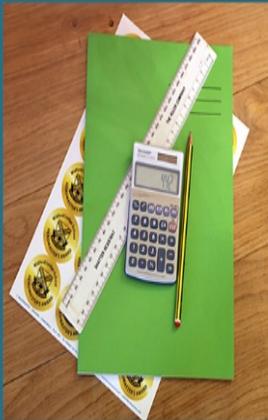




# Widford Lodge Preparatory School



Online Education  
Booklet





## Introduction from the Headteacher

I hope that you will find this guide to Widford Lodge School's digital learning programme helpful. We recognise that online learning from home can be an anxious time for our families and we have put together this guide to support you and your children if our school has to close again during the pandemic Covid-19 crisis. Our priority is to provide the very best possible education at this time, via a blend of virtual lessons via video link, the ability for pupils to interact directly with their teachers and the facility to view, complete, submit and receive feedback on assignments. The staff will be available 'live' through the academic lessons to allow pupils to ask questions about their work and teach new content.

In this guide, you will find an outline of the online learning timetable and other important academic routines. To balance the screen time, there will be creative offerings in the afternoons, to provide further fun and enriching activities. A broad and varied curriculum is important, and the children will be able to enjoy blocks of lessons in Art, Music and Humanities in the afternoons. Some individual music lessons will also take place during this time too, so please do contact our Subject Leader of Music, Mrs Naomi Poole ([npoole@widfordlodge.co.uk](mailto:npoole@widfordlodge.co.uk)) if you have further questions. While routine is very important for the children, and we do encourage them to follow their timetable wherever possible, we do also understand the need for flexibility, to fit with your family's needs. Breaks and lunchtimes are important times for relaxation with the family where possible, and we recommend that that this is non-screen time, and devices are turned off.

If you have any questions or require support, in the same way as usual, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant member of staff. All academic questions should be raised with the teachers in the first instance or via the specific Subject Leaders and the Deputy Head (Academic), Mr Ed Callaway ([ecallaway@widfordlodge.co.uk](mailto:ecallaway@widfordlodge.co.uk)).

In this booklet, we provide clear guidance around our pastoral care and wellbeing support, which we will continue to provide to our pupils. You will find some important guidance for e-safety too. During this time of change and anxiety, it is essential for pupils to feel that they can discuss things that are important to them with the staff and with each other. Form tutors will have live interactions with pupils on a daily basis and we will be setting PSHEE assignments in the timetable. Please contact our Deputy Head (Pastoral), Mrs Sam Pawsey ([spawsey@widfordlodge.co.uk](mailto:spawsey@widfordlodge.co.uk)) if you have any questions or require further support.

We, of course, hope to remain open and for school to operate as normally as possible. However, in uncertain times, we must now use technology to our advantage for learning and be aware of what we can do, should a return to lockdown be necessary. We recognise how important our families' support and positive engagement at home with Widford Lodge's online learning is and we are hugely appreciative of your support.

I wish you all continued good health during these unprecedented times. As always, I am here for any queries or concerns – please contact me via email [headteacher@widfordlodge.co.uk](mailto:headteacher@widfordlodge.co.uk)



# Academic

The period between the closure of the school and the start of the Easter holidays was a very challenging and uncertain time for the whole school community. Like many schools, we had to implement plans and processes for home learning at very short notice. Using our experiences from this and feedback from pupils and parents, a great deal of planning took place during the Easter holidays to implement an academic and pastoral programme that we felt confident was robust and supportive for everyone: pupils, parents and staff.

None of us would have chosen to be in the position that we found ourselves in but, in order to move forward, we needed, as a community, to respond positively to the situation and support each other. While there were many challenges, we were able to do this.

We are hopeful that many of you will feel reassured in knowing more about **Widford Lodge's Online Education** programme that was put in place and ran smoothly for the summer term period of home learning.

Inevitably, by having to interact remotely, much of our provision was reliant on IT and we knew this was a concern to some parents. While operating in this way was new to the teaching staff too, we endeavoured to make things as easy for the parents and pupils as possible.

We realised that there was a daunting amount of information for staff, pupils and parents to digest and become familiar with so we provided instructions, tutorial videos and other support. Now that staff, pupils and parents are more familiar with remote learning, we intend to continue to use this option sometimes to set homework tasks in future, so that children retain their understanding of how to view, complete and submit assignments. Moreover, children showed in this process how adaptable they are, and rose to the challenge quickly, responding well to the expectations of staff.

As we have always maintained, through the programme it was important to not let your attempts to motivate your child to work lead to tears (theirs or yours). Liaising with the teacher was an important part of helping you or your child, if they were not responding or struggling. This is something we would encourage again in the future. The teachers checked in with their groups and took 'registers' to ensure lessons were being accessed and tasks completed.

If you have any questions or queries about anything that is included here, please do not hesitate to contact your child's form teacher or the Deputy Head (Academic), Ed Callaway ([ecallaway@widfordlodge.co.uk](mailto:ecallaway@widfordlodge.co.uk)).

Thank you for your ongoing support.



## Pastoral Care

We are very much keen to stay connected with the children during any Virtual Learning experiences, albeit from a distance. It goes without saying that we want to do everything that we can to support both the pupils and yourselves as we all continue to adapt to new ways of working. Our focus on pastoral care remains as strong as ever. Indeed, our strong sense of community and our core values - respect, perseverance, resilience and rising to new challenges – are as relevant as ever during times of remote learning, and our supportive, caring and nurturing environment is still very much available to the pupils. Our intention is that our remote systems will allow all pupils to feel that they are involved, listened to and informed.

As previously mentioned, the children's form tutors will continue to play an important role during this time of online learning. Form tutors will check in with pupils on a daily basis, and offer them the opportunity to discuss things that are important to them. At this uncertain time, it is essential that the children continue to talk, both to the adults in the school and to their wider support network. PSHEE, delivered by the form tutors, will continue to play an important part of the curriculum. Much of the time will be devoted to discussing issues that affect mental health.

There will inevitably be some children who find it easier to talk via messages rather than face-to-face. Form tutors will happily respond to messages sent via Teams. Alternatively, if they wanted to send a message to another teacher, they have the use of the 'chat' function in Teams to contact any teacher.

The whole team is here to support parents too. We recognise that this is a daunting time, so please do get in touch if you need help with structuring the day or encouraging your children to settle to work. Staff will support you wholeheartedly: we all share the common goal of giving your children the very best possible education at this time. If you would appreciate some guidance, please contact your child's form tutor directly, or email your questions or concerns to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) Sam Pawsey at [spawsey@widfordlodge.co.uk](mailto:spawsey@widfordlodge.co.uk)



## Applications that are needed for our online delivery

The main tool that we used was Microsoft Office 365, specifically Teams.

- **Microsoft Teams** will continue to be used for communication and collaboration between teachers and pupils/parents, in the form of virtual lessons, setting of assignments and use of the 'chat' function.
- **Purple Mash** will continue to be used as a tool for completing some assignment tasks.

Therefore, all children need to have access to Microsoft Teams in order to communicate with their teachers, access virtual lessons, access assignments and to receive feedback on work completed. We have asked teachers to think carefully, when setting work, about the amount that needs printing, scanning and uploading. Inevitably there will be some printing and scanning that is required.

Teachers in Years 3-6 will continue to deliver the education programme by following the normal programmes of study, although this will have been lightened slightly. This will ensure that there is continuity across the various year groups, particularly for the Core subjects of Maths and English.



# Microsoft Teams

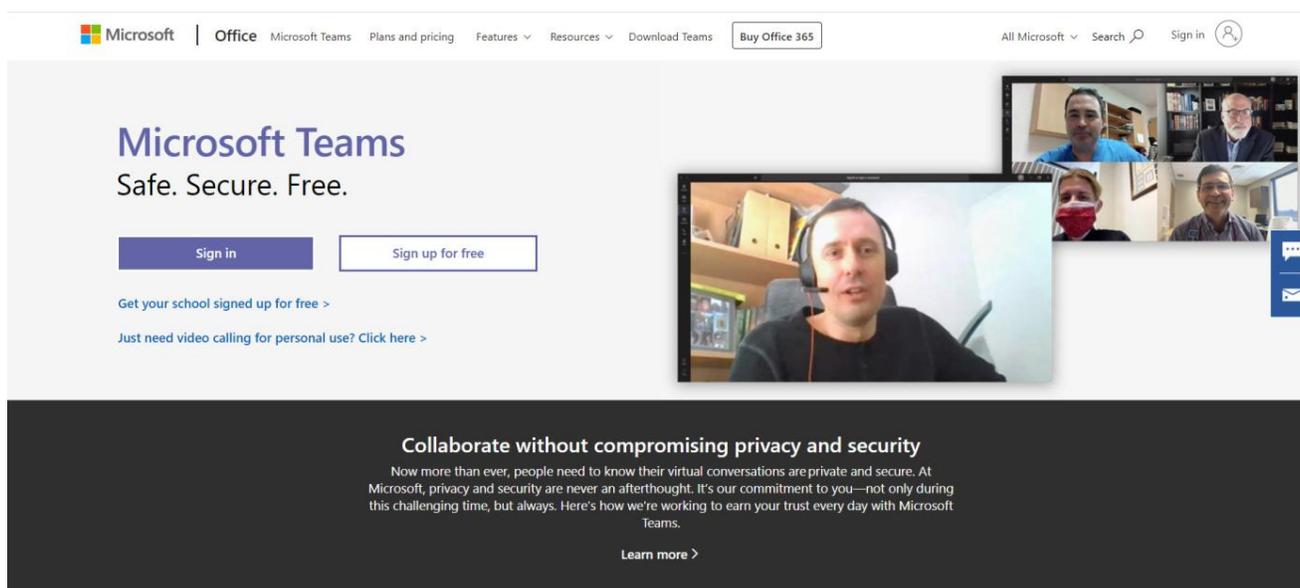
This is part of the Microsoft Office suite of programmes and can be accessed through Microsoft Office 365 or through the Teams app on an iPad or other device. Children will need their school login details to access this. All children in Reception to Year 6 already have a login and password.

Microsoft Teams will be used for the start of the lesson as a general introduction to the lesson and to go through work that has been submitted. Individual work can also be set, submitted and feedback given through Teams.

Microsoft Teams will also be used by teachers to touch base with their pupils although, of course, how the platforms are used exactly will depend upon the age of the children and this may evolve over time. The Prep School will have regular engagement in it, while Pre-Prep will use it for brief periods in the day to support tasks and pupil welfare.

It would be very useful if you as parents and/or guardians could please download the Microsoft Teams app onto a laptop and/or device and ask your child to log in. Please use your child's school email address and their normal computer club password to access Teams.

<https://teams.microsoft.com/download>



The screenshot shows the Microsoft Teams website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Microsoft logo, 'Office', and links for 'Microsoft Teams', 'Plans and pricing', 'Features', 'Resources', and 'Download Teams'. A 'Buy Office 365' button is also present. On the right side of the navigation bar, there are links for 'All Microsoft', a search icon, and a 'Sign in' button with a user profile icon.

The main content area features the heading 'Microsoft Teams' followed by the tagline 'Safe. Secure. Free.'. Below this, there are two buttons: 'Sign in' and 'Sign up for free'. Underneath the buttons, there are two links: 'Get your school signed up for free >' and 'Just need video calling for personal use? Click here >'. To the right of the text, there is a large image showing a video call in progress with several participants.

At the bottom of the page, there is a dark grey banner with the heading 'Collaborate without compromising privacy and security'. Below this heading, there is a paragraph of text: 'Now more than ever, people need to know their virtual conversations are private and secure. At Microsoft, privacy and security are never an afterthought. It's our commitment to you—not only during this challenging time, but always. Here's how we're working to earn your trust every day with Microsoft Teams.' Below the paragraph, there is a 'Learn more >' link.

Completed work will be marked using a mixture of methods: in addition to teacher feedback, there will be an element of self-assessment and parental assessment. We hope that all tasks set will be attempted but understand if families prefer to focus on the core subjects due to their own situation.

## Timetable

The timetable is re-written for the Online Education programme. The decision was made to move the academic lessons to the start of the day and then end the day with the humanities/ creative/arts subjects. This does mean that some pupils may have a new teacher for part of the programme. We have also made the decision to remove Computing from the timetable in recognition of the amount of screen time for the pupils.

Any new timetable will be emailed to you at the start of the process and form tutors will talk it through with their classes in a virtual lesson. The new format not only suits households with limited use of laptops etc., but is also based on feedback from parents, teacher unions, charities and well-being organisations. The timetable is deliberately structured so that no year group has a virtual lesson at the same time as another one, although classes in the same year group will share a similar time. This hopefully helps those households with limited IT and children in multiple year groups.

Although it is possible to record meetings on Teams, we decided to avoid doing this because of GDPR and safeguarding issues. It would be appreciated if pupils could upload their completed work as soon as possible after their lesson. If this is not possible, then please try and do it by the end of the day.



## ICT Acceptable Use Policy

Each pupil has seen and is aware of the Internet use which is detailed in their planners. It is extremely important that the contents are adhered to. Any transgression from the guidelines contained in the policy will be dealt with in accordance with our behaviour policy. These policies are available for parents on our website.

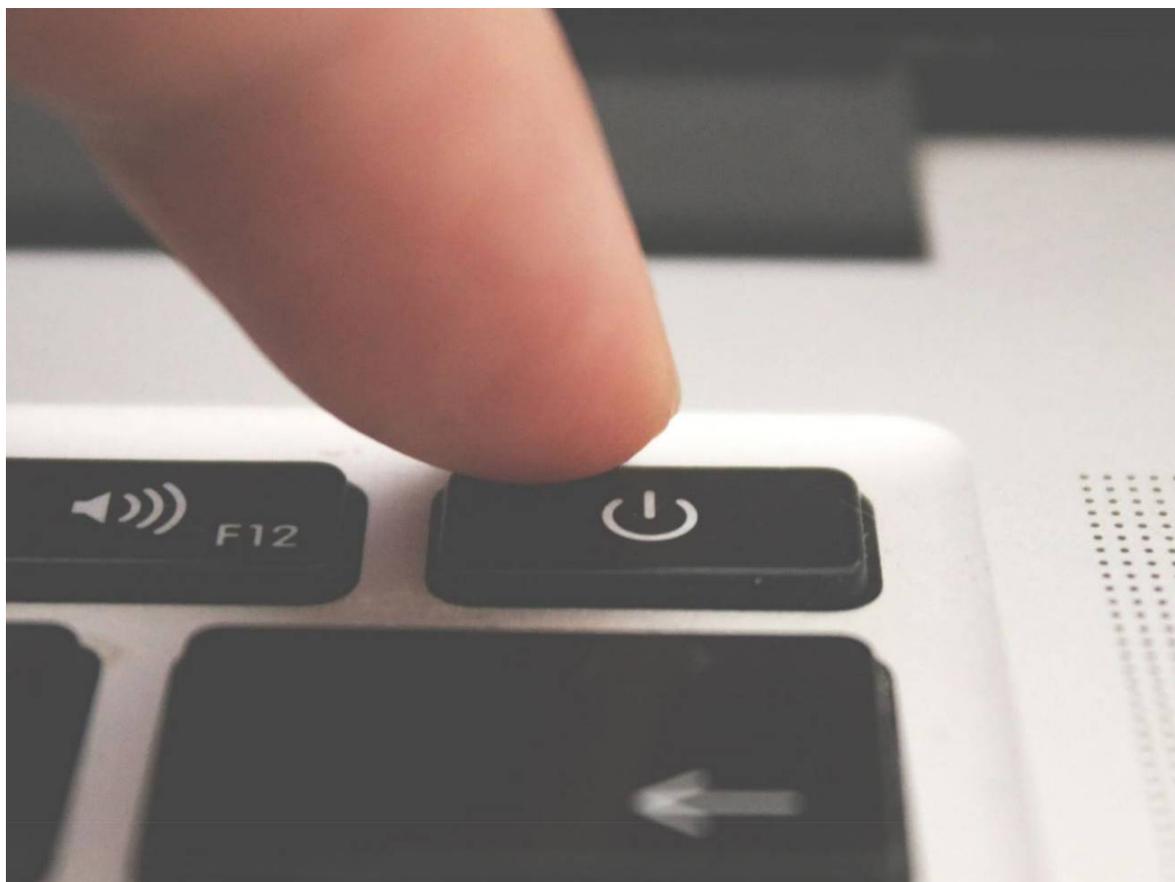
## Some ideas to create a structure for the day

**Ready:** A child's working space should be distinct from areas in which they usually relax, if possible. It should be clear of clutter and distractions, and please try to limit any background noise that can interfere with the lessons. The children will need to have access to charging points for devices, as well as strong Wi-Fi. Please encourage the children to drink water whenever possible throughout the day but keep all other refreshments for break times and lunch times. We encourage the children to dress appropriately for school but clearly this does not have to include school uniform! The children will be expected to write and make notes during their lessons so please ensure they have stationery and paper with them.

**Structure:** The day should be structured. By following the school's online learning timetable as closely as possible, pupils will have times between lesson for breaks, meals and socialising. Please ensure that the children use the Microsoft Teams platform in a sensible manner.

**Interaction:** Each day should allow time for pupils to socialise with other people, whether at home directly, or remotely on social media or the telephone. As humans are innately social beings, children will suffer if they are not given the opportunity to chat to their friends. As well as their own methods of socialising, there are opportunities on Microsoft Teams for the children to engage with each other throughout the school day.

**Turn-off:** Devices should be turned off for distinct periods during the day, and in the evening to allow for conversation, reading and family interaction. We recommend that pupils have time away from screens during their lunchtime as well as once their academic studies are complete for the day. Restrictions on screen time are vital for maintaining good mental health.



## Learning Support

If you have any questions regarding Learning Support, please contact Mrs Palmer via e-mail: [cpalmer@widfordlodge.co.uk](mailto:cpalmer@widfordlodge.co.uk) . Despite teachers endeavouring to differentiate the online work, we are aware that working remotely for many pupils is challenging. Supporting from a distance is not ideal, but we are keen to do our best to help, so please get in touch if you need to. Individual/small group lessons will continue where possible and the relevant Learning Support staff will be in touch regarding the timetabling of these.

## Recognition of effort

We want to be able to see the children achieve and make progress in everything that they do. We will be able to monitor their progress through every assignment and challenge that is set and the children's form tutors will be keeping a close eye on the speed and range of their successes. The usual system of Headteacher's awards and stars, will continue.



## Some questions

### **Will every piece of work be done on a computer?**

*No. Pupils will receive tasks via Teams, but not all will have to be completed on a computer or device. Some may require writing in an exercise book, drawing in a sketchbook, or having a go at some physical exercises in PE!*

### **Will every lesson be live?**

*Your virtual timetable will show all your live lessons. Tasks set on Teams ensure that every pupil receives the same learning experience. If a child is unable to join a live lesson for whatever reason, please ensure you communicate this to the teacher concerned. They still may be able to support you with any particular assignment.*



### **How much help can I give my son or daughter?**

*This depends on the activity that has been set and the age of your child. Be mindful of the fact that, in a normal classroom setting, the children will not usually have constant 1-1 adult supervision to complete tasks. Checking that they're on task every now and then may be wise, though.*

## How to support home learning

We know that there is a fair amount of anxiety about the prospect of supporting your children with their learning, especially as you try to juggle work and family commitments. As stated, and as far as possible, we will provide the necessary guidance so that your child can continue to develop and flourish but, inevitably, there will be a need to oversee what the children are doing and provide some hands-on support in certain tasks, depending upon the age of the pupils.

We know that many parents are not teachers and so below are some useful tips to help create a positive learning environment at home.

- Try and set up a routine/structure for the day as this will help the children adapt. A routine is what children are used to. For example, eat breakfast at the same time and make sure they are dressed before starting the 'school' day. Due to safeguarding reasons, please ensure that children are not in their pyjamas for the start of their lessons. The children do not need to wear school uniform, but they should be presentable.
- The new timetable has been designed to allow children, parents and teachers to have a short break between each lesson. Children's concentration is more effective in shorter bursts and this will help in terms of sharing the childcare duties.
- Display the timetable on the wall so that everyone knows what they should be doing when, and tick activities off throughout the day.
- Check in with your child(ren) and try to keep to the timetable. Do not be afraid to be flexible if a task/activity is going well or if your child wants more time.
- Designate a working space if possible and, at the end of the day, have a clear cut-off to signal that school time is over.
- Make time for exercise and use the 15 minute break between the lessons. Our PE staff will be sharing some useful ideas, and I am sure that many of you will continue to enjoy sessions with Joe Wicks.
- Take care of your own health and wellbeing. If you have a garden, use it regularly; if you do not, try to get out once a day.
- Most importantly, be realistic about what you can do. Everybody's circumstances are different. If you cannot stick to the timetable, or if your child misses a lesson, do not worry. Just email your child's teacher so that they are aware.

### **Other activities** to keep children engaged throughout the day

- Individual music lessons will be delivered by Peripatetic staff for those that learn instruments.
- Art and DT ideas and tasks will be posted via Teams.
- Encourage your children to write postcards to their relatives, friends or pen pals.
- Ask relatives or friends to listen to your children read on FaceTime or ask them to read to younger children.
- Give them chores to do so they feel more responsible about the daily routine at home.
- Ask them to help you cook and bake.
- Ask them to help you in the garden, perhaps plant some seedlings.
- Accept that they will probably watch more TV/spend more time on their devices but try to set limits.



## Online Safety

During this process, the children are likely to be online far more than in the past, using computers, laptops, tablets and mobile devices to access learning material as well as other entertainment. The risks will vary depending on their age, but it is important that, as adults, we do everything possible to keep our young people safe and healthy.

There are a few key principles that the pupils should be reminded to follow when engaging in their online learning:

- Pupils must follow the terms of the Widford Lodge School's internet use policy, as printed in their Pupil Planner.
- Pupils should work in a suitable open space, free from distractions. They should not work in a bedroom.
- Pupils should be dressed appropriately. Pyjamas cannot be worn.
- Any background should be neutral so as to safeguard all involved.
- The online learning environment should respect the same boundaries as the classroom. No photographs of staff or pupils may be taken during lesson time, and language must be appropriate.
- Lessons must neither be recorded by a pupil, nor shared publicly.
- Pupils must not deliberately download, upload or forward material that could be considered offensive.
- Pupils must remember to log out after any online lesson.
- Pupils must ensure that there are no other windows open on their device (e.g. an online game) during an online lesson.
- Communication between pupils, and with staff, must be sensible and responsible at all times.
- Live lessons and chats should only take place during the normal school day.
- A breach of these guidelines may result in a school sanction in line with protocols during normal school times.

There are also specific things that parents can do to support safe online learning:

- Parents should show an interest in their children's online learning and be aware of the staff members with whom they are communicating.
- Parents should be aware of the privacy and security settings for the platforms being used. For Microsoft Teams, the guidance is as follows:
  - Turn off guest access so that only school issued email addresses communicate.
  - If linked to Office 365, enable Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) to help prevent against threats via emails, links and attachments.
  - Make sure your operating system has the latest updates and security patches.
  - Beware of phishing emails asking for your password: Microsoft will never ask you for it.
- Parents must ensure that the correct parental controls are in place to ensure children can conduct safe internet searches.
- Parents should talk to their children about staying safe online, encouraging them to report any instances of unwanted messages or images from strangers or pupils.

Whilst it is essential that children, and indeed adults, get a break from technology each day, it would be unrealistic to think that, once lesson time is over, the children are going to be totally 'screen free'. It is important to acknowledge that the internet provides vast opportunities for children, both educationally and socially, especially during the current situation. It must therefore be used positively and to the very best advantage.

Discuss and agree as a family how the internet will be used in your house at a level that is appropriate to your children; discuss with your children what they think is and is not acceptable to do online, and then add your own rules and boundaries. Some families find it helpful to write 'ground rules' down as a visual reminder (a template 'family agreement' can be found at [www.childnet.com/resources/family-agreement](http://www.childnet.com/resources/family-agreement)).

Remind your children about the need to keep personal information private and not to be tempted to overshare, or to click on links or free offers. Remind them also only to communicate with real life friends. Now is certainly a good time to educate children about good digital citizenship before they make a mistake which could impact upon them, their friends or the school. Encourage them to stop and think before sharing anything online, and to consider how it might be perceived by others. Remind them that once something has been shared, it is almost impossible to delete it. It is important that children understand the importance of being kind and thoughtful in their online interactions; the right sort of communication during difficult times such as these can be hugely beneficial to others.

With older children, it is, of course, important to recognise their need and right to privacy. Those private conversations that would have taken place with friends at break times won't be able to happen over the next few weeks; parents and guardians must respect that children need to be able to have them in some other way. Being too intrusive will not help; it is about trust. As adults, we need to appreciate that these are difficult times for our children too, and technology could enable vital communication with friends, teachers and wider family.

Above all else, try to maintain an open mind and positive attitude when talking with your children about the internet and their use of social media: do not assume that they are up to no good! Ask your children which games, apps, websites they like to use, and try to engage in their online world with them. Playing together with children can often open opportunities to discuss safe behaviour online. The most important thing is to ensure that your children know that they should come to you, or another trusted adult, for help if something happens online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable. Reassure your children that help is always available.

Do have a look at the following links for useful tips on talking to children about online safety in an age-appropriate way:

[www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/have-a-conversation](http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/have-a-conversation)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>



The following websites are additional sources of information:



**Think U Know:** <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Child Protection and Online Protection (CEOP), a command of the UK's National Crime Agency, has a website suitable for children aged 5-16. There is a section written specifically for parents and carers, containing useful advice and information.



**NSPCC:** [www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk) and [www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety)

The NSPCC has produced resources for parents, including Net Aware, a tool which reviews some of the most popular apps. The website has helpful advice for parents about issues such as online grooming, 'sexting' and cyberbullying. The NSPCC also provides a helpline for parents: 0808 8005002



**ChildLine:** [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

The ChildLine website has a wide range of information and advice on both online and offline safety. There is information about online gaming and grooming, which can be shared with children. ChildLine provides a helpline for children: 0800 1111.



**UK Safer Internet Centre:** [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

The UK Safer Internet Centre provides a wide variety of advice and guidance to help parents discuss online safety with their children. There are useful checklists for privacy settings on social networks and suggestions to consider before buying devices for your children.



**Childnet International:** [www.childnet.com](http://www.childnet.com)

Childnet International has resources, including videos and storybooks, to help parents discuss online safety with their children. It includes advice on setting up parental controls, cyberbullying and setting up a family agreement for safer internet use.



**Internet Matters:** [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)

Internet Matters contains all of the information that adults need to keep children safe online. It has a tool which guides you through how to set up parental controls on all of the different devices in the home.



**BBC 'Own It' Website and App:** [www.bbc.com/ownit](http://www.bbc.com/ownit) and <https://www.bbc.com/ownit/take-control/own-it-app>

The BBC Own It website aims to help children aged 8-13 'be the boss' of their online lives. The website has a range of videos and activities to explore with children. There is also a helpful app which can be installed on children's devices to help them use technology responsibly.



# Widford Lodge Preparatory School