

Dear Parents and Carers,

Keeping children safe online is one of the most important things we can do together — at home and at school. Online spaces offer amazing opportunities for learning, creativity and connection, but they can also expose young people to confusing, harmful, or inappropriate content.

As part of our ongoing commitment to safeguarding, we want to share guidance and trusted resources to help you support your child online.

Children today live in a blended digital and offline world. They may encounter:

- Unhelpful or harmful adult content
- Online grooming or abusive behaviour
- Algorithms that promote extreme or repetitive trends
- Fast-moving, confusing content like repetitive meme cycles or surreal video loops

With content continually changing there are many areas of online safety that are having a huge impact currently within the UK. One of the most recent concerns that has been raised nationally is one known as **MAP**. Children may come across references to adults who identify themselves using terms such as **MAP (Minor Attracted Person)**. While some online discussions attempt to frame this language as neutral or academic, it is important to be clear that any sexual interest in children is harmful and illegal, and children should never be exposed to conversations, content, or individuals of this nature.

You may also hear your child refer to “**Italian brainrot**” - a term used to describe fast-paced, surreal, repetitive, or nonsensical videos and memes, often designed to maximise attention and engagement.

While much of this content may seem humorous, it can encourage excessive screen time, reduce attention span and emotional regulation. occasionally include inappropriate language, stereotypes, or hidden adult themes.

Such content for both **MAP** and **Italian brainrot** may appear:

- On social media platforms
- In comment sections
- Within gaming chats or private messages
- Through shared videos or memes

We encourage parents/carers to:

- Remind children never to engage in private conversations with strangers online
- Reinforce that they are not in trouble if they see something upsetting and tell a trusted adult
- Use parental controls and privacy settings where available

If your child ever reports feeling uncomfortable, confused, or pressured online, please take this seriously and seek support.

Practical Ways to Support Your Child Online

✓ Keep communication open

Ask about the apps and games they use and what they like about them. Be curious instead of reactive — this encourages trust.

✓ Use parental controls and privacy settings

Most platforms and devices offer tools to help you set boundaries — from age-appropriate filters to screen time limits.

✓ Help them recognise risk and report it

Show them how to flag content, block accounts, and talk to you if something doesn't feel right.

Below are free, authoritative UK resources you can turn to for information, practical tools, and support:

 **NSPCC – Online Safety Guidance**

Comprehensive advice on online safety, talking to your child about digital life, and setting boundaries.
Helpline: 0808 800 5000 | Childline (for children): 0800 1111

 **Internet Matters**


Practical guides for parents on setting up devices safely, understanding apps and managing online risks.

 **UK Safer Internet Centre**

Advice, tools and reporting guidance for concerns like grooming, bullying or harmful content.

 **Childnet**

Help and advice for parents and children about safe internet use and managing online challenges.

 **CEOP – Child Exploitation and Online Protection**

Part of the National Crime Agency, with resources to help keep children safe and tools to *report* online abuse.

 **Parentkind Online Safety Toolkit**

Practical tools and activities to help families build good digital habits together.

 **Family Lives – Parentline**

Free support on family and online safety issues. Helpline: 0808 800 2222

(You can also find age-specific resources and conversation guides on these sites.)

If you believe a child is being groomed or someone is behaving inappropriately towards a child online:

- In an emergency, contact 999
- Report to CEOP via the *Safety Centre*
(Both of these channels are for serious concerns where someone's safety is at risk)
- Please inform the Safeguarding Team at your child's school so they can support both you and your child.

We teach online safety as part of our safeguarding curriculum and encourage children to speak up if they're worried about something online.

If you ever want to talk further, need help understanding a trend your child has mentioned, or want support using any tools, please contact the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or a member of the Safeguarding Team at your child's school. Their contact details can be found on the school website.

Thank you for working with us to keep our children safe - online and offline.

Kind Regards

Lydia Greenwood

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