Dear Parents, carers and friends,

Digital technologies have become integral to the lives of young people, both within and outside school. At River Bank we believe that these technologies are very positive and powerful tools, which open up new opportunities for everyone. These technologies can stimulate discussion, make ideas clearer, promote creativity, can be enjoyable and collaborative, and stimulate awareness of context to promote effective learning.

Parents play a crucial role in ensuring that their children understand the need to use the internet and mobile devices in an appropriate way. Research by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) has shown, however, that parents and carers:

- feel they have a limited understanding of online risks and issues;

- underestimate how often children and young people come across potentially harmful and inappropriate material on the internet;

- are unsure about how to respond to incidents.

To support you in understanding good online safety practice, there are many websites and resources targeted at informing and empowering parents.

Think U Know – https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/

Think U Know is a website set up by the National Police Child Exploitation Online Protect Agency (CEOP). An excellent website providing advice on a range of topics for children of all ages including sexting, cyberbullying and staying safe online.

Safer Internet Centre - http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers

A partnership of three leading organisations: SWGfL, Childnet and Internet Watch Foundation. Tips, advice, guides and resources to help promote the safe and responsible use of technology for young people.

Parent Zone - http://parentzone.org.uk/

Parent Zone is a company devoted to helping families navigate the challenges of the digital age. In partnership with Vodafone, they produce the informative and current 'Digital Parenting Magazine'.

Know IT All - http://www.childnet.com/resources/know-it-all-for-parents

Know IT All for Parents is a unique interactive e-safety guide for parents and carers produced by Childnet International. It's designed to really help you as a parent or carer keep up to date with how children are using the internet, and support them in using these new exciting services safely and responsibly.

River Bank Primary School, Bath Road, Luton LU3 1ES

Telephone: 01582 531860   Email: info@riverbankprimary.org   Web: www.riverbankprimary.org

Active Education Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales Registered Office: Wigmore Hall, Eaton Green Road, Luton LU2 9JB
Registered Company Number: 07650619 (England and Wales)

Digizen - http://www.digizen.org/parents/

Digizen is a website set up by Childnet International. The website provides information for parents and young people. It shares specific advice and resources on issues such as social networking and cyberbullying and how these relate to and affect their own and other people's online experiences and behaviours.

Get Safe Online - https://www.getsafeonline.org/

Advice for the whole family on protecting your devices and yourself against viruses, spyware, fraud, cyberstalking and identity theft. There is also advice on safeguarding children.

Online Safety Curriculum
Whilst regulation and technical solutions are very important, their use must be balanced by educating our pupils and students to take a responsible approach. Children and young people need the help and support to recognise and avoid online safety risks and build their resilience. Online safety education is therefore an essential part of the River Bank School's online safety provision.

Online safety is a focus in all areas of the curriculum and staff reinforce online safety messages across the curriculum. The online safety curriculum is broad, relevant and provides progression, with opportunities for creative activities.

Acceptable Use Agreement
At River Bank School, we want students to be able to use these digital technologies creatively, responsibly and independently. Our 'Acceptable Use Agreement' is intended to ensure:

- that students will be responsible users of digital technology for educational, personal and recreational use;

- that they will act in a manner that shows respect to both themselves and others;

- that the school systems are protected from accidental or deliberate misuse which could put the security of the systems and users at risk;

The school will ensure that students have good access to digital technologies to enhance their learning and will, in return, expect the students to agree to be responsible users. Copies of the 'Acceptable Use Agreement' are available on the school website http://www.riverbankprimary.org/

Sexting
Research by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety has also shown there is a lack of clarity regarding sexting. Half of parents surveyed were unsure of the law and only 40% of parents had spoken to their children about the topic. Under the Sexual Offences Act, it is illegal to make, take, share or possess indecent or sexual images of anyone under the age of 18 – a young person is breaking the law if they take an explicit photo or video of themselves or a friend. There is more information on this on the websites listed above.

Yours sincerely,

Mr D Seeley
Assistant Head Teacher

Sources: SWGfL Online Safety Policies, CEOP ThinkUKnow, Childnet KnowITAll UKCCIS research, Bromsgrove School http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/research/research-highlight-series,

River Bank Primary School, Bath Road, Luton LU3 1ES

Telephone: 01582 531860   Email: info@riverbankprimary.org   Web: www.riverbankprimary.org

Active Education Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales Registered Office: Wigmore Hall, Eaton Green Road, Luton LU2 9JB
Registered Company Number: 07650619 (England and Wales)