



PURBROOK INFANT SCHOOL
ALDERMOOR ROAD EAST, PURBROOK PO7 5NQ
Telephone: 023 9261 0761
Email: adminoffice@purbrook-inf.hants.sch.uk
Headteacher: Lisa A de Carteret
Assistant Headteacher: Paul Stray
Business Manager: Hazel K Dean



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Dear Parents/Carers

We understand that during the previous lockdowns as well as this last one that screen time has inevitably gone up for all of us and the impact of this is especially evident now that the children are all back in school, as they're vocalising their feelings and experiences about this, some of which are of concern that we've had to support with, so we wanted to share with you and provide some solutions you may want to consider. It is important that, as parents, we are monitoring our children's use of these tools and control their usage to a healthy and safe amount of time.

For the first time ever, we have a generation of Infant School children who have much more access to the likes of TikTok, Online Games, Instagram and Social Media Influencers. It's what we do to be the best digital parents to our children now, at this age, that could shape how they act online as they get older and really importantly help to prevent any significant harm from ever happening to them online. For example, a recent ONS Survey during "Lockdown 1" found that 1 in 6 children of junior school age had accepted a friend request from a complete stranger online (game or social media) and chat to them often. It goes without saying that the online world is a world we want everyone to be able to use and enjoy but it's also very important not to become complacent. In the local area, in other schools, there have been nationally significant incidents where children have been subjected to things online which could affect the rest of their life, we want to ensure we can help you do everything possible to stop this from happening to any children within the Purbrook Infant School Community.

Recent studies show most children's screen time and exposure to content they may not be ready for has increased significantly and now that we are able to help you in having some structure and routine into daily life, we want to give you some simple ways to bring down that screen time at home and feel fully in control of what is happening. One of our Governors and Director of Online Safety UK says: "If you feel like you don't understand the technology, you're certainly not alone but it cannot be underestimated the power that a conversation has that doesn't physically involve any technology. Essentially what we are talking about is feelings, emotions and experiences, beyond the technology at our fingertips. Conversation is the best safety blanket for your children online. Simple, open, non-judgmental conversations and sometimes sitting down and accepting we have some learning to do. Even I do, understanding my daughters mind, rather than trying to think of it all as an adult all of the time."

Here are some topical guides you may find useful;

Managing Screen Time - <https://www.onlinesafetyuk.com/guide-balancing-screen-time/>

Roblox Settings - <https://www.onlinesafetyuk.com/roblox/>

Being the Digital Role Model - <https://www.onlinesafetyuk.com/being-the-role-model/>

TikTok Family Settings - <https://www.onlinesafetyuk.com/guide-fact-sheet-tiktok-v2/>

Also, did you know that when your children are on their Games Consoles, no matter what it is, you can easily manage what they're doing, stop them making unplanned payments, check who they're speaking to, what age rated games they can download and how much time they're allowed all from your phone? For Playstation search "PS APP", for Xbox search "XBOX Family" and for Nintendo Switch search "Switch Parental Control". Within 20 minutes you'll be setup to manage them now and as they grow up and the rules change."

Some of the YouTube videos they are watching will unfortunately get through the child account filters but can still be scary (5 Nights at Freddie's). It is important they are only watching them in an adult's presence, where possible. Streaming sites such as Netflix and Amazon, where children can access Scary movies (lots of children have mentioned recently seeing 'IT') can be password protected and a child's account can be set up for the children to have safe and free access.

We want to work together with our families to support in reducing screen time and keeping our children safe. As previously mentioned we are lucky to have a member of the Governing board whose business is Online Safety and we hope to work with him in the future to educate the children at their level and support our parents. You can visit his website on: <https://www.onlinesafetyuk.com>. In the meantime, we have set up a Webinar through the NSPCC where you can have access to information and support around the risks and benefits of being online for children, practical things you can do to help your child stay safe online and knowledge of the tools and resources that can help you.

They will be covering:

- Parental controls
- Modelling good behaviour
- Gaming
- Cyberbullying
- Mental health and wellbeing

A link to attend the Webinar on Thursday 22 April 7pm till approximately 8pm will be sent 1 DAY BEFORE with a reminder letter 1 week before

We will send out a google form nearer the time to check attendance so we can let the NSPCC know how many to expect and cater for.

Any questions or expertise in this area that you would like to share or support the school with, please do not hesitate to come forward.

Best wishes and stay safe,



Mrs L A de Carteret
Headteacher