

Cheswardine Primary and Nursery School

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Reach for the Stars

12.2.19

Dear parents/carers,

Safer Internet Use / Healthy Internet Use

Thank you to all those who came to the meeting last Tuesday in order to discuss internet and computer issues and concerns.

One of our major worries as a school is making sure the children have enough 'good' sleep. Last week the Chief Medical Officer recommended that all devices were removed from children's bedrooms at night. It is not healthy for anyone to have too much blue screen time before bed as this is known to affect the quality of the sleep you have. Primary aged children are recommended as needing 9-11 hours sleep each night and blue screen should be turned off at least 1 hour before this time, preferably two. Some children have told us they have a phone, I-pad, X-box or TV on in their bedroom before going to sleep and this will affect their performance during the day in school and in any other activities.

It would be great if we could all try to achieve this and make sure the children get the best sleep possible in the midst of their busy lives.

All the parents who came to the meeting were very confident about putting limits on internet use and restricting access to technology for their children. This was very encouraging. Despite children going home saying 'it's not fair, everyone else is allowed' and pushing with social pressures, parents have put in place several sensible restrictions and reinforced good practice so that children play games in full view of parents, phones and i-pads are left downstairs when the children go up to get ready for bed, children have to ask if they find a strange message or advert and get consent to access games and apps. There were also parents who didn't allow games such as Fortnite which is rated 12+ and wouldn't allow the children to have their own passwords and access to sites without insisting they knew them and could check on content. I think it was useful for parents to get together and share what they do so that they don't feel like the tyrants children will sometimes insist they are!

A very useful site for keeping up to date with new apps and technologies is 'common sense media' <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>. This site reviews games and apps canvassing what parents and children think and explaining what parents need to know about them. I will certainly be using it to keep up with trends and issues.

Last week in school the children discussed issues concerning internet safety and learnt about how to keep safe online and make sure they have consent before posting photos of others online. They are all brilliant at saying who they would turn to if they saw something disturbing or were approached to talk to a stranger, however this can be easily forgotten if not checked and reinforced by parents at home. There is no doubt that the internet and technology has an awful lot to offer both to learn and enjoy, however it is better for everyone if limits are in place.

Attached is the new home/school agreement which we would request you read, sign and send back to us to go alongside the agreement your child has signed in school. Copies of the new full E-safety Policy and all Acceptable Use Policies can be found on our website:
www.cheswardineschool.org.uk

Please join us in trying to make internet use a safe and healthy experience for all our children.

Further helpful sites and advice can be found on our website and on these sites:
<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk>
<https://www.childnet.com/>

Yours sincerely

REWilliams

Rachael Williams (Acting Interim Headteacher)