

St James' Church of England Junior School



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30 September 2025

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to alert you to an immediate and very serious online risk to children within our local community.

We have been made aware that pupils in a nearby school have been contacted while playing *Fortnite* online by an unknown male. This individual has engaged them in highly inappropriate conversations, messages and even video calls of a sexual nature, encouraging the children to expose themselves and perform sexual acts. He has then attempted to control the children by threatening to share what they have done with others.

In this case, the children's parents had believed that their children were only playing with school friends. The truth only came to light when the parents checked their children's phones and tablets this past weekend. The police are now involved.

We share this with you because if it has happened to these children, it could happen to any child. Please take time to check your own child's devices, including messages, apps and contacts. If you find anything concerning, **please do not delete it** – instead, report it to the police immediately.

At school, we will be addressing online safety with all pupils, in an age-appropriate way, as part of our computing and PSHE curriculum. We will particularly stress:

- The importance of only communicating online with people they truly know in real life.
- Always telling a trusted adult if anything online worries or frightens them, no matter how small or embarrassing it may seem.

Our school is committed to ensuring that all children are able to grow, learn and flourish in a safe and nurturing environment. Working together, we can protect our children from harm and give them the confidence to use technology wisely and safely.

Attached to this letter is a Keeping Children Safe Online Parent Guide for your information with useful links and telephone numbers. However, if you would like any further advice or support around online safety, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Gardiner
Acting Headteacher



Parent Guide: Keeping Children Safe Online

Immediate Online Safety Checks for Parents/Carers

Please take the following steps today to help keep your child safe:

Check Devices & Accounts

- Look at all apps, games, and social media accounts your child uses.
- Review friend/contact lists – remove anyone your child does not know in real life.
- Check message histories, including in-game chats, texts, WhatsApp, Messenger, and video apps.

Supervise & Talk

- Keep devices in shared family spaces where possible.
- Talk openly to your child about who they play with and chat to online.
- Reassure them: *“You can always tell me, no matter what – you won’t be in trouble.”*

Report Concerns

- If you discover anything worrying or inappropriate, **do not delete it**.
- Take screenshots or save evidence where possible.
- Report immediately to the **police** and seek advice at www.ceop.police.uk.

Set Boundaries

- Use parental controls to limit contact from strangers in games and apps.
- Set time limits and check privacy settings together.
- Encourage your child to only play or chat online with people they know offline.

Teach Key Messages

- Never share personal details, images, or videos with people online.
- Say **no** and tell a trusted adult if someone asks for something that feels wrong.
- Remember: people online are not always who they say they are.

Useful Links & Support

- **ThinkUKnow (CEOP):** www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- **NSPCC Online Safety Helpline:** 0808 800 5002
- **Childline:** 0800 1111 (for children to talk in confidence)

Together, we can protect our children and help them use technology safely and wisely.

