

Dear Parents/Guardians

4th October 2020

Last week was e-Safety week at RAK Academy! The aim of this awareness week was to equip our students with the tools and knowledge to use the Internet safely as the Internet has become an integral part of children's lives. As part of our ongoing commitment to e-Safety, we planned a variety of activities in school, including themed assemblies, class lessons, and parent presentations.

RAK Academy has an e-Safety and Internet Security Policy in place which aims to offer guidance and direction on e-Safety, including the use of social media within the RAK Academy community. While the Internet and social media offer many social and academic benefits by allowing individuals to share ideas and exchange information, it is important to understand the harm that can be caused by, and the risks associated with, its misuse.

At RAKA we teach our students to be **SMART** when using computer or mobile devices.

S- SAFE - Don't give out your own information

M- MEET - Only meet people you have met online with your parents

A- ACCEPTING - Only open emails & texts from people you trust

R- RELIABLE - Some people online tell lies, only talk to real world friends and family

T- TELL - Tell a parent or trusted adult if you see anything online which makes you feel uncomfortable

Some advice which you may find helpful in supporting your child online:

- Discuss together as a family how the internet will be used in your house. Consider what information should be kept private (such as personal information, photos in school uniform etc) and decide rules for making and meeting online friends
- Take an active interest in your child's life online and talk openly with them about the things they do
- Discuss using strong passwords with your child so they understand how they can protect their online accounts - talk about keeping passwords safe e.g. not sharing them with anyone or using the same password for several accounts
- Be especially aware of settings rules relating to your child's use of webcams and any applications or devices which allow voice or video chat

- Ensure that your child knows that once a picture, video or comment is sent or posted online, then it can be very difficult to remove as other people can forward it and share it with others, without them even knowing.
- Always remember that parental control tools are not always 100% effective and sometimes unsuitable content can get past them, so do not rely on them alone to protect your child.
- Install antivirus software, secure your internet connection, and use Parental Control functions for computers, mobile phones, and games consoles to block unsuitable content or contact from unknown people
- Make sure you read any parental guidance and safety recommendations
- Always ensure your child knows how to report and block people online who may send nasty or inappropriate messages or content. Encourage your child not to retaliate or reply to cyberbullying and to keep any evidence.
- Make sure your child knows it is important that they tell an adult they trust if anything happens online that makes them feel scared, worried, or uncomfortable

Education around safe use of the internet is essential! Thank you in advance for your cooperation on this matter. I am sure you will agree, that by working together, we can help our children understand how important it is to be mindful of what they share, say and upload.

Below is a list of useful websites to support you in keeping your child safe when they are online at home:

www.internetmatters.org

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

www.saferinternet.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

Graham Baele

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