

Beyond the classroom

T is for TRUST - not everything or everyone online is trustworthy

Beyond the classroom is designed for parents, carers and residential staff to help support the work being done at school to help young people recognise that not everything or everyone online is trustworthy.



What do we mean by online trust?

Online trust refers to whether something or someone is trustworthy or true online. Whilst the internet is a great place to find the answer to virtually anything you want to know or do, such as finding help with homework or interacting with other people, the reality is that not everything or everyone online is trustworthy.

Online content, such as images and videos can be edited to make them look more appealing as well. Things like edited selfies and using filters can leave people comparing themselves to images online which aren't real and appear to be perfect.

Sometimes it can be difficult to tell the difference, but if you look closely, often there are clues to help you recognise if something or someone is genuine.



How can I help young people to know what is and isn't trustworthy online?

1. Have a conversation

Start by finding out what your child likes to do online and who they are talking to. A great way of doing this is to ask them what they like to do online and get them to show you their favourite games, websites and apps. You can then ask them what worries them about going online. Childnet's 'Let's talk about life online' guide can help you with this: www.childnet.com/resources/lets-talk-about-life-online. From here, you can use the guidance on the following page to help you have a conversation about trust online.

2. Give them actions to do when they are worried about something or someone online

If you or your child are worried about something you have seen online then visit our 'How to make a report' page which can help you to do this: www.childnet.com/resources/how-to-make-a-report.

If you are concerned that your report hasn't been dealt with properly then visit reportharmfulcontent.com.

If you are worried about the way someone is communicating with a child online then report this to www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/

Talk to your child about the pressures of edited content online and reassure them that you are there to help if they ever feel like they aren't good enough, or if other people's lives online appear more perfect to them.

3. Talk together about what they can trust online

Go through the online safety checklist together discussing who and what they can trust online and what they can do if something worries or upsets them. This checklist can then be kept somewhere central or near where they use their devices (phone, computer, tablet etc.).

What are the clues to know whether something or someone is trustworthy online?

Clues to know whether something is trustworthy online...

- ✓ **Check the information is coming from where you expected.**
Is the website address (URL), email address or social media account from who you expected it to be?
- ✓ **Check you have heard of the organisation or person before.**
If an organisation you have never heard of before posts something online then it's hard to know whether to trust them. Check with other people if they have heard of this organisation before and if not then don't just trust what it says, make sure you check the information.
- ✓ **Check the information you're reading can be trusted.**
Is the information about what you expected, and can you find it on other websites as well?
- ✓ **Check if other people think it can be trusted.** Most online news stories and social media posts will have comments or reviews underneath them and if the information cannot be trusted then people will often comment saying that. You can also check by asking people you know and trust what they think.
- ✓ **Compare with what you already know.**
Sometimes we can read things online which make us question what we already know. It's great to learn new things but trust yourself if something doesn't sound right.
- ✓ **Check when it was posted online.**
Sometimes the things we read online can be out of date or old news stories which people have shared again.
- ✓ **Be careful with pop ups and competitions.**
If something appears on your screen without you looking for it or says you have won a competition, then ignore it and click the red cross to get rid of it.

Clues to know whether someone is trustworthy online...

- ✓ **Ask yourself...have I met this person before?**
If not, then this person is a stranger.
- ✓ **Ask yourself...are they who they say they are?**
If someone says they go to your school or know someone you know then always check first with a trusted adult or by asking your friend.
- ✓ **Ask yourself...what are they promising or asking me?**
If they are asking you to do something like meet up or share personal information or images and videos, then tell a trusted adult.
- ✓ **Ask yourself...are they putting pressure on me?**
A good friend will never pressurise you into doing something you don't want to do. It's important to tell a trusted adult if this ever happens online.
- ✓ **Ask yourself...should I do this just because someone else has?**
Just because someone else does something online like sending a picture of themselves, it doesn't mean you have to do this as well.
- ✓ **Ask yourself...do I have to reply to a message from someone I don't know?**
If you get a message or request from someone new or that you weren't expecting then you can ignore it, block and report. You don't have to reply or accept the request.
- ✓ **Ask yourself... are these images or videos edited?**
Lots of people edit their images and videos online and this can make them look different or their lives appear to be perfect.





Online trust at a glance

Not everything we read or see online is true. Always check at least **3 other websites** and ask someone if you're not sure.



Only use websites that you have heard of before and used as you know these are trustworthy.

If something online looks different to what you expected, check it with an adult you trust.



Never accept a free online prize. If you haven't entered a competition, you won't have won a prize.

If an email asks for your personal details, ask a trusted adult to check who the email is really from and if it can be trusted.



If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Someone you only know online and have never met before is a stranger. Even if they are a friend of a friend.



Only add people you know in the offline world to your online contact list.

STOP and **TELL** an adult straight away if an online friend is pressuring you to do something you don't want to do.



ALWAYS tell a trusted adult if an online friend asks you to send them personal information (such as your full name or home address), to meet up in person or for a picture or video.



Online Safety Checklist

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If I'm not sure about something or someone online, I will...

(This might include telling someone you trust, making a report online or blocking someone.)

The people I will go to for help if I'm not sure, are...

(These might be parents or carers, other family members, school teacher, club leader, key worker.)



HOME:



SCHOOL:



The websites I trust to use are:

For information I go to:

For news I go to:

For music I go to:

For videos I go to:

For games I go to:

To speak to my friends and family online I go to:

Add some more of your own

Add some more of your own



The people I know, and trust online are:

Write a list of all the people you talk to online who you can trust

With someone I only know online, I will never...

- ☐ Share my personal details (like my full name or where I live).
- ☐ Meet up with them in the offline world, for example at a park or café.
- ☐ Send them a photograph or video of myself.