

Welcome to our spring term copy of our online safety newsletter, the first one of this academic year.

More useful information and websites can be found on our school website at: <https://www.st-peter-gowts.lincs.sch.uk/online-safety/>

Please do get in touch if you have any questions, comments or concerns you would like to discuss with us.

Many thanks for your continued support.

The St Peter at Gowts Team



We love National Online Safety in school. The CPD and resources are brilliant for ensuring we are kept up to date with the latest developments and resources to deliver the best online safety curriculum possible.

We have already achieved the NOS accredited school award again this year. Thank you to all the parents and carers who have signed up and are already using the website.

If you haven't signed up already, please find below the URL you need to visit to register your account. You will need to complete your details and select "I am a: Parent/Carer" from the dropdown.

<https://nationalcollege.com/enrol/st-peter-at-gowts-ce-primary-school>

Once you have registered, you will be able to access the 'Online Safety for Parents and Carers' course and all the resources the site has on offer.

NOS publish weekly guides to support schools and parents with getting to know different apps, social media platforms and websites etc. We will retweet the guides each week so do keep an eye on the school Twitter accounts. These can also be found on the NOS website when you have created an account.

Meet our JOSOs



We are the JOSOs - Junior Online Safety Officers.

As JOSOs, we hope to help children understand how to use the internet safely. We have lots of exciting things planned to support all classes in doing so. We will be talking about trusted adults and being mindful about who you trust on the internet.







AI Chat Parent Factsheet

Lincolnshire Stay Safe Partnership have received quite a few concerning reports regarding inappropriate, oversexualised and abusive material on AI Chat Apps. **They have created the attached factsheet for us to share with parents and carers.** Whilst AI can be a really creative tool and has many benefits that will change how we use the internet it is important parents are aware that safety features have not caught up with all available apps and they therefore need to be checked by an adult and monitored in order to avoid harmful content being seen by children and young people.

AI Chatbots What is it ?

While online your children frequently encounter artificial intelligence (AI) in various forms. One increasingly common application is the AI chatbot, a computer program designed to simulate conversation with humans. They access information from across the internet and use it to generate responses that mimic human conversation. AI has a wide range of uses from providing information, engaging in conversations or assisting with problem solving. It's a powerful tool that offers exciting possibilities for children and young people, but like any tool, it also comes with potential dangers.

Examples of Chatbots;

 ChatGBT Generates human-like responses to text-based conversations	 Replika An AI companion that is paired with a 3D avatar	 My AI My AI is a chatbot available on Snapchat
 HiAi HiAi allows users to create a character to talk to	 AI Friends Has pre set fictional characters for user to chat with	 WOMBO An app that makes pictures based on text prompts

The dangers;

Harmful and inappropriate content:
While AI Chatbots may seem intelligent they are not able to determine what information is good or bad. This can often result in responses that may be harmful or inappropriate for young people. Some apps try to get around this by creating rules and filters for the chatbots to follow. However, whilst investigating this issue we found that most available at chat apps would jump to sexualised, toxic and abusive conversations with little input from the user, making them inappropriate for the given age rating.

Misinformation and manipulation:
AI can be used to create deepfakes (a video of a person in which their face or body has been digitally altered) and generate realistic but fabricated content. Children may struggle to discern real from fake information, making them vulnerable to online manipulation and propaganda.

The dangers continued;

Connections and wellbeing:
AI Chatbots are designed to be a virtual friend, users can create fictional characters or create a persona from scratch. It is important to understand why children are seeking friendship in this way and if there is a need to seek further wellbeing support. We found that some of the AI apps merge AI and live chats in a way that was not overly clear. Making it possible for strangers to contact children undetected. It is essential to check for these features before giving children or young people access to these apps.

Privacy and data collection:
Many AI apps collect your personal data, including children's online activity and interactions. This data can be used for target advertising, profiling, or even sold to third parties. AI should be treated as though it is a stranger, never sharing private and personal information. Be careful of adverts whilst most AI Chat apps are free to download these include popup adverts. We found that these adverts were often for live chat apps that were not age appropriate for the rating they were given.

5 tip for safe usage;

- 1. Know your tools:** Research the chatbot and test it out before letting your child use it, understanding its features, age appropriateness, and potential risks. Check to see what parental features they have. Remember may on the chatbots we used were inappropriate so it's important to explore first.
- 2. Open communication:** Talk openly about the risks, encouraging your child to share their experiences and ask questions about things that feel uncomfortable. Try to avoid judgment or dismissiveness that could put them off sharing.
- 3. Set boundaries:** Establish time limits and nonprivate spaces in the house for chatbot use, prioritizing real-world interactions and offline activities.
- 4. Fact-check together:** Teach your child critical thinking skills, encouraging them to double-check information shared by the chatbot through reliable sources.
- 5. Be the guide:** Explore chatbots together, demonstrating responsible online behaviour and showing how to interact respectfully and safely.

Remember AI isn't all bad, however it is a new technology that requires adult supervision whilst the safety features catch up. AI even helped write some of this newsletter.

To learn more about AI and all parents need to know, visit [InternetMatters.org](https://www.internetmatters.org). A full range of step by step parental controls guides are also available.

For advise and support on young people's mental health and wellbeing check out [Healthy Minds Lincolnshire](https://www.healthyminds.org.uk) for self help guides. You can also call the [Here4You Line](https://www.here4you.org.uk) on 0800 234 6342 to speak directly to one of the practitioners who will talk through how you are feeling.

[NSPCC FREE workshop for Parents and Carers about keeping children safe when gaming 7th February 7-8pm](#)

This year, the NSPCC launches its first Game Safe Festival. As part of the upcoming NSPCC Game Safe Festival, there will be a **free** online webinar for carers, parents and those working with families about online gaming and how they can help keep their children safe. The webinar will be open to parents and carers from across the UK. We're bringing together key players to make sure children have positive gaming experiences. And we're helping the adults in their lives have the knowledge, confidence and tools they need to help keep children safe when they game.

The **free** workshop will take place on Zoom on **Wednesday 7 February 2024, 7-8pm**. There is a poster attached with details on how to register.

[Safer Internet Day 2024 – Tuesday 6th February 2024](#)

Safer Internet Day 2024 will take place on the Tuesday 6th February 2024, with celebrations and learning based around the theme '**Inspiring change? Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online**'.

Safer Internet Day is the UK's biggest celebration of online safety. Each year Safer Internet Day covers an online issue or theme that speaks to the things young people are seeing and experiencing online. Created in consultation with young people across the UK, this year Safer Internet Day will be focusing on change online.

At St Peter's this year, we will be celebrating the day in our classrooms and with the JOSOs, who will be leading a whole school assembly to share information with the children from their training.

Keep an eye on Twitter to see highlights from the day!

As always, please do get in touch if you have any questions, comments or concerns you would like to discuss with us.

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