

Dear Parent/Carer

Police Scotland and East Ayrshire Council Education Service are increasingly aware that the internet, particularly Social Media, is used extensively by children and young people on a day to day basis. Police Scotland and Partners do not wish to discourage your children from going online, the aim of this letter is to raise awareness about online safety and the potential risks involved from online activity.



You will be fully aware that social media is a common form of communication for a vast majority of children and young people. Inappropriate use of communications and threatening/offensive communications presents challenges to schools on a regular basis, however there are occasions when the communication is at a such an an inappropriate level that criminal proceedings are raised against those involved.

We can offer advice on ways in which you can safeguard children and young people in order to limit the opportunity of exposure to criminality.

- Protect the accounts that your child has, check the privacy settings and look at friends and followers. If your child is unsure about friends or followers then delete or block them.
- It is recommended that parents/carers know the passwords for accounts until children are aged 16 years. Only you and your child should know the password. Police advice would be for children under the age of 13 years not to use social media.
- Phones or devices should have a lock on them which can be applied in the security settings

If you wish to seek guidance or advice we recommend the following websites:

www.getsafeonline.com

- **Internet safety advice**
- **Crime prevention advice**

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

- **Child protection online advice**
- **Public portal to report suspected child abuse online**
- **Crime prevention (children and parents)**

www.cyberstreetwise.com

- **Internet safety advice**
- **Crime prevention advice**
- **Free anti-virus software**

www.facebook.com/fbprivacy

- **Advice to general public on protecting privacy of online profiles and alerts.**

You can also seek further guidance by contacting the local Safer Communities officer or your allocated campus officer.