



Co-op Academy  
Woodlands

# Online Safety

## GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Social networking is popular. Young people are clever in using a range of social media platforms to communicate, changing the way they do this for different people. Children are accessing them from a range of devices including smartphones, tablets, and games consoles.

But social media, like all forms of public communication, comes with some risks. Not all of these risks turn into actual problems; and if children never face any risks, they never learn how to deal with them. By helping your child understand what the risks are, you can play a big part in preventing them from turning into problems.



### Why are there age restrictions on social media platforms?

Many social media platforms have an age restriction of 13 years or over. This is because you have to be at least 13 years old to give consent for your personal data to be collected and processed.

Platforms or Apps		Games	
Age restriction 13+		Age restriction 3+	Age restriction 7+
Facebook	Reddit	Just Dance	Minecraft
Instagram	Messenger	FIFA	Roblox
Snapchat	YouTube	DiRT Rally	Among Us
TikTok	Skype	Animal Crossing	Lego Series
X (formerly Twitter)	WhatsApp	Age restriction 12+	Age restriction 16+
Pinterest	Twitch	Sims	Halo Infinite
Age restriction 16+		Age restriction 18+	
Vimeo		Call of Duty	
Telegram		Grand Theft Auto V	
Tumblr		Far Cry 3 Blood Dragon	

## Understanding the risks

### What they could see or do:

- Seeing or sharing of violent, sexual and pornographic content
- False information and extreme views
- Promotion of harmful behaviours including self-harm, anorexia and suicide
- Over-sharing of personal information
- Actively or unintentionally getting involved in bullying or hurtful behaviour

### Who they might meet:

- People who might bully, intimidate or frighten
- People posing behind fake profiles for:
  - Mischief-making
  - Sexual grooming and stalking
  - Blackmail and extortion
  - Identity theft and hacking

### How this could affect them:

- Fear of missing out leading to excessive use or exaggeration
- Getting upset by things they have seen and being uncertain about what to do
- Engaging, or being pressured into engaging in more risky behaviour either by accident or by design
- Developing unrealistic, and perhaps depressing ideals of body image and gender
- Becoming subject to peer pressure or interactions that are intense or too difficult to handle
- Creating an online reputation that may create problems for them in the future

## Practical tips to help minimise the risks your child might face

- Ask them to show you which social media apps they use and what they like about them. Talk about how they use them and what makes them so engaging.
- Explain how you can use privacy settings to make sure only approved friends can see posts & images.
- Check if any of their apps have 'geolocation' enabled, sharing their location accidentally.
- Show them how to report offensive comments or block people who upset them.
- Check 'tagging' settings so that when others are posting or sharing photos online, your child's identity is not revealed. Also, get people's consent before sharing photos.
- Encourage your child to come and talk to you if they see anything that upsets them.

## Keep talking, and stay involved

- People may not always be who they say they are online: how can this create problems?
- Why is it unwise to meet anyone in the real world that you've only ever met online?
- Even if you think your messages are private, remember that words and images can always be captured and shared with others.
- People present themselves differently online - do they really look like that?
- Are they always having that good a time?
- Be aware that screens, and especially being anonymous, can lead people to say things they wouldn't say to someone's face.
- What does being a good friend and a likeable person online look like?
- There can be pressure to be part of particular group online or to be seen to be following a certain set of ideas. How can you take a step and make better decisions?



## Hate speech, trolling, inappropriate and sexualised language.

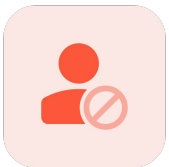
- “Trolling” is when someone posts or comments online to provoke a reaction from others. Trolling aims to disrupt, get attention and cause distress.
- It becomes hate speech when the actions promote hatred and discrimination against a person or group’s identity, such as their gender, race or sexual orientation.
- People involved in trolling or hate speech will often hide behind fake names or post anonymously making it difficult for them to be identified.
- Inappropriate language are words or phrases that are vulgar, discriminatory, socially offensive or harassing.
- Inappropriate sexualised language includes talking about sexual acts or making comments of a sexual nature.
- The use of hate speech or inappropriate or sexualised language is harmful, and not acceptable.

So, what can you do if you or your child experiences inappropriate or worrying content online that is not ok?



1. **Take a screenshot**

By taking a screenshot, you are keeping evidence of the incident that has taken place. This is useful to support any investigations that may need to take place when the incident is reported.



2. **Block the person, or remove yourself**

By blocking the other person, or removing yourself, you are keeping yourself or your child safe.



3. **Tell someone you trust - report it**

Report it to someone who can help. In school, we explain to children that they should speak to a trusted adult - someone over the age of 18 who helps to keep them safe.



4. **Report it to the platform**

By reporting it to the platform it took place on, you are supporting them in stopping inappropriate behaviours online.

Examples of hate speech and inappropriate language or sexualised language online are serious.

Co-op Academy Woodlands has a duty to report any incidents of hate speech to our local authority.

Look out of the CEOP button online

If a child has concerns about something that has happened online, they can report this through CEOP, a free online tool. To do this, they can:

- Click the CEOP button
- Go to [ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre](https://ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre)



### Should I make a report to CEOP? →

If you're worried about online abuse or the way someone has been communicating online, let CEOP know.



# Here to help!

If you have a concern you'd like to report about something that concerns or worries you, you can do this by:



1. Talking to us  
Pop in for a chat, or give us a call





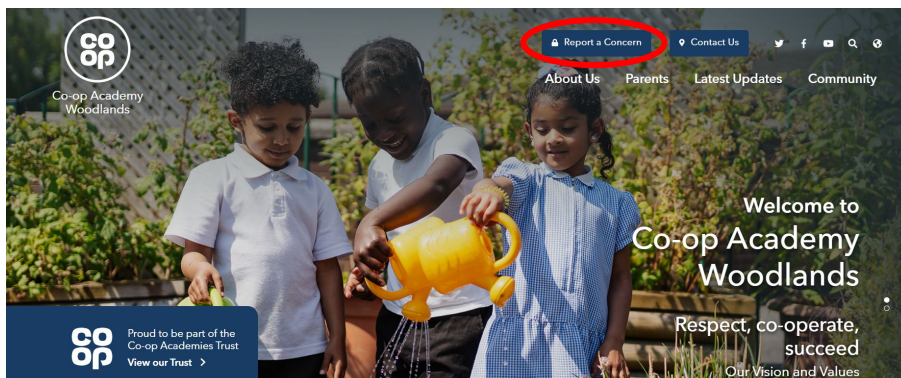
2. If you or a child is in immediate danger  
Call 999



3. Report through our website
  - Go to [woodlands.coopacademies.co.uk](https://woodlands.coopacademies.co.uk)



- Click the  Report a Concern button
- Click  Send us a message online
- Complete the short form and we will get back to you



Report a concern about something online, or something that worries you through our website.










Children can also let us know about a concern through our in-class worry boxes

Every classroom has a worry box. We encourage children to write down or draw anything that is worrying them. Our team will then address this with the child or the class.



Other Trusted Adults at Co-op Academy Woodlands



 Mrs Clark Headteacher Deputy DSL	 Mr Trower Deputy Headteacher	 Miss Price Assistant Headteacher
 Miss Wilson Designated Safeguarding Lead & Pastoral Team Lead	 Mrs McLean Deputy DSL & Pastoral Team	 Mrs O'Carroll Deputy DSL & Attendance Team
 Miss Goodall SENDCo	 Miss Kerrigan Learning Mentor	 Miss Barrett Learning Mentor