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Dear Parents and Carers,

## **ONLINE SAFETY – 5S**

This week in 5S, we have been learning about online communities and digital citizenship. We learned about the differences between online and offline; one of the key differences is that you cannot see the person you are talking to online, which potentially can be dangerous. We also discussed how expression and intonation cannot be heard online.

Reading the digital citizens' pledge, we decided to add that we should never judge other people's work and we should never retaliate over negative comments and behaviour online. Finally, we all signed the pledge to promise that we will be responsible citizens online.

**From 5S and Mr Sharp**

# Common Sense on Digital Life



## What's the Issue?

We may think of our children's online, mobile and technological activities as "digital life", but to them it's just life. In their world, being able to connect and communicate 24/7 from just about any location is normal – and expected! Between Reception and Year 6, children go through rapid growth in learning. From playing games on their parents' mobiles, to learning how to point and click a mouse, to navigating online by themselves, children this age are participating in a connected culture.

## Why Does It Matter?

The stakes are high because our children's technological abilities can be greater than their maturity and judgement. Having unrestricted access to information and people can result in gaining a wealth of information and experiences, but also access to inappropriate content. Just as children learn to eat properly, swim safely or drive a car carefully, they need to know how to live in the digital world responsibly and respectfully. Their success depends on their abilities to use digital media to create, collaborate and communicate well with others. Those who master these skills in using digital tools will benefit from the digital world's awesome power.

### common sense says

**Use bookmarks and safe search.** Teach your child to bookmark his or her favourite sites. This way, your child is less likely to go somewhere online you don't want. Use safe search options on web browsers, such as Pixabay, to make sure that your child can search safely.

**Consider using filtering and blocking software.** Some parents find these tools to be useful to help protect younger children from accessing inappropriate content.

**Have older siblings help.** Have your older children help teach your younger children how to be responsible and safe online. Let the older ones know that you want them to help you protect their little brothers or sisters online.

**Share wisdom.** Children often don't understand how their actions affect others. We do. We teach children to choose their words carefully, play nicely with others and respect their teachers. Now, we have to extend those lessons to a vast, invisible world. As a parent, you can translate your values into the digital world and help children understand the implications of their actions.

**Seek balance.** If our children are going to thrive with digital media, we must balance the negative with the positive, privacy with protection. As our children grow, they need more independence and privacy. However, parents have to be sure their children know how to be safe and responsible before letting them loose.

**Keep an open mind.** We don't see the world the way our children do. We don't help our children when we judge their lives through the lens of a non-digital world. It's important for us to understand that our children will spend much of their lives in a connected world, where everyone creates and communicates. We need to help them to enjoy it and learn from it.

# Digital Citizenship Pledge

## \* DID YOU KNOW ...

Club Penguin encourages good digital citizenship by using a special tool that stops members from swearing or sharing private information online.

## Word Search

a c i e u e a r y  
k p l e d g e t m  
j e e d e e i a l  
u e e e d n p r i  
n t d u u s a i a  
k a a m n a a i m  
s n m p p n r i o  
n o i t a t i c o  
c m u k a a r i o

pledge junk mail citation community spam

## \* WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What is a pledge? What do you pledge to do as a digital citizen?

## \* DO YOU REMEMBER ...

How you can help create a positive online community?

## 1. Family Activity

Part of being a good digital citizen is making sure to follow your family's values and expectations when you use the Internet. With a parent or family member, fill out Common Sense Media's Family Media Agreement ([www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/parent-media-education/family-media-agreements](http://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/parent-media-education/family-media-agreements)). You can make revisions to the document as you see fit. If you and your parent agree on the terms outlined in the document, you can sign it to make it official.

## 2. Tech It Up!

Together, watch "Pause and Think Online" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgbZAWnOWOo>). After you watch, discuss the following questions with a parent or family member: 1). What does it mean to "listen to your gut"? Can you think of a time when you listened to your gut? 2). Why is it important to feel with your heart when you're online? 3). How do you balance your time on the Internet with other activities? 4). Can you think of a situation when you would need to stand up for something or someone?

## 3. Common Sense Says ...

Be a good digital citizen by communicating responsibly with one another, protecting your own and others' private information online, standing up to cyberbullying, respecting others' ideas and opinions, and giving proper credit when you use others' work.