexual Harassment & Violence
- Sexting
- Live Streaming
- Online Identity
- Screen Addiction
- Online Challenges
- Overspending
- Social Media Platforms
- Online Gambling
- Radicalisation, Terrorism & Extremism
- Age Inappropriate Content
- Copyright & Ownership
- Hacking
- Fake News
- Online Fraud
- Online Reputation
- Personal Data
- Pornography
- Targeted Adverts & Pop-Ups
- The Dark Web
- Games & Trends

To create your account, please follow <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/enrol/st-benedict-s-catholic-high-school> and complete your details.

Alternatively, you can scan this QR code using your phones camera to go straight to the site:



When you are set up, you will be able to set 'Parent/Carer' as your user type.

You can access National Online Safety online via any device- including a smartphone app. To download the app, please go to:

Apple devices: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/national-online-safety/id1530342372>

Android devices: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.co.nationaleducationgroup.nos>

Alternatively, search for 'National Online Safety' in the App Store/Google Play Store.

J. Crosthwaite, Associate SLT