

# The Harefield Academy

*Achievement through Active Learning*

Northwood Way, Harefield, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB9 6ET

T: 01895 822108 F: 01895 822414 E: info@theharefieldacademy.org

W: www.theharefieldacademy.org

Headteacher: Tash Hurtado BA PGCE



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Good morning all,

Today, **Safer Internet Day 2021** is being celebrated around the world. The global theme is **'together for a better internet'** and this year in the UK, communities are focusing on how young people can tell fact from fiction and work together to create an internet we trust. Everyone has their part to play in making the internet a better place and we have appreciated student contributions to the Online Safety assemblies that have taken place this year, as well as student engagement with our **Remote Learning Code of Conduct** which can be found [here](#). In addition to the guidance that can be found on the Remote Learning section of our school website and Government guidance <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-staying-safe-online#parents>, the tips and links below provide suggestions on how you can support your child's online safety.

## Talk together

*Communication is the key to identifying online misinformation....*

Talk regularly with your child about how they use technology and where they go for information online. Discuss who they follow, what types of adverts they see, and what stories they find surprising or suspicious. Listening to your child will give you the best possible idea of how you can support them. Not sure where to begin? Have a look at our suggested 'Conversation Starters' for parents and carers.

## Set an example

*Show your child how you question and evaluate online content....*

If you come across a fake news story, or get sent a phishing email, discuss with your child how you spotted it and what you did. Why not ask them for a second opinion? Your child may have already heard about it or seen something similar, and if not, it's a learning opportunity for both of you. Seeing a parent actively question and evaluate online content teaches young people the importance of doing the same.

## Think before you share

*Fact-check and reflect before sharing content, posts or pictures....*

It can be tempting to share surprising or attention-grabbing online content with your child or your family group chats, but make sure to fact-check these links before you do. As it's come from a parent, some children may believe it without questioning it, and older children may



find it difficult or awkward to point out if it is false or misleading. This is another chance to set a good example in how to share information responsibly online.

## Check in with your child

*How does misleading information they see online make them feel?*

False and misleading content online can be upsetting and confusing, e.g. harmful claims that target specific groups, or unhealthy lifestyle tips. Young people may feel powerless when faced with the amount of unreliable content they see. Regularly check-in with your child about their online life and ask them how what they see makes them feel. This is an issue that affects all of us. Reassure your child that you are there to talk about things that upset them and to support them with how they feel.

## Seek help and support

*Ask other parents how they address misleading online content....*

Just as we ask young people to talk about what they are unsure of, make sure you do too! Chances are that you'll find other parents or carers who are trying to figure out how to help their family avoid false information and get the most out of the internet.

Find out how to get more support by visiting [Childnet's 'Need Help?' page](#). You can take steps to support your child online by using features such as making a report on a range of apps, games and services, and using privacy settings on social media.

Should you have concerns specifically relating to the online safety of a young person, please contact Miss Booker or Mrs Carey, Designated, Safeguarding Leads via [rbooker@theharefieldacademy.org](mailto:rbooker@theharefieldacademy.org) or [Fiona.carey@theharefieldacademy.org](mailto:Fiona.carey@theharefieldacademy.org) who will be able to put the required steps in place.

Kind regards,

**Mrs Carey**  
**Deputy Headteacher**