

ONLINE SAFETY NEWSLETTER

DEVICE USE, PARENTAL CONTROL AND AUP

Welcome to all our parents and guardians to the first of this year's online-safety newsletter. In each edition we aim to offer advice and information on key aspects of online-safety. If there are particular areas or issues you would like us to focus on in future editions, please contact: lbartlett@mayfieldgirls.org

Logging on

Term has begun in the IT Department with numerous sessions dedicated to introducing our new students to our state of the art information systems together with supporting the girls using their own devices on our network. We hope the girls are fully equipped to enjoy the computer facilities at Mayfield safely and responsibly. The IT Support team have been running A1 sessions to support girls with technology problems. No booking is required to attend this session, just bring the device to room 12 for assistance.

Use of Social Media: understanding the issues

Returning to School after the Summer holidays necessitates a range of decision-making from the fairly inconsequential choice of pencil case in Year 7, through to the more challenging choice of a new wardrobe for Year 12 with coordinating facemask. Not to be underestimated are the essential communication choices all girls have to make on a daily basis, most notably with regards to social media. Boarders' use social media to connect with friends and family, but day girls find it equally attractive. These are choices that students and parents must discuss together. As part of our curriculum through the School, girls undertake online safety modules to inform and make them aware of the negative as well as the positive features of social media, and provide a better understanding of the age restrictions. While many girls feel that they are aware of the issues, there are always some that are new to them.

In light of this, I would like to direct you to the parent resource by **Digital Awareness UK**. Charlotte Robertson, co-founder of leading digital wellbeing organisation, shares her top tips on how to be a better tech role model to your children. (<https://youtu.be/NPIDsznUiY0>). Charlotte led a fantastic presentation in our Parent Information Evening in June 2018. We had anticipated a return visit during the Summer term, but unfortunately this was not possible due to the Covid-19 National Lockdown, however she will be joining us remotely for a parent talk on Wednesday 21 October at 19:30. Further details to follow.

Mobile Phone and Device Controls

When girls access the School network, our strict controls and firewalls are in place to protect them. When they access material on Smartphones/devices through 3 or 4G we have no way of imposing files or any form of protection. However, as parents responsible for the phone your daughter uses, you have the ability to limit the access she has, by means of a range of filters. Exactly how to do this will vary depending on both your network provider and the device. Apple provide a useful website to assist with filtering and parental controls on your child's iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch with Content & Privacy Restrictions in Screen Time, you can block or limit specific apps and features on your child's device and restrict the settings on your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch for explicit content, purchases and downloads, and privacy (<https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201304>)

Android also offer parental controls. However due to the ever-changing nature of the app world, it is hard to recommend a particular app to help. However, MashableUK have produced a useful summary that may help in your decision making. <https://mashable.com/roundup/best-parental-control-apps-for-android/?europe=true>

VPNs

VPN stands for Virtual Private Network. It allows users to connect to a different computer and use the other computer's internet access. It seems like the computer being used is in a different location and it hides all browsing history through an encryption process. This is beneficial for people using public networks who want extra security, but it can also allow students to get around home and school firewalls and filters. They can then access all blocked sites at School because the computer is not using the School's network. Essentially when connected to a VPN they are essentially taking themselves out of the protected network and opens up the rest of the internet for their own use. When a VPN is identified through our network, it is blocked. Ultimately the best way to prevent usage is through education both at home and school. We would recommend that you discuss the use of VPNs with your daughter.

Online Safety (e-safety)

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, it is compulsory for each student to read and sign our Acceptable Use of ICT Policy (AUP) which outlines our expectations of Mayfield girls. At the start of term, all girls must digitally sign the Policy. If you have time to go through the Policy with your daughter, this will give you a perfect chance to discuss usage of their various devices. A copy can be found on our website.

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1598640722/mayfieldgirlsorg/p7ivmziwetovsjrm4u4c/AcceptableUseofICTPolicyPupil-Sept2020.pdf>

In the News...

THE SOCIAL DILEMMA (CLASSIFIED 12)

In 1 hour 30 minutes, this documentary-drama hybrid explores the dangerous human impact of social networking, with tech experts sounding the alarm on their own creations. The Social Dilemma gradually breaks down exactly how those social media apps in our phones can lead to addiction, create fake news, and affect mental health. Arguably the most important part of The Social Dilemma is at the end, where each expert reveals exactly how we can avoid getting sucked into the social networking whirlpool and take back control of the content we want to see online – when we want to see it.

You may wish to watch The Social Dilemma with your daughter, however I would suggest that you watch it first yourself to decide whether you feel your daughter is mature enough to view it. It can be particularly beneficial for girls to discuss and explain the issues and challenges they perceive, and their decision making to you. It is really good for them to marshal their thoughts, present their ideas and answer your questions. That way everyone learns!

How you can stop social media 'interfering' in our lives?

- Turn off your notifications;
- Delete apps you don't use;
- Don't fall for recommendations;
- Avoid clickbait;
- Fact-check your feed;
- Don't leave technology in the bedroom – leave devices downstairs.

TIKTOK

Social media site TikTok recently announced that it has introduced a new parental control feature called **Family Safe Mode**. It is designed to help parents keep their children safe by managing their screen time, limiting who they receive direct messages from and restricting access to inappropriate content. <https://www.vodafone.co.uk/mobile/digital-parenting/tiktok-controls>

X-BOX FAMILY SETTINGS - FOR PARENTS

Microsoft have recently released some new management features that parents can use. Available for iOS and Android, it is a free download and it has some great features, e.g:

- Create new child accounts;
- Manage screen time limits (including grant more time);
- Accept or decline friend requests;
- View and manage friends list.

Read the full article here <https://news.xbox.com/en-us/2020/09/24/xbox-family-settings-app-launch/>

Additional useful resources:

Apple Families	A website for parents showing safety tools available: https://www.apple.com/families/
Live My Digital – Digital Awareness UK	A series of informative videos on a range of safety issues https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20_IV7ISv7A&index=8&list=PLOUEV_SpnEIZVt5yawS5E0vgOdbDNrcUQi
Parental Controls	BT Parental Controls. BT Parental Controls help keep your children safe online. Once activated, all devices connected to your BT Home Hub will have content filtered to a restriction level that you set. http://bt.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/46768/~bt-parental-controls---how-to...-guide https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/
Online Safety Parenting Advice	https://www.common sense media.org/parent-concerns https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers https://www.internetmatters.org/
The latest 5 apps every parent should know about	https://www.vodafone.co.uk/mobile/digital-parenting/five-apps

If you do have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Lucy Bartlett, KS3/KS4 Digital, Literacy and Technology Coordinator - lbartlett@mayfieldgirls.org