Safeguarding – New Christmas Devices – Online Safety

10th December 2025

Theme: New Devices for Christmas – Online Safety

Welcome to this week's safeguarding bulletin for parents. As we move into the festive season, many children at Morley will be receiving new devices — tablets, phones, smart TVs, games consoles, smart watches and more. While technology offers wonderful creative and learning opportunities, it also brings risks if not managed carefully.

This week's bulletin focuses on how families can keep children safe when using new devices at home.

Setting Up Devices Safely

Before children start exploring their new device, it's vital that security and age-appropriate controls are in place.

Key steps:

- **Enable parental controls** on all devices (Apple Screen Time, Google Family Link, Xbox/PlayStation parental settings).
- **Turn on safe search** and content filters.
- **Password-protect app store purchases** to prevent downloads without adult consent.
- **Install updates** – the latest software usually includes important security fixes.

App Ages & Why They Matter

Many apps and social platforms have clear age ratings – most social media is **13+**, even if it appears child-friendly.

Common examples:

- **WhatsApp – 16+**
- **TikTok – 13+**
- **Snapchat – 13+**
- **Instagram – 13+**
- **YouTube – 13+ (YouTube Kids available)**

Younger children may not be emotionally equipped for online pressure, group chat dynamics, or exposure to harmful content. Please check app ages before allowing downloads.

Group Chats – A Growing Issue in Derbyshire

Schools across Derby and Derbyshire continue to report challenges linked to group chats, including:

- late-night messaging
- unkind comments
- sharing inappropriate content
- pressure to stay constantly "online"

What parents can do:

- Agree boundaries such as **no devices in bedrooms at night**.
- Review who is in each chat – large groups often become unmanageable.
- Encourage children to leave any chat that feels uncomfortable.
- Remind them that screenshots can be taken and shared instantly.

Monitoring Devices Without Invading Privacy

Healthy online safety is about **guided independence**, not surveillance.

Ideas that work well:

- **Regular check-ins** – ask your child what they're playing, watching, or messaging about.
- **Co-play or co-view** games and YouTube content.
- **Family tech agreements** – set clear expectations about screen time, respectful behaviour, sharing personal information, and gaming with strangers.
- **Talk early, talk often** – an open, trusting relationship protects children far more than any filter.

Children often tell us they want adults to understand the apps they use. Taking an interest makes a huge difference.

Local Derby & Derbyshire Support

- **Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership** – online safety guidance.
- **Safer Derbyshire** – practical advice on gaming, apps, and screen time.
- **Derbyshire Police Cyber Protect Team** – family workshops and digital safety support.

Reporting Concerns

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you ever have concerns about a child's online activity or exposure to harmful content, please contact our safeguarding team or use our **My Concern Community tool** to report confidentially.
Link: https://www.morley.derbyshire.sch.uk/can-i-talk-to-you-safeguarding-concerns/

Designated Safeguarding Leads at Morley

- **DSL:** Mr Taylor
- **Deputy DSLs:** Mrs Taylor, Mrs Richards, Miss Smith

Key Websites

- **ThinkUKnow (CEOP):** https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/

- **Internet Matters:** https://www.internetmatters.org/
- **NSPCC Online Safety:** https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/
- **UK Safer Internet Centre:** https://saferinternet.org.uk/
- **Safer Derbyshire:** https://www.saferderbyshire.gov.uk/