

Children and Young People Services  
School Improvement Team  
Sand Martin House  
Bittern Way, Fletton Quays  
Peterborough  
PE2 8TY

24<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following recent local events, I am writing to offer some guidance and reassurance to support you in helping your child stay safe online and in the community. We know that many parents and carers are already having positive conversations at home, and this message is intended to help you in supporting your child to navigate the online world safely.

For young people, online platforms, social media and messaging apps are a central part of daily life. These spaces can offer opportunities for connection and self-expression, but they can also expose young people to harmful content, pressure from peers, or contact from people they do not know.

One of the most effective ways to support your child is through open, ongoing conversation. We recognise that topics such as online harm, inappropriate content or peer pressure can be difficult to discuss. However, young people are far more likely to seek support if they feel they will be listened to calmly and without judgment. Even short, informal chats can help build trust and make it easier for young people to ask for help if they need it.

As young people become more independent online and, in the community, we encourage you to:

- Take an interest in their friendships, who they spend time with, both online and offline and which platforms and apps your child uses.
- Be aware of who they are communicating with. Encourage them to trust their instincts and seek advice if something doesn't feel right.
- Agree clear expectations around online behaviour and screen time.
- Stay alert to changes in mood or behaviour that may indicate something is wrong.
- Encourage positive activities, interests and routines that build confidence.

It can also be helpful to talk to your child about how information spreads online. During or after local incidents, posts, images or videos can quickly be shared without full context or accuracy. This can cause unnecessary worry or distress and may impact those involved. Encouraging your child to pause and think before sharing and to rely on trusted sources can help reduce harm to them and others and prevent situations escalating.

Encourage respectful behaviour online and help your child understand that not everything they see is true. Also be sure to show them how to block or report anything that concerns them.

If something does happen, try to stay calm and listen. Reassure your child they have done the right thing by speaking to you, and seek support from the school or other services if needed.

### **Where can parents get help**

For further advice and practical guidance, we recommend the NSPCC and their Net Aware website [Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#), which provides up-to-date information on apps, games and conversation starters to help you talk to your child about their online life.

If you have concerns about your child's safety or wellbeing, please contact your child's setting, school or college. Any immediate risks should always be reported to emergency services.

By working together, we can support young people to stay safe, make informed choices and feel confident both online and offline.

Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carrie Traill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Carrie Traill (She/Her)  
Service Director for Education  
Peterborough City Council