



(image from www.kaspersky.com)



Online Safety Newsletter February 2025

One of the big challenges facing families and teachers today is helping children to navigate the online world safely, in a way that is healthy and helpful. With this newsletter, we aim to share information with you about current online safety issues and relevant articles.

Your safeguarding team at school are Ms Lagodzinska (all sites), Ms Cheesewright (Early Years), Mr Stephenson (Primary), Frau Lintfert (Secondary) and Ms Thomas (Secondary).

Our head of IT is Mr Berman.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's safety, or are seeking advice on IT issues, please contact us via:

safeguarding@berlinbritishschool.de

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Talking about digital safety

This video gives suggestions about how to have a successful conversation with your child about their digital experiences and safety. If we are very negative about using the internet, it can encourage children and teenagers to keep their online life hidden, and discourage them from coming to you when they need help or have questions.

<https://vimeo.com/795644825>

There is a further article [here](#), from the NSPCC website. Please note that some of this information maybe more relevant to families living in the UK, though most advice applies generally.

How to support your child if they read distressing news stories online

If children are active on social media, they may come across news stories and videos that have not been edited or placed within context, as would be the case with news programmes broadcast for children.

This article has tips on how to handle these situations, using a news story from the UK as an example.

[discussing distressing news events with children](#)

Replika / AI 'friends'

If your child has mentioned the app 'Replika', it is worth watching this short video on safeguarding issues.

[Safeguarding issues to be aware of with Replika](#)

Gambling within gaming

The Ineqe website gives the following tips to parents regarding monetised gaming. For a link to the full article, click [here](#). Be aware of 'loot boxes', where people are making decisions about paying for an unknown benefit, which encourages gambling behaviour.

- Educate yourself on the games your children are playing. Try asking them to explain their experiences and what kind of things happen in the game.
- Ensure they are playing age-appropriate games by using platform app stores to check the age recommendations and PEGI ratings.
- Talk with those in your care about the different ways people gamble and the importance of being sensible. Remind them that you don't win every time and people can lose a lot of money. A simple explanation on the importance of having to budget money may be all a child needs. For a young person, talk about losing money and the problems getting into debt can cause.
- Set some boundaries around screen time limits within your household. Keep an eye on how long those in your care are playing games, and encourage them to take regular breaks by suggesting [alternative activities](#) like a family walk or movie night.
- Understand that it may be difficult for the child or young person to step away from a game. When communicating with your child during gameplay, try using phrases like "When will your game be done?" or giving them a time frame for when you need them to be finished (e.g. 10 minutes, 5 minutes, etc.) to avoid tantrums or ignorance.
- Use 'airplane mode' for younger children to stop them making accidental in-app purchases. If they want to play a game that requires access to Wi-Fi, ensure all payment options for your device are password protected or switched off.
- Have an honest conversation with the young person in your care about finances and appropriate spending. Suggest using pocket/chore money on in-game spending as a way for them to learn the value of money.
- Make sure children in your care know to ask for your permission before purchasing anything while gaming.



Ineqe website

As we have mentioned before, a good source of updated information on digital safety is the INEQE website. In the online safety centre [here](#) you can ask specific questions about different websites, or sign up to receive a regular parent newsletter [here](#).

Best wishes,

Your BBS Safeguarding Team