St John's Primary School and Nursery

7th April 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

ONLINE SAFETY – 1C

This half-term, we have been learning about keeping our personal information private. We must not tell strangers our email addresses, our full names, our ages, our telephone numbers, our home addresses or where we go to school. We learnt that if we find a website that needs our personal information, we have to ask a grown-up. Finally, we discussed creating sensible usernames that don't contain our private information.

From 1C and Miss Cossins

Common Sense on Online Security

What's the Issue?

Learning to protect personal identity information, creating strong passwords and being cautious when downloading programmes and files are crucial to children's safety as well as the security of the information stored on their digital devices. Otherwise, children can expose themselves and their families to digital threats such as computer viruses, data and identity theft, and hacking.

To understand digital safety and security, you'll need to learn perhaps some unfamiliar words: phishing, malware, spyware, spam and yes, even junk. These refer to greedy little programmes that attach themselves to respectable-looking software, e.g. a downloadable game that looks really cool and then wreak havoc once installed on our computer.

Why Does It Matter?

If children don't protect their personal information, there are many potential risks: damage to the hardware, identity theft and financial loss. Children may not realise that they are putting their information in jeopardy because the warning signs aren't always obvious. For instance, another child might ask for your child's computer password to play a game and then access your child's private email account. Or your child might use a file-sharing programme that passes along a virus to your computer. Older primary school children might be asked to provide personal identity information such as home phone number, address, or date of birth, by a thief posing as someone else, all of which opens up the family to the risk of identity theft. Just like in real life, children online have to know who to trust with information.

common sense says

Help your child master the fine art of password creation. Teach them:

- **Not to use passwords that are easy to guess, such as their nickname or their pet's name.**

- **Not to use any private identity information in their password.** Identity thieves can use this information to pretend to be them.

- **Not to use a word in the dictionary as a password.** Hackers use programmes that will try every word in the dictionary to guess passwords.

- **To use combinations of letters, numbers and symbols.** These are harder to crack than regular words because there are more combinations to try.

Teach your children to be careful with what they download. Let them know not to download free games or videos to their computer. These programmes often come with spyware and viruses that will land the computer in the repair shop – and them in hot water. In the end, what seemed like free software often comes at a cost.

Let your children know how to identify and deal with spam. Teach them that spam is Internet junk mail. They should not open it because, if they do, they will just receive more of it. The best strategy is not to open email from addresses they don't recognise.

common sense education

TALKING SAFELY ONLINE / TIP SHEET / DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP / REV DATE 2016
www.commonsense.org/educators | CREATIVE COMMONS: ATTRIBUTION-NONCOMMERCIAL-SHAREALIKE

Keep It Private 🔑

Match the words to their definitions

Internet something that you should keep to yourself, or share only with people you trust

credit a piece of work that is new and created firsthand

private an electronic system that connects billions of people using computers, phones, or other devices, and allows them to communicate with one another

original public acknowledgement or praise given to a person

* **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

When might you be asked to give out private information on the computer?

1. Family Activity

Help a parent come up with a safe username to use on the Internet! To help your parent pick a username, find out: 1) his or her favourit pet or animal, 2) a favourit TV show, book or movie, and 3) his or her favourit numbers. Use the information to make a username and then double check that you followed all the "Common Sense" rules so that the username is safe and secure.

* **DO YOU REMEMBER** ...

What kinds of information you should keep to yourself when you use the Internet?

2. Tech It Up!

With a parent or family member, visit a website such as Eekoworld (**http://pbskids.org/eekoworld**) and sign up using a secure username that you pick together. (Note: On Eekoworld, the sign-up button is in the upper left corner if you're staring at your computer screen!) Adults: You can use any site that you want for this activity, but we recommend sticking to a non-commercial website.

3. Common Sense Says ...

Many websites require you to create a username. A username is like a code name that you give yourself when you're using the Internet. Never include any private information in your username, such as your real name, age, birthday, the name of your school or hometown, or parts of your address or phone number.