
**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHEN USING THE
INTERNET**

EMERGENCY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To raise awareness of the risks that children and young people face when interacting with the internet. In particular the dangers of disclosing personal information and entering into 'relationships' with strangers when using the internet.

Summary

2. The emergence of the internet as potentially the most versatile aid to learning can no longer be disputed. Regrettably the internet has rapidly evolved without proper control and for every 'legitimate' website there may be a hundred or more that prey on the vulnerable.
3. In Darlington we obtain our internet provision through a regional network funded through a consortium of local authorities, the Northern Grid. This internet provision provides the most stringent of filtering and security systems to safeguard, as far as possible, its users against accessing internet content that display: As part of its security policies, social networking sites such as 'MySpace', 'Facebook' Bebo, Twitter, etc. as well as 'Chatrooms' and 'instant messaging' sites, like MSN which have become so very popular with young people, are routinely blocked. These elaborate filtering and security systems deployed in schools are rarely replicated at home.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Members accept the report.

Murray Rose
Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

John Steel:

S17 Crime and Disorder

The safeguarding agenda is linked to criminal

	activities related to children especially when using the internet
Health and Well Being	Failure to address child protection and safeguarding issues has implications on the emotional and physical wellbeing of children and adults
Sustainability	Not related to this report
Diversity	Safeguarding is an issues for all ethnic groups
Wards Affected	All wards
Groups Affected	Children, families, all agencies involved in safeguarding children and the wider community
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no budget implications
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Safeguarding relates to 3 themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy: Safer Darlington; Healthy Darlington; and Aspiring Darlington. Safeguarding is also a feature of the 'Narrowing the Gap' priority in Darlington
Efficiency	There are no efficiency implications

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. Children and young people who use the internet in our schools are protected by elaborate filtering and security systems which are specifically configured to block access inappropriate web sites and content. These filtering and security systems are updated on a daily basis and go to the most extensive lengths to ensure that children and young people are not exposed to material which is inappropriate, such as pages that display:
 - (a) Violent content—this may be in movies, music, online games, or web images.
 - (b) Content that breaches norms or standards on social, religious, cultural or other grounds.
 - (c) Sexually explicit content. This is widespread on the internet and able to be viewed on websites, shared in peer-to-peer networks, or sent as spam via emails. Sexual content may range from easily accessible soft-core pictures to prohibited adult pornography as well as child abuse images.
 - (d) Extremist websites—including racial hatred, anti-gay or anti-Semitic sites or pro-violent sites. Sometimes these sites can be used to recruit new members.
 - (e) Content that instructs on illegal activity—including instructional websites on topics like bomb or weapon making or sites promoting copyright infringement, security breaches, such as unauthorised access to computers, or fraudulent online schemes.
 - (f) Online advertising—some online advertising can be inappropriate for children because it contains inappropriate or adult content. The internet provides an inexpensive delivery channel for advertisers, making online advertising a popular option.
6. It has to be conceded that there are many benefits of young people using such sites to communicate with their friends and peers and it has to be acknowledged that some young people who may have been reluctant writers in the classroom suddenly become prolific authors when communicating on-line.
7. The inherent dangers of communicating over chatrooms, instant messaging, and above all social networking sites, are that young people are not always assured that the ‘person’ they are communicating with is who they say they are. It is so easy for any person to set up on any social networking site a false identity, complete with fake photo and begin to fantasize and engage with unsuspecting new ‘friends’. The majority of young people communicate with these ‘friends’ in the virtual world without ever considering meeting in the ‘real’ world.

8. Because technology is becoming ever more powerful, especially in the realm of computer ‘virtual reality’ games and simulations, the line between the ‘virtual’ and the real world is becoming increasingly blurred and young people who have been groomed by predators can be tempted to step over that line from their virtual world into the real world.

Minimising the Risks through Education

9. From starting school, through well-embedded Personal Health, Citizenship and Social Education strands of the National Curriculum and programmes such as SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Education) our schools routinely begin to introduce children into ways of keeping themselves safe.
10. Building on programmes which include the ‘Stranger Danger and “say NO to Strangers”’ themes, e-safeguarding education is introduced with teaching supported by age-appropriate resources developed by the UK law enforcement agency, CEOP – the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre.
11. In Key Stage 1 internet safety starts to be addressed using the cartoon character ‘Hector’ who guides young children in how to use computers safely through a series of on-line games and puzzles. With older children, towards the end of Key Stage 2 the Stranger-Danger theme is extended to include strangers encountered on the Internet and the importance of not disclosing personal information on websites. Once again CEOP materials are used via an on-line ‘CyberCafe’ which introduces explicit instruction about children not meeting with identities they have met in the ‘internet world’ with people in the real world.
12. Children in secondary education have their learning extended by accessing further age appropriate materials from CEOP. These include impactful videos which are based on true to life scenarios depicting teenagers who have been groomed over the internet and lured into life-threatening situations.
13. To support these learning programmes throughout school and college life the Learning Technologies Team and Children’s’ Safeguarding Teams have worked closely together to develop training programmes and identify an eSafeguarding named person in every school to lead on training other teachers to ensure that all children are exposed to learning about the dangers of online activity.
14. Darlington’s LSCB has established a sub-group which is currently finalizing an eSafety Policy to guide practitioners within the broader children’s services workforce and in schools to signpost them toward good practice and relevant resource materials to support training. The Local Authority currently has 5 officers who are accredited by the UK law-enforcement agency, CEOP as ‘ambassador trainers who support priority e-safeguarding programmes.
15. Through each school’s named e-safeguarding contact, schools and parents have access to these accredited trainers and a wealth of support materials to support the e-safeguarding education agenda. For the first time this year every family

with a child entering secondary in Yr7 received a 'Know it All' DVD, produced by Childnet, which provides a wealth of information and advice to help keep their children safe whilst on line.

16. In the aftermath of recent tragic events additional e-safeguarding parental guidance materials have been ordered and these will be made available, free of charge, from schools and council offices.

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**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHEN USING THE
INTERNET**

EMERGENCY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To raise awareness of the risks that children and young people face when interacting with the internet. In particular the dangers of disclosing personal information and entering into 'relationships' with strangers when using the internet.

Summary

2. The emergence of the internet as potentially the most versatile aid to learning can no longer be disputed. Regrettably the internet has rapidly evolved without proper control and for every 'legitimate' website there may be a hundred or more that prey on the vulnerable.
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Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Members accept the report.

Murray Rose
Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

John Steel:

S17 Crime and Disorder	The safeguarding agenda is linked to criminal
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	activities related to children especially when using the internet
Health and Well Being	Failure to address child protection and safeguarding issues has implications on the emotional and physical wellbeing of children and adults
Sustainability	Not related to this report
Diversity	Safeguarding is an issues for all ethnic groups
Wards Affected	All wards
Groups Affected	Children, families, all agencies involved in safeguarding children and the wider community
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no budget implications
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
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Efficiency	There are no efficiency implications

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

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6. It has to be conceded that there are many benefits of young people using such sites to communicate with their friends and peers and it has to be acknowledged that some young people who may have been reluctant writers in the classroom suddenly become prolific authors when communicating on-line.
7. The inherent dangers of communicating over chatrooms, instant messaging, and above all social networking sites, are that young people are not always assured that the ‘person’ they are communicating with is who they say they are. It is so easy for any person to set up on any social networking site a false identity, complete with fake photo and begin to fantasize and engage with unsuspecting new ‘friends’. The majority of young people communicate with these ‘friends’ in the virtual world without ever considering meeting in the ‘real’ world.

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**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHEN USING THE
INTERNET**

EMERGENCY REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To raise awareness of the risks that children and young people face when interacting with the internet. In particular the dangers of disclosing personal information and entering into 'relationships' with strangers when using the internet.

Summary

2. The emergence of the internet as potentially the most versatile aid to learning can no longer be disputed. Regrettably the internet has rapidly evolved without proper control and for every 'legitimate' website there may be a hundred or more that prey on the vulnerable.
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Recommendations

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Murray Rose
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Background Papers

John Steel:

S17 Crime and Disorder	The safeguarding agenda is linked to criminal
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	activities related to children especially when using the internet
Health and Well Being	Failure to address child protection and safeguarding issues has implications on the emotional and physical wellbeing of children and adults
Sustainability	Not related to this report
Diversity	Safeguarding is an issues for all ethnic groups
Wards Affected	All wards
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Budget and Policy Framework	There are no budget implications
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
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MAIN REPORT

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Summary

2. The emergence of the internet as potentially the most versatile aid to learning can no longer be disputed. Regrettably the internet has rapidly evolved without proper control and for every 'legitimate' website there may be a hundred or more that prey on the vulnerable.
3. In Darlington we obtain our internet provision through a regional network funded through a consortium of local authorities, the Northern Grid. This internet provision provides the most stringent of filtering and security systems to safeguard, as far as possible, its users against accessing internet content that display: As part of its security policies, social networking sites such as 'MySpace', 'Facebook' Bebo, Twitter, etc. as well as 'Chatrooms' and 'instant messaging' sites, like MSN which have become so very popular with young people, are routinely blocked. These elaborate filtering and security systems deployed in schools are rarely replicated at home.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Members accept the report.

Murray Rose
Director of Children's Services

Background Papers

John Steel:

S17 Crime and Disorder	The safeguarding agenda is linked to criminal
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	activities related to children especially when using the internet
Health and Well Being	Failure to address child protection and safeguarding issues has implications on the emotional and physical wellbeing of children and adults
Sustainability	Not related to this report
Diversity	Safeguarding is an issues for all ethnic groups
Wards Affected	All wards
Groups Affected	Children, families, all agencies involved in safeguarding children and the wider community
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no budget implications
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Safeguarding relates to 3 themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy: Safer Darlington; Healthy Darlington; and Aspiring Darlington. Safeguarding is also a feature of the 'Narrowing the Gap' priority in Darlington
Efficiency	There are no efficiency implications

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. Children and young people who use the internet in our schools are protected by elaborate filtering and security systems which are specifically configured to block access inappropriate web sites and content. These filtering and security systems are updated on a daily basis and go to the most extensive lengths to ensure that children and young people are not exposed to material which is inappropriate, such as pages that display:
 - (a) Violent content—this may be in movies, music, online games, or web images.
 - (b) Content that breaches norms or standards on social, religious, cultural or other grounds.
 - (c) Sexually explicit content. This is widespread on the internet and able to be viewed on websites, shared in peer-to-peer networks, or sent as spam via emails. Sexual content may range from easily accessible soft-core pictures to prohibited adult pornography as well as child abuse images.
 - (d) Extremist websites—including racial hatred, anti-gay or anti-Semitic sites or pro-violent sites. Sometimes these sites can be used to recruit new members.
 - (e) Content that instructs on illegal activity—including instructional websites on topics like bomb or weapon making or sites promoting copyright infringement, security breaches, such as unauthorised access to computers, or fraudulent online schemes.
 - (f) Online advertising—some online advertising can be inappropriate for children because it contains inappropriate or adult content. The internet provides an inexpensive delivery channel for advertisers, making online advertising a popular option.
6. It has to be conceded that there are many benefits of young people using such sites to communicate with their friends and peers and it has to be acknowledged that some young people who may have been reluctant writers in the classroom suddenly become prolific authors when communicating on-line.
7. The inherent dangers of communicating over chatrooms, instant messaging, and above all social networking sites, are that young people are not always assured that the ‘person’ they are communicating with is who they say they are. It is so easy for any person to set up on any social networking site a false identity, complete with fake photo and begin to fantasize and engage with unsuspecting new ‘friends’. The majority of young people communicate with these ‘friends’ in the virtual world without ever considering meeting in the ‘real’ world.

8. Because technology is becoming ever more powerful, especially in the realm of computer ‘virtual reality’ games and simulations, the line between the ‘virtual’ and the real world is becoming increasingly blurred and young people who have been groomed by predators can be tempted to step over that line from their virtual world into the real world.

Minimising the Risks through Education

9. From starting school, through well-embedded Personal Health, Citizenship and Social Education strands of the National Curriculum and programmes such as SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Education) our schools routinely begin to introduce children into ways of keeping themselves safe.
10. Building on programmes which include the ‘Stranger Danger and “say NO to Strangers”’ themes, e-safeguarding education is introduced with teaching supported by age-appropriate resources developed by the UK law enforcement agency, CEOP – the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre.
11. In Key Stage 1 internet safety starts to be addressed using the cartoon character ‘Hector’ who guides young children in how to use computers safely through a series of on-line games and puzzles. With older children, towards the end of Key Stage 2 the Stranger-Danger theme is extended to include strangers encountered on the Internet and the importance of not disclosing personal information on websites. Once again CEOP materials are used via an on-line ‘CyberCafe’ which introduces explicit instruction about children not meeting with identities they have met in the ‘internet world’ with people in the real world.
12. Children in secondary education have their learning extended by accessing further age appropriate materials from CEOP. These include impactful videos which are based on true to life scenarios depicting teenagers who have been groomed over the internet and lured into life-threatening situations.
13. To support these learning programmes throughout school and college life the Learning Technologies Team and Children’s’ Safeguarding Teams have worked closely together to develop training programmes and identify an eSafeguarding named person in every school to lead on training other teachers to ensure that all children are exposed to learning about the dangers of online activity.
14. Darlington’s LSCB has established a sub-group which is currently finalizing an eSafety Policy to guide practitioners within the broader children’s services workforce and in schools to signpost them toward good practice and relevant resource materials to support training. The Local Authority currently has 5 officers who are accredited by the UK law-enforcement agency, CEOP as ‘ambassador trainers who support priority e-safeguarding programmes.
15. Through each school’s named e-safeguarding contact, schools and parents have access to these accredited trainers and a wealth of support materials to support the e-safeguarding education agenda. For the first time this year every family

with a child entering secondary in Yr7 received a 'Know it All' DVD, produced by Childnet, which provides a wealth of information and advice to help keep their children safe whilst on line.

16. In the aftermath of recent tragic events additional e-safeguarding parental guidance materials have been ordered and these will be made available, free of charge, from schools and council offices.