



ST. ANNE'S CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL

"Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly With Your God"

Cyber Safe

**ONLINE SAFETY
NEWSLETTER**

OCTOBER 2026



Content Awareness Notice

This edition discusses sensitive online safety topics, including 764 and the Com network, and digital self-harm. These subjects involve potentially harmful online communities, manipulation and behaviours that can affect young people's emotional wellbeing.

Parents and carers are encouraged to read with awareness and sensitivity. If these topics raise concerns for you or your child, please remember that support is available and that children should feel able to speak to a trusted adult.

ONLINE SAFETY: IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

A sensitive edition for parents and carers.

This edition covers:

- Harmful online communities, including 764 and the Com network
- Digital self-harm and emotional wellbeing
- Warning signs, prevention and how to seek support

Stay curious. Keep talking. Let young people know they are not alone.

ONLINE RISKS ARE REAL

Behind every screen, your child can be exposed to harmful influences, online manipulation and communities that can negatively impact their wellbeing.



764 and the Com network

These are linked to harmful online communities that can exploit and manipulate young people.



Digital self-harm

This can be a hidden sign of distress and may be linked to harmful content, online pressure or manipulation.

*If something
online makes you
feel uncomfortable,
frightened or unsafe...*

**TALK TO A
TRUSTED ADULT**

**TALK.
CHECK.
SUPPORT.**

Open conversations
can make a big difference.



Be aware

Know the risks, including harmful online communities, manipulation and signs of digital self-harm.



Look for warning signs

Changes in mood, behaviour, phone use or secrecy can be a sign something is wrong.



Keep the conversation going

Ask how they are feeling, what they're seeing online, and remind them they're not alone.



Build their confidence

Help them develop the knowledge, skills and resilience to make safer choices online.



Together, we can help our young people
navigate the digital world safely and responsibly.

SAFE MINDS
SAFER ONLINE
BRIGHTER FUTURES



St. Anne's Catholic High School

CyberSafe



WELCOME TO THE LATEST EDITION OF CYBERSAFE!

Dear Students, Families and Colleagues,

In this edition, we focus on some concerning online safety issues that parents and carers should be aware of, including 764 and the Com network, and digital self-harm. These topics highlight the potential dangers young people may encounter online, including harmful online communities, online manipulation and behaviours that can negatively affect their emotional wellbeing.



Our aim is to raise awareness, help you recognise potential warning signs, and provide practical advice on how to support your child in staying safe online. We encourage you to take some time to read this edition and discuss online safety with your child, reminding them that they can always turn to a trusted adult if they encounter anything online that makes them feel uncomfortable, frightened or unsafe.

Working together, we can help our young people develop the knowledge, confidence and skills they need to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly.

Kind regards,

Mrs Claudia Duarte
Online Safety Lead

Are YOU Worried?

If you have a concern about your daughter or another student's online activity or safety you can reach out to your child's **Learning Support Coordinator** or contact **Kaylea Vevers**, the **Designated Safeguarding Lead**, by emailing dsl@st-annes.enfield.sch.uk



KEEPING SAFE ONLINE

The internet is a big part of children's lives in the UK, with children spending 2 to 5 hours online daily (OFCOM, 2024). It helps them make friends, learn, and be creative. However, the internet also has risks, such as exposure to harmful content and online abuse.



In school we have a duty to ensure your child is protected and taught how to keep themselves safe. Filtering, monitoring and a robust online safety curriculum all form part of this duty. However, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and while it is never possible to remove risk entirely, parents and carers also have a duty to ensure their children are kept safe and are able to manage risk effectively both in the real world and online. Our parental online safety newsletter is designed to help families to develop safe and healthy internet use using the **TECH** approach. It is research-based, practical and trauma-informed.

Our aim is to support families to understand and implement **TECH Safeguarding Guidance**:

T - TALK - Encourage two-way communication with your child

E - EDUCATE - Stay informed about the latest online risks

C - CO-VIEW - Spend time online together

H - HOUSE RULES - Set clear rules for internet use

Helpful Guides for Specific Online Risks:



Report sexual abuse images/videos: How to report online child sexual abuse imagery or child pornography | Internet Watch Foundation
<https://www.iwf.org.uk/en/uk-report/>

Parental guidance of sexual image-sharing:
Parent guide to sexual image-sharing among kids | Internet Matters
<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/research/parents-guide-child-sexual-image-sharing/>



Resources to tackle online grooming | Internet Matters

<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/online-grooming/resources/#grooming-resources-support-parents>

Resources to protect children for radicalisation and grooming:

Radicalisation of young children online | Internet Matters

<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/radicalisation/>

Resources to deal with cyberbullying: Internet Matters

<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/cyberbullying/resources/>

Guidance for online abuse: How to talk about harassment and abuse online | Internet Matters

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/how-to-talk-about-harassment-and-abuse-online/>

Supporting LGBTQ children and young people online | Internet Matters

<https://www.internetmatters.org/inclusive-digital-safety/advice-for-parents-and-carers/supporting-lgbtq-children-and-young-people/>

Resources to tackle harm from inappropriate content:

Learn about inappropriate content online | Internet Matters

<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/inappropriate-content/learn-about-it/>

Resources to protect children's privacy and identity online:

Online identity theft facts and advice for parents | Internet Matters

<https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/privacy-identity/>

Resources to manage in-game spending:

How to manage in-game spending | Internet Matters

<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/by-activity/online-money-management-guide/in-game-spending/>

NSPCC

Resources to support your child if they are being bullied:

How can I help my child if they are being bullied? | NSPCC

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/dealing-with-bullying/>



Resources on racism and racial bullying | Childline

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/crime-law/racism-racial-bullying/>

DIGITAL SELF-HARM

Self-harm is a growing issue among young people and while it is seen to be physical abuse, now, more teens are using social media to encourage others to abuse them online.

There are many reasons why young people may start to self-harm. Family reasons, such as not getting on with other family members or their parents getting divorced, may be the trigger. They may have personal problems to do with sexuality, race, culture or religion, or they may suffer from low self-esteem and feelings of isolation. Bereavement, current or previous experience of abuse in childhood or stress as a result of bullying or impending exams can all lead to self-harm.

Girls are more than twice as likely to self-harm as boys. One in four of 11 to 16-year olds in England who had a mental health problem said that they had self-harmed or attempted suicide at some point. A US study found that approximately 6% of young people between 12 and 17 have digitally self-harmed by anonymously sharing negative information about themselves online.

Self-harm can start at a very young age, i.e. seven years old or more commonly between the ages of 12 and 15 years old. Experts say self-harm behaviour normally end within five years of starting, however, for some, it can last into adulthood.



How to spot the signs of self-harm

There are two types of self-harm: **physical and emotional**, and young people will go to great lengths to hide them or explain them away.

The signs to look for with physical self-harm are:

- cuts
- bruises
- burns
- bald patches from hair pulling

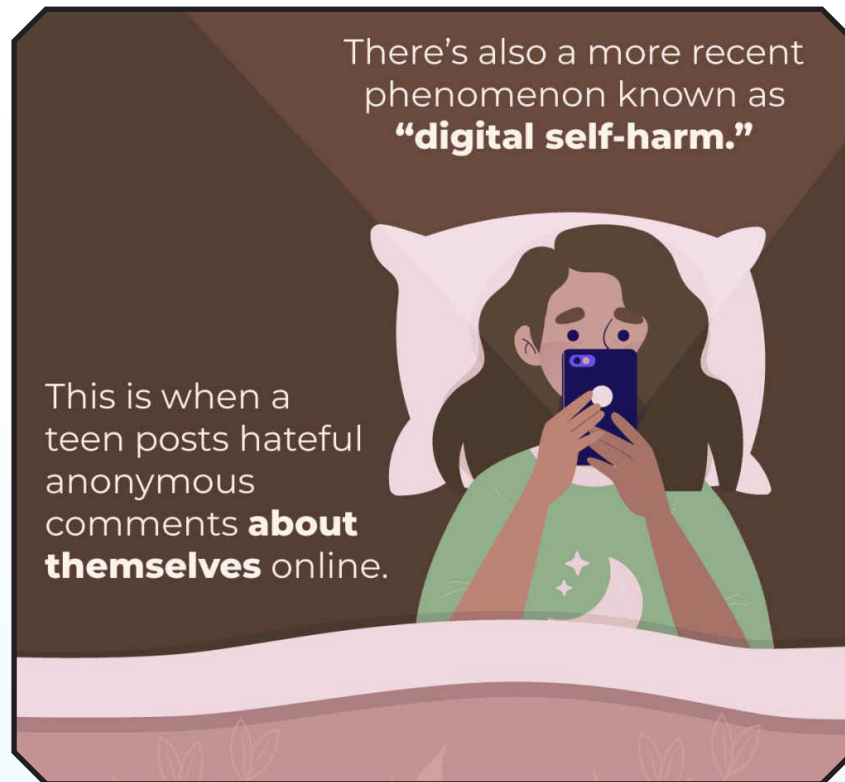
Young people are likely to cover themselves up in long-sleeved clothes and hats to hide the signs.

The signs of emotional self-harm are a lot more difficult to spot, and it shouldn't be assumed that a young person is self-harming purely on this basis. If you spot these in addition to the physical signs there may be cause for concern.



The emotional signs include:

- depression
- tearfulness and low motivation
- unusual eating habits
- sudden weight loss or gain
- low self-esteem
- drinking or taking drugs



Preventing access to self-harm content online

- **Parental controls** usually include the option to prevent access to self-harm and suicide websites. The mobile operators use 18+ filtering as standard, this includes suicide and self-harm.
- With the recent focus on wellbeing online, many of the most popular **social media platforms have provided guidance** and implemented stricter policies to tackle the issue of self-harm on their platforms. From preventing posts glorifying it to providing resources and access to emotional support helplines, there is a range of ways that it is being addressed.
- When you are out and about be aware that not all public **Wi-Fi** has filters applied.
- It is worth bearing in mind that no controls are 100% guaranteed to block all unwanted content, but there are additional actions you can take, such as **disabling the Google preview pane**, which will prevent unwanted images from appearing when you search.

Find out more here:

[Learn About Self-Harm](#) | [Internet Matters](#)

[Why are children encouraging others to 'roast' them online?](#) | [Internet Matters](#)

[Where to get help for self-harm](#) | [NHS](#)

[Advice for Parents About the R;pple App](#) | [Internet Matters](#)



764 AND THE COM NETWORK

What is 764 and the Com Network? How to protect your child.

The internet is a powerful tool for social connection, friendship and community. However, like any shared space, it can also be misused by people who exploit its social features to target vulnerable individuals, including children. One emerging threat that parents should be aware of is 764.

764 is an international network of online predators. They target, manipulate and groom children into producing child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and conducting self-harm and acts of violence. The network also glorifies violence, celebrating notorious killers and terrorists. Members themselves have also attempted murder, plotted mass-casualty attacks and driven victims to suicide.



764 does not exist in isolation. It's part of a wider online culture where some groups treat extreme violence as entertainment or a way to gain attention and status. The term '764 network' often describes a collection of related groups that operate under different names within this wider online ecosystem. This is often referred to broadly as the 'Com Network'.

This network poses a growing challenge for law enforcement worldwide, with more than 200 arrests linked to it. Multiple agencies, including the National Crime Agency, have issued warnings about the threat.

Why people participate in 764

Participants in the 764 network are often fascinated by violence for its own sake. They engage in acts of cruelty to demonstrate their control over others and gain social status online. Unlike extremist groups like ISIS or white supremacists, who believe that their violence is morally justified or in service of an ideology, 764 participants are acutely aware that what they are doing is morally objectionable. This is the point of their behaviour. The shock, transgression and harm itself are what generate status within these communities. As such, attempting to counter the 'beliefs' of these individuals, such as by challenging their ideology, is often ineffective.

How and where are children targeted?

Research from the Institute for Strategic Dialogue shows that the 764 network methodically targets individuals who they believe will be most susceptible to manipulation, threats and blackmail such as children and teenagers. This also includes those who have shown signs of vulnerability, such as neuro-divergence, social isolation or engagement in self-harm, eating disorders and other mental health struggles.

Commonly used platforms

There is no single online space or platform that is uniquely responsible for 764 activity. However, our analysis has identified **Discord**, **Roblox**, and **Telegram** as common environments for grooming and exploitation. It's important to note, though, that all three are used for otherwise non-harmful activities. Additionally, predators within this network use other large mainstream platforms and games as 'hunting grounds' for potential targets. These platforms include **X**, **Instagram**, **Reddit**, **TikTok**, **YouTube**, **Minecraft** and **Fortnite**, among others. They often cast a wide net in initiating contact with users on these platforms. Perpetrators will scour their public profiles and messages for clues that they may be especially vulnerable to manipulation.



Commonly used tactics

764 uses a variety of tactics to exploit children. Members of the network have even written guidebooks outlining these techniques. One common approach is 'catfishing'. This is where offenders establish fake personas, initiate contact with a seemingly vulnerable individual and pose as an empathetic friend or romantic interest.

After establishing trust, they may attempt to move the conversation to a more private platform. This is often, but not always, Discord or Telegram. Here, they extract sensitive information from the victim, such as nudes or identifying details. At this point, the relationship can become controlling. Predators use blackmail, such as by threatening to share nude images with the child's friends, family or school, to coerce them into acts of harm.

What are the warning signs?

No single indicator proves that a child is involved with 764. Instead, parents should watch for a cluster of behavioural, emotional and physical changes, especially if they appear suddenly or accelerate within a short period of time.

Behavioural and emotional indicators:

- Unusual secrecy around their online activity (e.g., creating new accounts, deleting messages or adopting new privacy measures, being cautious not to leave a device unattended).
- Sudden or secretive use of new messaging platforms – particularly encrypted or invite-only apps like Telegram. Or dramatic shifts in the nature of use of platforms like Discord, for example, secretive engagement in private servers.
- Obsessive use of digital devices.
- Social withdrawal, irritability, anxiety, paranoia, mood swings or other signs of emotional distress.
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
- Substance abuse.
- Distancing from longstanding peer groups and prioritising new online contacts or 'friends'.
- Mention of threats, **doxxing** (sharing someone's private or personal information online without their permission, often to threaten, harass or intimidate them), **swatting** (making a false emergency call to send armed police or emergency services to someone's home), often to scare or harm them, or indications that someone may be able to blackmail them.

Online Grooming

Online grooming is when an adult tries to build an online relationship with a child so that they can sexually exploit them. They may do this by:

- ⚠️ befriending the child through social media
- ⚠️ chatting in an online forum
- ⚠️ chatting in an online game
- ⚠️ connecting on any other online platform

The infographic features a photo of a young girl looking at a smartphone.

Physical and environmental indicators:

- Fresh injuries such as cuts, scratches, bruises, burns or other wounds. They might specifically appear in unusual patterns or depict symbols, words or names.
- Shifts in appearance or clothing, such as wearing long sleeves or pants in hot weather to disguise self-harm.
- Unexplained gifts, which can be physical or digital (e.g., gaming currencies such as **Robux** on **Roblox**).
- Signs of physical harm or behavioural changes in pets, such as being suddenly avoidant or fearful of a child.

How to protect your child:

- **Regular conversation:** Protecting your child from the 764 network starts with creating an environment for open, regular dialogue about their online activity. It's a space where they feel safe to engage in these discussions without fear of shame or punishment. You want your child to believe that if anything goes wrong online, they can seek support from you. Tell this to your child clearly and repeatedly to develop a sense of trust and safety.



- **Build digital resilience:** It is also helpful to teach your child about basic online safety. Like we give children offline safety tips, such as not getting into a stranger's car, we can share simple tips for them to follow in their online lives. Teach them to be cautious of online strangers, especially if someone asks them for sensitive information or to move to a different platform. Encourage them to immediately report any suspicious interactions to a trusted adult. Your child must also understand that they do not need to reply to strangers; they can block and report anyone who they think is harmful.
- **Agree on boundaries:** Introducing some practical and preventative boundaries can also help keep your child safe. This can include limiting screen time, keeping devices in shared spaces overnight, maintaining awareness about what apps they're using and using device or app-level parental controls where appropriate. Strengthening privacy settings is also essential. This includes keeping accounts private and not sharing identifying information, disabling location services and using strong passwords and two-factor authentication. Most importantly, try to stay aware of their online activities in a calm and curious manner so that it feels more like support than surveillance.
- **Find the right support:** If you suspect your child has been harmed by 764 or has been coerced into harming others, reassure them that they are not in trouble. Tell them that your priority is to keep them safe. Have them stop any contact with their abusers and remove any opportunities for further communication. Importantly, **do not delete messages, images or online accounts**, as these can be critical for police investigations. These cases often involve complex victim-perpetrator dynamics. This means that a child who has caused harm may have also been groomed, coerced or manipulated into doing so. As such, it's essential to engage trained professionals including law enforcement, child protection organisations and mental health providers.

In the UK, you can seek support from the following organisations:

- **NSPCC:** Find support and advice or report a child who you think might be harmed.
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/>
- **Childline:** Your child can talk with counsellors for 1-to-1 support if they're less comfortable sharing with you.
<https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/>
- **CEOP:** Report online sexual abuse or other harmful online communication.
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>
- **Internet Watch Foundation:** Report suspected child sexual abuse images or videos, including AI-generated, drawn or 'fake' content.
<https://www.iwf.org.uk/en/uk-report/>
- **The Cyber Helpline:** Find advice on supporting your family's cyber safety.
<https://thecyberhelpline.com/>



Find out more here:

What is 764 and the Com network? How to protect your child | Internet Matters

Com Groups: Keeping children Safe from Harmful Online Communities | Safeline

764: A Topic Explainer | Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD)



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[x.com/StAnnes_N13](https://www.instagram.com/StAnnes_N13)

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