



Report to the Education, Skills and Children's Services Select Committee

Title:	Children Protection and internet safety
Committee date:	18 th February 2014
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Report signed off by Cabinet Member:	Angela Macpherson, Cabinet member for Children services
Electoral divisions affected:	All

Purpose of Agenda Item

To provide information and an update on the progress of the work of the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board esafety subcommittee.

Background

Child Protection and Internet safety, although not a recent issue, is becoming more of a concern as access to the internet becomes easier and part of our everyday lives.

Accessing the internet is no longer limited to computers with the increased use of smartphones and tablets. Over a quarter of adults (27 per cent) and almost half of teenagers (47 per cent) now own a smartphone, according to Ofcom's latest Communications Market Report (8/2011).

In a recent report by the charity Beat Bullying and parentdish surveyed 1000 8-16 year olds and 1500 parents about their online behaviour. The results identified 23% of 12-16 years spending more than 5 hours a day online. One in five (21%) of this age group have interacted with strangers online, 23% said they had seen verbal abuse online. They also discovered of those surveyed 12-16 year olds think being bullied online is a part of life. (www.beatbullying.org)

The charity ChildLine says it has seen a large increase in the number of children contacting it with concerns about online bullying. It saw 4,507 cases of cyberbullying in 2012-13, up from 2,410 in 2011-12.

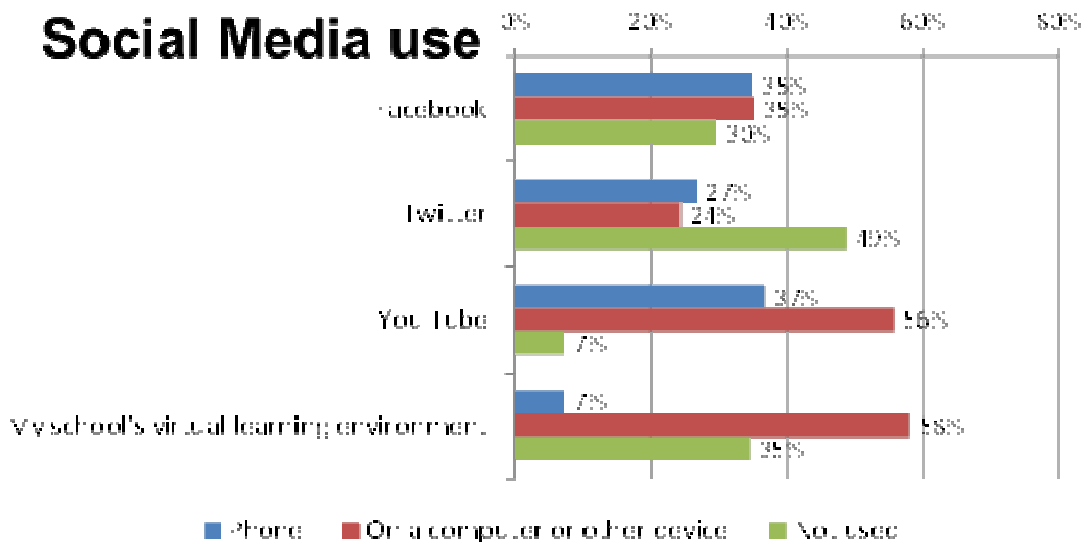


High profile cases of Hannah Smith from Leicestershire and Thomas Mullaney from Birmingham who took their own lives after experiencing target online bullying. This underlines the need to maintain our work to help keep children and young people safe online.

Recent results from the Buckinghamshire County Council Young People resident survey 2013 identified that 31% of young people accepting people that they don't know on their social networking sites. There is evidence of equal access to the internet via mobile phones as well as computers. 11% of young people identified that they had been Cyberbullied.

Results from Buckinghamshire County Council Young People residents survey 2013

Social Media use



- 31% of users have accepted someone they don't know as a friend
- Those users more likely to do this are boys (37%) and aged 16+ (36%)

Bullying

Bullying questions are also relevant for those being bullied online

Have you ever been bullied at school or anywhere else?



- 12-15 more likely to be bullied 45% v 40% Ave
- Those with a disability more likely to be bullied 68% v 40% Ave

What kind of bullying was it?	Frequency	Percent
Physical (For example hitting, kicking, pushing or spitting)	126	31%
Verbal (Calling you names, making verbal threats, sending threats or hurtful messages)	266	66%
Indirect (Spreading rumours, writing graffiti about you, excluding you from the group)	131	32%
Cyber bullying (posting hurtful photos or information about you on-line)	44	11%
Another kind:	26	6%
	402	

% in the above table show the type of bullying from those experiencing bullying. Note that someone can experience more than one type of bullying so the % above total more than 100%.

Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board esafety subcommittee

Since 2009 the esafety subcommittee of the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board as a multiagency group has been working together to raise awareness about the safe use of information and communication technologies by children and young people.

The BSCB esafety strategy and work plan[appendix 1] is to help achieve the aims set out by the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCISS).

These are: Creating a safer on line environment; Giving everybody the skills, knowledge and understanding to help children and young people stay safe on line; Inspiring safe and responsible use and behaviour.

Updating and maintaining our webpages [www.bucks-lscb.org.uk/information-e-safety] provides access to information and support on a range of issues for professionals, parents and children and young people including how and where to report internet abuse to CEOP [Child Exploitation Online Protection].

CEOP is part of the National Crime Agency works with child protection partners across the UK and overseas to identify the main threats to children and coordinates activity against to bring offenders to account. They protect children from harm online and offline, directly through NCA led operations and in partnership with local and international agencies (www.ceop.police.uk)

The subcommittee maintain a list of Thinkuknow trainers in Buckinghamshire who have been trained by CEOP to deliver training to professionals, parents, children and young people. The ThinkuKnow training raises awareness of the visits, how to behave online and to know what to do if you feel unsafe or at risk. Recent events in Buckinghamshire include training being offered to parents, teachers and KS 1 and 2 pupils.

E safety events are being planned, developed and held across the Buckinghamshire County Council run Children's Centres as the need has been identified with parents asking questions about keeping their children safe online. E safety is now also included in the new Ofsted Inspection Framework for Children's Centres under the section impact of practice and services the framework states that inspectors will look at the impact of how "*parents understanding of their responsibilities for their children's safety including esafety*" can be measured and evidenced.

An example of how the esafety subcommittee have supported schools in Buckinghamshire to raise awareness for both children and young people was through engaging a Theatre company to deliver a production to highlight how to keep safe online and risks. This was a very successful programme and produced evidence of young people changing their online behaviour.

Some of the feedback from young people on what they are now doing differently when going online:

"I have been more careful of the information I put online"

"I now know that I should only talk to friends online and not meet someone new"

"Making sure that I always keep my privacy settings on, and always checking that I am friending only people I know" Buckinghamshire KS3 pupils

After further consultation with young people they told us that their parents wouldn't know what to do and they need more information to be able to support them. Our current work plans include events to engage with parents to raise awareness of internet safety and to offer practical advice of how to make their IT equipment safer.

Summary

In order to offer advice and support to children and young people about being safer online and to be risk adverse, we need to ensure as many professionals working with children, young people and families are trained. Educating and informing both staff, parents and children about internet safety can help to protect children and increase the level of reporting to CEOP when issues arise.

Next steps

We encourage members to acknowledge the work of esafety subcommittee and its work and to promote in their communities and with partners.