

May 2009

Dear Parents

Child protection and Internet Safety

This is an information letter to inform parents of the precautions we take at school and give some advice on what you might do to safeguard your children at home. We make every effort to minimise the safety risks to children using the internet at school. The most serious risk to children involves the possibility of someone being hurt, exploited or abused as a result of personal information being posted online.

Filtered Internet System

In school, we use a filtered internet feed via the Cambridge Community Network provided by a regional broadband consortium called E2BN, who use a RM SafetyNet filtering system .

STARZ children's accounts

The children's use of STARZ is within a closed community at school level and we encourage the use of STARZ accounts both for safe e-mailing and for the storage of work which can be accessed from home and school.

School Website www.spaldwick.school.org.uk

We also have our own Spaldwick School website. One of the purposes of this is to promote the school, and to use this medium to celebrate children's achievements by publishing work or photographs. We have a strict code of practice to ensure children's personal safety is not put at risk and will ensure that

- Photographs are placed on our website, with full permission from parents. [Annually parents sign a permission slip]
- Full names of the pupils will not be used alongside photographs, although sometimes fore names may be.
- Home information or e-mail identities will not be published.
- Personal details about pupil's likes and dislikes will not be posted.
- We will remove any photographs or samples of children's work from the website if any parents object so please contact the school if that is the case
- We have guidance posted on the website for parents about how to make home access safer

Our PSHE curriculum reinforces personal safety for children and does include the safe use of the internet.

We would also strongly recommend that you monitor your child's internet use at home. Please remember that contact with individuals via 'chatrooms' without such secure settings as we use can potentially open children to exploitation by adults who may seek to harm them. We would, therefore, advise parents to become aware of who your child is in contact with over the internet, and to tell you if they come into contact with anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable.

Internet Safety Information

Setting the school web site as the default page on your Internet browser

The front page of the school's website (www.spaldwicksschool.org.uk) has a number of important functions. It provides parents with regularly updated school news and, with a password, will enable parents and pupils to securely access school information. We recommend that you set the page as the default home page for your browser.

If you use Internet explorer, you can do this by clicking on "Internet Options..." in the "Tools" menu. At the top of the page, simply enter www.spaldwicksschool.org.uk in the "Address" and then click OK. Every time you now open Internet Explorer, the school's home page will be loaded.

Protecting children from accessing unsafe material

School computers are currently protected by a powerful screening system that prevents children within the school being able to access Internet sites with inappropriate content. With children being able to access Internet at home, you may wish to consider purchasing appropriate software for your home computer. Net Nanny costs about £30 and is widely available for this purpose. As with other filtering products, it works by creating a user for each member of the family, each with its own filtering preferences. This allows you to restrict younger children more than teenagers, for example.

For more information, visit www.netnanny.com

Installing a firewall

School computers are protected with a firewall, that prevents external access by computer hackers. You may wish to install appropriate firewall software to prevent computer hackers from being able to access files on your home computer whilst you are connected to the Internet.

If you have Windows XP, this already comes with a firewall.

Windows vista has been loaded onto new computers for the last few years. Users can check on the status of the Vista firewall (and turn it on if necessary) by going to Control Panel then Security Center

If you do not have Windows XP and do not currently use firewall software, free software is available for download on the following site:

www.zonelabs.com

Avoiding viruses

All computers within the school are protected by virus software, ensuring that any files that are sent to you from school are free from viruses. If you do not have virus software installed on your home computer, there is a risk that your computer could become infected with a virus from emails or the Internet. You can download free virus software from the following site:

www.grisoft.com

Yours sincerely

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