

Suggested Guidelines for E-safety

- Consider carefully if your child really does need a phone (consider whether the reason is status or practicality). On the whole, children of prep age are never alone or unsupervised, so the function of the phone is often that of diversion rather than necessity, in which case an iPad or tablet allows for more control.
- If they need a phone to make contact, give them a basic model until you are sure they are old (and mature) enough to use one with internet access and Wi-Fi responsibly.
- Explain that the phone is **your property** not theirs (as parents of young children, you are ultimately responsible for their actions), and establish the terms on which you will let them have use of it.
- Insist that you know the passcodes and let them know you will check regularly to see what they have been writing etc.
- Only allow your child to participate in social networks for which he/she meets the minimum age requirement. If they do not, delete the account as soon as possible. Make sure you can access the account and let your child know that you will do so regularly.
- Create a code of conduct to define how they will use technology and social networking. A good contract should include expectations for: regulating hours of use, where devices will be used, maintaining privacy, content your child agrees he/she will never view or post, and the consequences for breaking the contract.
- Talk to your children regularly about inappropriate situations which happen with technology and try to show them examples of where technology has had a negative impact on someone's life. The type of examples will vary according to the age of your child.
- Limit the amount of time they spend on phones and other devices.
- Do not allow them to have these devices in their bedrooms at night, have them charge them in your kitchen or bedroom, so you can be sure they are not using them when they should be asleep.
- Discourage your children to access their phones at meal times and other inappropriate moments.
- Offer them opportunities which take them away from technology so they do not become addicted to games and chat groups.
- Talk to your child and participate in their life as fully as possible.
- Talk to other parents and share experiences and ideas about promoting sensible use of technology.
- Encourage your child to talk openly with you about any negative experiences they encounter while using their mobile phone. Sometimes a child will hide a negative experience from parents because they fear their mobile phone or internet access will be taken away.

Do not worry about being unpopular for making what you believe is the right decision about your child concerning their readiness for these devices; it is their wellbeing that you are safeguarding.