Dear Parents/ Carers,

Online safety is an important part of keeping children safe at Morley Primary School.

All of our pupils are taught how to stay safe and behave appropriately online, but this approach is only successful if we work together and reinforce safe behaviour at home too.

Many children have received new electronic devices or games, so we feel that this is an appropriate time to highlight some simple online safety tips to help parents/ carers make safer choices and support their children online.

Make informed choices:

In order to protect children online, it is vital that we fully understand the capabilities and make informed decisions about new games, apps and devices, before providing them to children.

- Do your research before purchasing a new device or game for your child; find out what other parents think, search for parental advice online and ask the shop about pre-installed apps or tools.
- Always check the PEGI age rating and descriptors on games before buying them for your child and carefully consider whether the content is appropriate for them.
- Take time to find out whether the device or game has an online component or allows your child to access to the internet, which allows them to connect with others online.
- Familiarise yourself with the privacy, safety and security tools on new devices; ensure you are in a position to teach your child how to make their accounts private and how to block and report other people online.

Use the parent guides and shopper's checklists from UK Safer Internet Centre to help you ask the right questions and make informed choices when buying new technology:
www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers/parents-guide-technology

Setting boundaries:

Much like the 'real world', parents need to set boundaries for children online; this provides them with a clear understanding of the limits, expectations and consequences of their behaviour.

- Discuss and agree as a family, how the internet and technology will be used in your home; consider nominating 'tech-free' areas or times, such as: your child's bedroom or dinner time.
- Discuss online boundaries too; let children use the lessons they learn in school to tell you what they think is/isn't acceptable for them to do online and adapt these messages into your own family rules.

Take a look at the conversation starter ideas and family agreement template available from Childnet International: www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/have-a-conversation

Filters and Parental Controls:

Children can accidently or deliberately be exposed to illegal, unwanted or unpleasant content online, but there are some simple steps you can take at home to help minimise this risk.

- Make sure you install anti-virus software, filters and parental controls on your child's device before giving it to them.
- Ensure that you are role-modelling good behaviour by using strong passwords yourself; make them difficult to guess and don't share them with your children.
- Remember that blocks and filters are not 100% effective and you can't rely on them alone to protect your children, so remind them to tell you if they see something upsetting online.

Take a look at the interactive guide to parental controls available from Internet Matters: www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/interactive-guide/

Talk to your children:

Take an active interest in your child's online life and engage in the digital world with them.

- Let your children teach you about their online world and how they use technology; playing new games and exploring websites together can often open opportunities to discuss safe behaviour online.
- Make sure your children know that you are safe and approachable; remind them that they can tell you if something happens online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable, without being told off or punished.

You can find more advice about talking to you child about online safety from CEOP: www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/having-a-conversation-with-your-child/

Other useful websites for parents/carers:

- www.net-aware.org.uk- NSPCC guide to the most popular apps and websites available online.
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk- CEOP website for advice and reporting abuse online.
- www.iwf.org.uk- Report illegal content online (including indecent images of children).
- www.parentport.org.uk- Report inappropriate content online.
- www.getsafeonline.org- Free up-to-date security and technical advice.

If you would like further support and advice regarding online safety, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead in school Mr Taylor.