

E-Safety Briefing

Subject: Tips for using Facebook safely and securely

Context: This document, which can be circulated without restriction, provides information that may be useful to members of staff, students and parents.

Briefing Date: 10th May 2010

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Background

The owners of Facebook want people to be able to find each other and make contact so they have set the website to share a lot of the information that people upload. The following tips suggest ways in which you can keep control of your own information.

Tips

1. Facebook's Terms & Conditions state that users must be at least 13 years of age but the evidence shows that many people younger than this are already using Facebook. Please be aware, therefore, that the user-base is broader than Facebook suggests.
2. Limit the amount of personal information you reveal. To find out how much of your information is visible to different people, use Facebook's *How Others See You* tool on the privacy guide page at www.facebook.com/privacy/explanation.php. To restrict the information that can be seen by others, log-in and then go to the Privacy Settings page under your Account Settings.
3. People are not always who they claim to be and it is very easy for somebody to set-up a Facebook page pretending to be somebody else, so don't believe everything that you see on Facebook and be careful about who you accept as a friend.
4. Be careful when uploading pictures, especially your profile picture as this is always visible to everybody. If a picture can be seen then it can be copied and emailed to others or changed to cause embarrassment.
5. To protect your own security, make sure that your Facebook log-in uses a strong password that other people cannot easily guess. Try making your password very long and mix numbers with letters: don't use "remember me" or password saving features if you access Facebook using a computer that is also used by other people.
6. If you come across something on Facebook that you think needs to be reported or removed, use the Flag or Report links. There is more information about reporting abuse on Facebook at www.facebook.com/help/?topic=reportabuse.
7. For general tips about using Facebook safely (including advice for parents) visit the public information page at www.facebook.com/help/?safety.