# Safe Digital Learning and Social Media

**Dumfries** & **Galloway**

## How do we use technology in our schools and at home.

Our schools use a range of tools to communicate, create, store and manage information. Some of these key tools can also be used in the home. This leaflet tells you about these tools and how we recommend we work together to keep children, young people and families safe online.

## What is ICT?

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) refers to technologies that provide access to information through telecommunications. This includes the internet, mobile phones, laptop computers and video conferencing, as well as software applications such as Microsoft Office, Glow Blogs and Social Networks like Facebook and Twitter. In schools, ICT supports learning across the whole curriculum, as well as being a taught subject.

## Front of class technology

More commonly known as Interactive Whiteboards (IWB) or SMART boards, these have been around several years, originally replacing the traditional blackboard or whiteboard. IWBs are now themselves being replaced with high spec touchscreen panels which resemble giant TV screens. IWBs and panels allow for engaging, collaborative and immersive learning. For example, Computing Science activities can take place with, or without a computer, and from the early years of education. Computing Science involves computation thinking activities such as controlling programme devices like Bee-bots, Micro:bits or Lego WeDo and introducing children to the world and language of coding using programmes such as Tynker or Scratch.

# glow

Glow is an online platform used in our schools and across most of Scotland. Learners can access the resources and features of Glow using any device at any time. This means that learning can continue outside the classroom on any device connected to the internet. Glow services are free to all learners with a Glow login and accounts are created for everyone when they start school.

Glow has the potential to allow schools across Dumfries and Galloway (and across Scotland) to work collaboratively. Pupil name and school are available for staff within Glow to support collaboration. This information can be accessed by staff (teachers and support staff) who have a Glow account. All staff accessing Glow will have been checked through the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) registration process. Pupils can search for and share information with teachers and other staff in Glow. However, if you have any concerns about your child's name and school being available to staff via Glow please discuss this with your Headteacher.

# Office

Through their Glow account, every learner in Dumfries and Galloway has full access to Microsoft's Office suite including OneDrive, Outlook (email), Teams, Word, PowerPoint and Excel.

Glow users can download the latest version of Microsoft Office on up to 15 home machines and personal devices, free of charge. Search 'Office 365' in the App library in Glow and click on the tile to download.
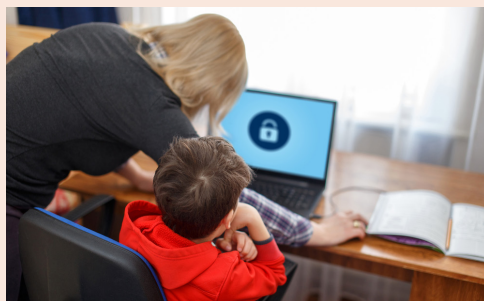
## Microsoft Teams

One element of Microsoft Office being used increasingly is Class Teams. Teachers can upload class materials, resources and assignments. Learners can access these in and out of class on any device connected to the internet. Class Teams provide a conversations area to support learning and lessons can be recorded for, or live streamed to learners unable to get into school.

## Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

Bring your own device, or BYOD is where learners use their personal device (laptop, tablet, mobile phone) in the classroom to engage in learning. The device will connect to the BYOD network which provides access to a safe, filtered internet connection. Our Secondary schools are in the early stages of implementing BYOD, more information on how BYOD will work at your child's school, please contact the school office.

## How can I get involved?

Ask your child to log in to Glow and show you what they use in school and how they use it. Some schools use Class Teams for homework which your child can show you in Glow. Encouraging the safe use of the internet at home is another great way to get involved in your child's digital life. You can open conversations by asking what sites or apps they like using and encourage them to show you what they do. As parents you might also want to agree when you access mobile phones / tablets at home, so you manage screen time. Information websites such as **UK Safer Internet Centre** have lots of resources and information to guide you through this.



## What about Internet Safety?

In school, pupils are taught cyber resilience and internet safety from early years onwards. This is referred to as Digital Literacy and forms part of Technologies in Curriculum for Excellence.

More information on the Technologies area of the curriculum, visit **Education Scotland's Parentzone**



## Support for Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers play a key role in helping children stay safe online, but as the internet changes quickly and often, knowing where to go for information and support can be confusing.

There are many fantastic resources available aimed at parents/carers, including:

**UK Safer Internet Centre**

**Childnet International**

**Thinkuknow**

**Scottish Government Digital**

**Digital Learning and Teaching**

**Digital Schools Scotland**

There are also online resources aimed specifically at young people. A great example is **BBC Own It**, a site written for young people, by young people with straight answers and support on a wide range of topics from bullying to gaming. Another site full of useful information is **Young Scot's "DigiAye?"**

Dumfries and Galloway Council's Education ICT Development Teams **Internet Safety Blog** is a 'one-stop shop' created to sign-post young people, parents and carers to the great resources available to keep safe and happy online.

# SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

## School Blogs, Websites, Apps and Social Media

Many schools have their own Blog, school app, website or social media accounts such as Facebook or Twitter. These online resources are a great way for parents to: keep up to date with important events, access information about the school, and celebrate the achievements of learners. School Blogs are often written by learners who sign up to be young digital leaders. Young digital leaders learn many transferable skills including communication, Literacy & English skills, including writing for an audience, working with others, problem solving and independent thinking.

## Social Media and Schools

Councils across Scotland have been developing their use of social media and schools are no different.

Social media enables us to have conversations about things that matter to us – about life in your community and your family. However, if that conversation were taking place in a room, you could influence and contribute to the conversation. If you are not using social media, you can be cut out of the conversation and are not aware of what is being said – true or false and have no way of presenting your viewpoint.

Social media is like having a conversation, so you need to think about how that person would feel or how they would react if you were in a room with them.

Think about the impact of your words, images, vlogs and blogs. Children in our schools are asked to consider this and it is important for this to be modelled by parents/carers.

## Social media – positives – a great way to:

- gather views and opinions
- advertise and promote events and activities in your school
- share achievements and celebrations
- supply answers to problems
- in an emergency

## Social media – negatives – a bad way to:

- spread information that this a view but shared as fact
- target individual children and young people with negative statements
- highlight negative stories about families
- share information that is private without consent that will do harm

We would encourage you to sit down with your family and discuss the positives and negatives of social media and how you as a family can use it to support and share the successes of the school.
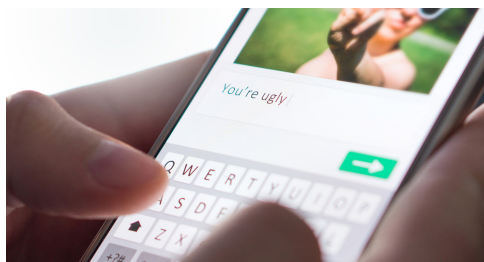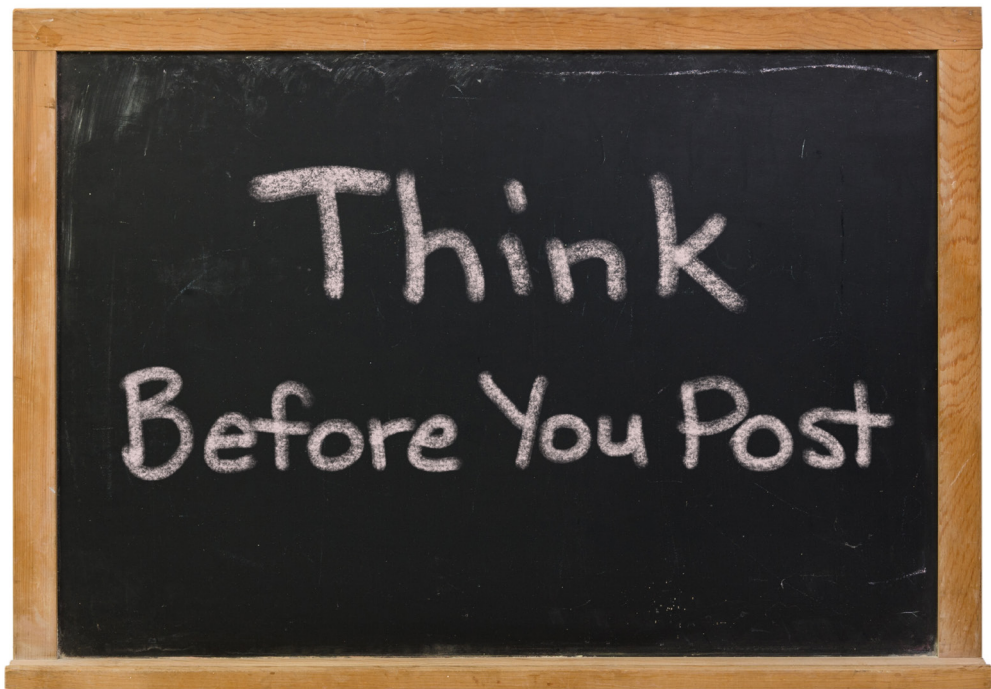
## Things to remember:

- What goes online tends to stay online

- You can't control the internet

- Use closed facebook groups to protect information about children and young people and families

- Carefully consider how and who you share information with

## Things to remember before posting:

- Before you post something pause and think – would you say this 'face to face' to the person?

- If someone has posted something argumentative – try to ignore unless the point they have is worth discussing

- Respect Privacy

- Apologise if you posted something you should not have

- Don't be a 'troll'. Trolling is a form of bullying where people gang up to abuse and aggressively poke fun at an individual and or an organisation.

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