

Welcome

Welcome to this terms spotlight for Online Safety. Technology for me has always been an exciting tool to engage and inspire young people to learn. Computing can provide amazing opportunities for young people that they may not otherwise have. Like anything in life, there are some potential risks. Our aim is to equip our young people with the correct tools to navigate the online world to ensure that they are aware of the online potential dangers that may occur.

Connecting and Sharing

Bad experiences online can happen to anyone, but sadly children and young people with additional needs are more likely to experience content, contact and conduct risks.

Risks do not always lead to harm. It's likely that children and young people may talk to strangers online while gaming or in a group chat, or may experience negative comments, but the key is to ensure they recognise warning signs to prevent these interactions turning into harm.

Interacting with others online through social media or other platforms has become an important part of children and young people's lives. Here are some thoughts about some of the benefits that online use has on our young people.

Being online brings a range of benefits which can support a young persons wellbeing. These include:

- Making and maintaining friendships
- May be a safer option to interact with others online (depending on what they are doing) avoiding the risks of face-to-face bullying
- Some young people find socialising behind a screen easier than face-to-face which makes them feel included and able to make friends and build connections
- The viral nature of the online world means children can put a spotlight on issues and concerns to affect change in the real world
- Being who they want to be without judgment
- A welcome distraction for needing downtime
- Managing their moods and relieving boredom
- Finding their 'tribe' of like-minded people
- Being more independent
- Discovering new interests

In order for our young people to truly reap these benefits they need to be supported. **Remember:**

- Know the risks and what questions to ask
- Know what they do online, the platforms they use and the people they connect with
- Technology solutions are helpful, on their own, they are not sufficient to prevent harm
- Support their desire for autonomy and independence
- Think carefully before banning technology or social media – it's a key part of how children and young people connect and communicate

If you would like any further information, advice or support with anything to do with online safety please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be more than happy to help!



ANGELA POPLAR
Head of Curriculum



Events and key dates

WEDNESDAY 1ST MARCH

Dysons Road Open Afternoon - 2pm

FRIDAY 3RD MARCH

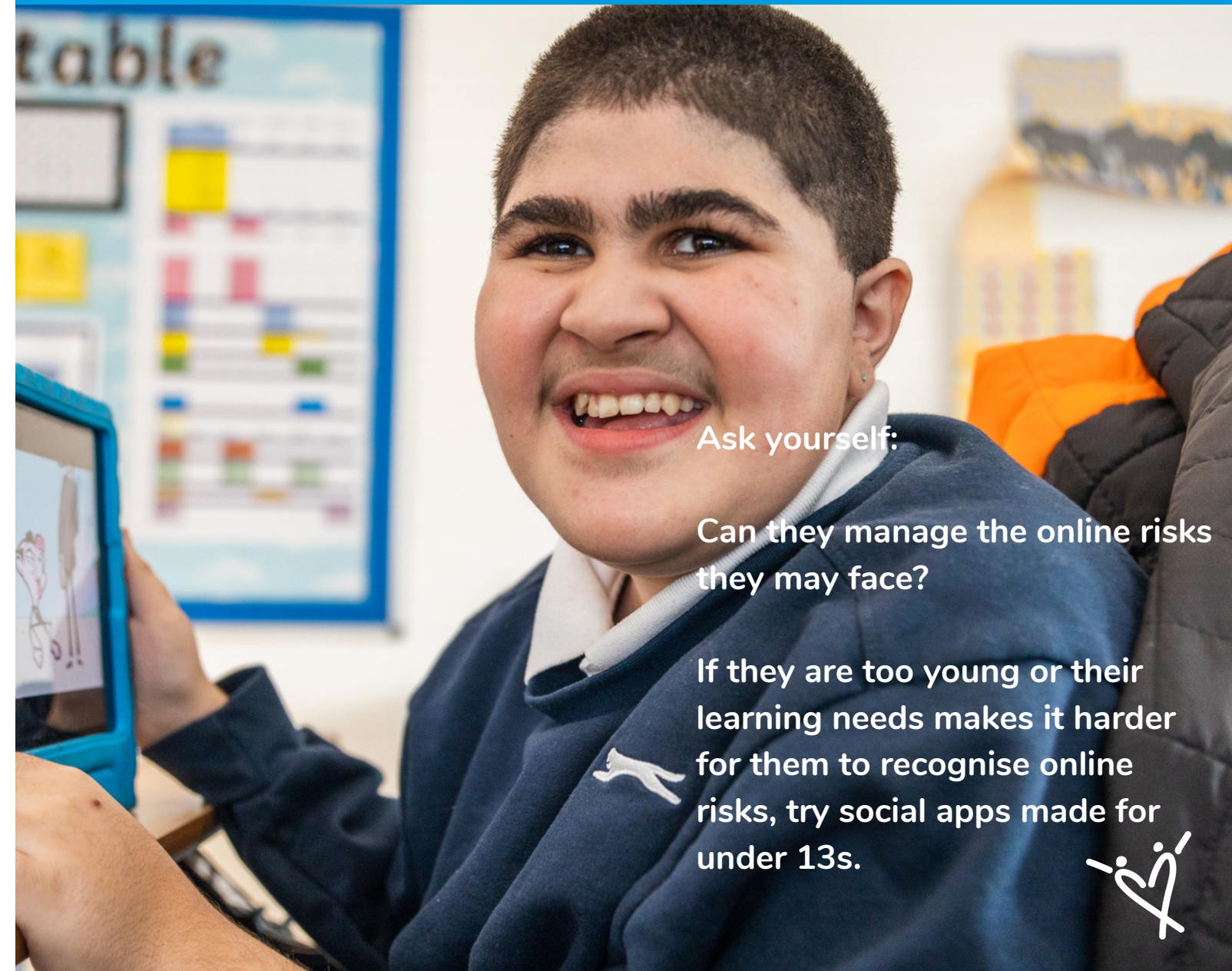
World Book Day

THURSDAY 2ND MARCH

Potential School Closure - Strike Action

MONDAY 6TH MARCH

National Careers Week



Ask yourself:

Can they manage the online risks they may face?

If they are too young or their learning needs makes it harder for them to recognise online risks, try social apps made for under 13s.

