

Safer Internet Day 2024: Inspiring Change and Navigating an Evolving Online World

On Tuesday 6th February 2024, our school proudly took part in Safer Internet Day, the UK's largest annual celebration of online safety. This year's theme—"Inspiring change? Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online"—reflected young people's real experiences in an increasingly fast-moving digital world.

Coordinated nationally by the UK Safer Internet Centre, the day brought together schools, families, industry, and wider communities across more than 100 countries to promote the safe and positive use of technology.

A Focus on Change in Young People's Online Lives

Developed in consultation with young people across the UK, this year's theme centred on the ways digital environments are rapidly evolving and how these changes influence the ways children think, feel, and act online and offline. Key areas explored included:

- Young people's perspectives on new and emerging technology, including the impact of fast-changing online platforms and tools.
- Using the internet to make change for the better, empowering young people to take positive action in their communities.
- The changes they want to see online, from improved safety to more responsible behaviour from influencers, creators and platforms.
- How online influences shape emotions, behaviour, and decision-making in both digital and real-world contexts.

These ideas prompted reflective conversations across the school about how pupils can be active, responsible participants rather than passive consumers online.

Whole-School Participation and Age-Appropriate Learning

Pupils from Early Years through to Year 6 engaged in structured activities tailored to their level of understanding:

Early Years & Key Stage 1

Younger pupils explored how online content can influence the way we feel and behave. Through simple stories and discussions, they learned that just as they can influence others with kindness and positive choices, online environments can influence them too.

Key Stage 2

Older pupils engaged in deeper conversations around:

- How influencers, trending content, and new technologies can shape opinions.
- How quickly online spaces can change—and what responsible behaviour looks like in a fast-paced digital world.
- How they can use their own voices to bring about positive, respectful change online.

These discussions helped pupils see themselves not just as digital users, but as digital citizens with responsibility and agency.

Encouraging Community Involvement and Wider Engagement

To extend the learning beyond the classroom, families and staff were encouraged to take part in wider Safer Internet Day initiatives, including:

- Registering support as a school, contributing to the national movement and receiving official recognition.
- Downloading free educational resources, including assemblies, lesson plans, parent materials, and activity packs, available in English and Welsh.
- Talking to partner organisations about the importance of the day and encouraging them to get involved.
- Joining the online conversation via #SaferInternetDay, helping promote positive online safety messages to the wider community.

These actions reinforced the message that keeping children safe online requires a collaborative approach between school, home, and the broader digital world.

Global Context and Continued Importance

Safer Internet Day has grown into a global initiative celebrated in more than 100 countries, supported by international networks and the European Commission. Its scale is a reminder of the shared responsibility held by governments, educators, families, industry, and children themselves in shaping a safer, more empowering online environment.

By participating in Safer Internet Day 2024, our school contributed to this global movement, ensuring our pupils are equipped with the skills, understanding, and confidence needed to navigate a changing digital landscape responsibly.

Impact and Looking Forward

The day fostered thoughtful conversations, encouraged critical thinking, and helped pupils recognise both the power and responsibility they hold online. Teachers reported increased engagement, with pupils showing curiosity about new technologies and a deeper understanding of the ways online experiences influence feelings and behaviour.

As digital environments continue to evolve, we remain committed to supporting our pupils in developing the resilience, awareness, and ethical understanding needed to thrive safely and positively—both now and in the future.