



St Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Here are some more useful updates and links from Alan Mackenzie at esafety-adviser.com regarding ways in which we can keep children safe online. Please do take the time to read and have a quick click in the links.

Offenders are Where the Children Are.

One of the fundamental and most important messages within safeguarding training (particularly online safety) is 'offenders are where the children are.' Although this may sound obvious, the tactics that offenders use are not always obvious. We all know that criminals will use a variety of social engineering tactics, but to be able to use those tactics there has to be some form of engagement, which requires communications features. So whether that is messaging on Snapchat or chatting within Roblox, if there is a communication feature there is a risk to any child or young person. You may be aware of Spotify, the globally popular music streaming service. Spotify doesn't have the traditional messaging features but [THIS](#) news article shows how criminals will use any means possible to coerce and exploit children and young people.

Social Media Algorithms

Over the past few years there is heightened concern in which companies are feeding information to all of us. Whether that's your 'For You' feed on social, recommended videos on YouTube and much more these algorithms are trying to do a good job - giving us information that we may be interested in. But often these algorithms fail miserably, or content is manipulated to appear as one thing but it's actually something else (e.g. the use of hashtags) in order to 'play the algorithm'.

If you are a professional or a parent/carer talking to children and young people about their use of social media, a basic, non-technical understanding of how algorithms work is essential and there is a really good, non-technical article by Dr. Richard Graham [HERE](#) which includes some tips and advice.

For Parents - Game Finder

Finding games for children which are appropriate for their age, which work on the devices the children use and the children will actually enjoy playing can be a minefield, particularly when parents are being bombarded with the 'but everyone else is playing this game' guilt trip. Game Finder is a new (free) service available from Taming Gaming which walks parents through various aspects, such as how old is your child? What devices do they have? What types of games do they like to play? And then gives a list of recommendations of suitable games. I've used this a few times and it is brilliant, you can find Game Finder [HERE](#).

If you'd like to return to these, or any other of the e-safety information and links sent previously, please visit this page on our website: <https://www.st-augustine.lincs.sch.uk/parents/online-safety/>

With best wishes,

Mrs Tina Cox