

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

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OUR VISION

A world in which children are using technology in a safe, positive and successful manner.

OUR MISSION

To empower children, parents and teachers to navigate the online world in a stronger, smarter and safer way.

DIRECTORS



Ms. Ursula McMahon



Prof. Joseph Carthy



Prof. Brian O'Neill



Mrs. Avril Ronan Naughton



Mr. John Fitzsimons



Ms. Fiona Conway



Ms. Derval Blehein



Mr. Michael Moran

COMPANY SECRETARY

Ms. Ursula McMahon

CHARITY NUMBER

20104108

COMPANY NUMBER

568651

REGISTERED OFFICE

93 Upper George's Street Dun Laoghaire Co Dublin

AUDITORS

Veldon Tait 4 Clarinda Park North Dun Laoghaire Co. Dublin

BANKERS

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Foreword | Professor Brian O'Neill

The disruption to everyday life that occurred from March 2020 onwards arising from the global pandemic is unprecedented in modern times. An immediate consequence of this for children was not just the closure of schools and restrictions on their movements. Life during lockdown also brought about a turn to digital technology as never before so that young people everywhere could continue school activities, leisure and interacting with friends. In these strange times, families have been able to discover many new digital platforms and to avail of new opportunities to communicate online. For many parents and children, this has also brought to the fore questions about online risks and safety and concerns regarding security and privacy of personal data. For some, this may have been the first time they had an opportunity to seriously consider the consequences of digital misuse. In this context and against the background of the extraordinary challenges facing society as a whole, CyberSafeIreland has continued to provide an invaluable service to reinforce the message of online safety, digital empowerment and wellbeing.

The year in review, 2019/20, both up to and after the period of lockdown, shows just how vital this contribution is and the ongoing need that CyberSafeireland continues to fulfil. Children are surrounded by digital technology from a very early age. But, as we can see from CyberSafelreland data, from age 8 onwards, they become active independent digital users with their own smart devices, profiles and accounts across a range of digital services and platforms. The research again shows that, despite age restrictions, children are registering on social media and instant messaging services, sometimes without their parents' knowledge. One third of all children surveyed have also seen something online that has bothered them. One fifth of children in this age group (8-12) have come across content online that they would not want their parents to know about. Alongside this, schools are increasingly having to deal with online safety incidents, most often relating to cyberbullying, and over 80 per cent of teachers say that online safety is a significant issue in their school. In response, CyberSafeIreland's top class resources and expertly delivered programme of talks and workshops meets a real need in Irish schools. Importantly, this service is now also available online, ensuring vital continuity in supporting schools.

Alongside this all-important training and educational role, CyberSafeireland continues to make a remarkable contribution in raising awareness of these issues. It is frequently called upon to comment in the media about the latest cyber threats and to contribute its always balanced and evidence-based guidance. As a member of the National Advisory Council for Online Safety (NACOS), CyberSafeIreland played a key role in ensuring voices from the front line are heard in the drafting of legislation



such as the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill. It has also worked with other NGOs to ensure that commitments to online safety are retained and followed through in the new Programme for Government, Our Shared Future. The year ahead will be an important one with the proposed establishment of an Online Safety Commissioner and the introduction of new forms of regulation on video sharing platforms. At the same time, with the return to school a number one national priority, CyberSafeIreland will unquestionably be a key player in supporting the safe and responsible use of digital technology as an integral part of our everyday life, at home and at school.

Since its establishment in 2015, CyberSafeIreland has made a unique contribution to online safety education in Ireland and to empowering children, parents and teachers to navigate the online world in a safe and responsible manner. As a member of the board since its foundation and having now moved to an advisory role, it has been a privilege to be associated with such a dynamic and passionate organisation that has done so much to support children to be safe online and to promote a positive message of its opportunities.

Professor Brian O'Neill

Professor Brian O'Neill, Technological University Dublin, is a researcher of young people's use of digital technologies, online safety and policy for the digital environment. He is member of the Internet Safety Advisory Board for the Safer Internet Ireland programme. He also leads the EU Kids Online project in Ireland and is a board advisor for CyberSafeIreland. He is the co-author of Towards a Better Internet for Children? Policy Pillars, Players and Paradoxes published by Nordicom.

POINTS OF INTEREST

- 93% of 8 12 year olds own their own smart device. Boys are significantly more likely to own a gaming console than girls (71% vs. 30%).
- 65% of 8 12 year olds have their own social media and/or instant messaging account, this is an 8% increase on last year's figures.
- Most children (84%) are speaking to parents or carers about what they are seeing and doing online with some regularity but 13% never do and 3% only once a year.
- 22% of children have seen something online that they wouldn't want their parents to know about. This is notably higher for boys (26%) than girls (18%).
- A small proportion of children (4%) say they are 'never' allowed online or not very often (13%). A third (32%) can go online for an agreed amount of time every day and **28% can go online whenever they want to**.
- Most children (87%) have rules at home for going online although 13% say "there are no rules". Boys (17%) are more likely to say there are "no rules" than girls (10%).
- Most children (54%) say they wouldn't do things differently if a parent or carer was watching but 16% said they would (with boys more likely) and 30% saying they weren't sure.
- TikTok is now the most popular social media app amongst 8 12 year olds with 40% saying that they have an account on it. This is followed by 34% on Snapchat and 32% on WhatsApp.
- **26% of children reported playing over-18s games** with boys (39%) much more likely to do so than girls (11%).
- **31%** of children game online with people they don't know in real life (40% of boys vs. 22% of girls).
- Most children (61%) had been contacted by a stranger in an online game.
- Overall, there were some interesting differences between the genders with boys reporting fewer rules at home, far more likely to be playing over-18s games, more likely to game with people they don't know, more likely to see things online that they wouldn't want their parents to know about and more likely to do things differently if they know a parent is watching.
- The majority of teachers (60%) are dealing with online safety incidents in the classroom with 30% dealing with 2- 5 incidents in the last year, 27% dealing with 1 incident and 3% with more than 5.

Introduction | Avril Ronan Naughton, Chairperson

I am delighted to present this report on behalf of Cyber-SafeIreland CLG in my capacity as Chair of the Board of Directors. The report provides audited accounts and an organisational overview, including governance, for the period January to December 2019 and in the second part of the report we will share with you our feedback from children, parents and teachers gathered over the course of the academic year.

This has not been a "normal" year by any means. The appearance in late 2019 and subsequent spread of COVID-19 in early 2020 has had a significant impact on almost every aspect of our lives. Charities like CyberSafeIreland have found this period extremely challenging. Normal business for the organisation literally stopped with the announcement that schools followed by libraries as well as other public spaces and workplaces would close for an indefinite period in March. Up to this point, CyberSafeIreland did not deliver any courses online; all educational courses involved one of our education team being physically present to deliver the session in person. Traded revenue, which provides an important source of income for the organisation, has been severely impacted by these changes.

I'm proud to report however, that CyberSafeIreland responded well to the challenge and remained committed to providing support, resources and training to their target audiences, including children, parents and teachers throughout these last few months. Within a week of school closures, they had launched a microsite called 'Stuck At Home?' for parents and schools with lots of great (and free) online and offline resources for children that was regularly updated throughout the period March - August. They also moved their service online, offering webinars to parents, children, teachers, youth workers and social workers throughout this period. We are particularly grateful to **Permanent TSB** (PTSB) for sponsoring many of the fantastic CyberSafeIreland summer bootcamps for children over the summer and to Trend Micro, the Ireland Funds, Lifes2Good, Jim & Diane Quinn, and our long-term partners Social Entrepreneurs Ireland for their ongoing support and to Sara Emmanuel and CommSec for their generous donations.

I think it's safe to say that the online world has provided a significant opportunity during the latter months in particular. What would we have done during lockdown without access to it? It enabled us to work remotely with ease, to socialise with friends and family during a time that we couldn't be with them in person and it provided a great source of entertainment too. For our children, it also offered the possibility of doing their school work from home. We live in the Digital Age and it was never more apparent than during this time as most of us spent far more time online than ever before.

These unprecedented times have only served to remind us of our responsibility to ensure that children are well prepared for their digital lives. It is vital that we continue to provide



education, resources and support to children themselves but also to parents and teachers. As an organisation, we remain concerned that children are not being adequately prepared and that they need more guidance and support from parents and educators. CyberSafeIreland is committed to its vision of a world in which children are using technology in a safe, positive and successful manner. The focus must be on balance. The focus must be on quality. The key to raising digital citizens is open honest communication between parents and their children, as well as a good education.

CyberSafeIreland also recognises the need for effective national measures, especially in the areas of education and regulation of the online service providers in order to better support and protect children online. The lead up to the National Elections in February was a busy time for Cyber-SafeIreland whilst we worked to ensure that online safety and digital wellbeing measures were in almost every party manifesto. We subsequently joined forces with a number of other organisations under the leadership of the Children's Rights Alliance to ensure that commitments expressed in the manifestos were well-represented in the Programme for Government. In the coming years, it will be the role of CyberSafeIreland and others to ensure that the new Government honours the commitments it has laid out and really invests in bringing about positive change to the online lives of children.

As always, I'd like to end this with a few thank yous. I've already mentioned our funders and I'd like to reference them again for their fantastic support and to recognise the multi-year support that many of them have provided. I'd like to particularly acknowledge Social Entrepreneurs Ireland who have been there almost since the very beginning of CyberSafe's journey and have provided fantastic support and advice over the last four years as well as access to a network of like-minded organisations. Our formal funding relationship ends this year but we hope there will be many more years of friendship and interaction to come.

I would like to thank the CyberSafeIreland team for their hard work, dedication and commitment. We have had some wonderful additions to the team over the last year, including Aoife Keogh as Marketing and Admin Officer, Louise O'Hagan as Education Officer and Philip Arneill as Head of Education & Innovation. Our team of trainers were out in schools and workplaces across the country until lockdown came into effect and have been keeping in touch as we work remotely. I would also like to thank our small but dedicated team of volunteer "cyberninjas" led by the wonderful Michelle Garrigan. Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge my fellow board members and advisors who give up their time to meet four times a year and who offer their expertise throughout the year.

Uncertain times still lie ahead but CyberSafeIreland will continue to do everything it can to support and promote rights of children to have a safe and positive experience online. Here's wishing you all a "cybersafe" year ahead.

Avril Ronan Nauhgton | Chairperson

DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT

The directors present their Directors' Annual Report, combining the Directors' Report and Trustees' Report, and the audited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2019.

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The Directors' Report contains the information required to be provided in the Directors' Annual Report under the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) guidelines. The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purpose of charity law and under the company's constitution are known as members of the board of trustees.

In this report the directors of CyberSafeIreland Company Limited by Guarantee present a summary of its purpose, governance, activities, achievements and finances for the financial financial year 2019.

The charity is a registered charity and hence the report and results are presented in a form which complies with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014 and, although not obliged to comply with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015), the organisation has implemented its recommendations where relevant in these financial statements.

The charity is limited by guarantee not having a share capital.

MISSION, OBJECTIVES **AND STRATEGY**

Objectives

The charity's main object is to advance, promote and provide education and training to children, parents and teachers in the community to ensure safe and responsible navigation of the online world.

The following objects support the attainment of the main object.

- To engage in research and development and to organise, promote and provide training and development through seminars, conferences, discussions and other meetings to promote the main object.
- To make, print, publish, computerise, distribute training materials or general information in connection with the main object.
- Sharing safe and responsible online practice to enrich the education of children, parents and teachers in furtherance of the main object.
- Work directly with parents, schools, children and other persons as may be required to build a strong framework for high standards in furtherance of the main object.

The mains area of the company's activity in 2019 were as

- The delivery of the Education Programme and launching a behaviour change measurement project in partnership with UCD and the Children and Young Persons Committee (CYPSC) for Dun Laoghaire Rathdown
- A strong Safer Internet Day campaign.
- We launched more online content and resources targeting parents of younger children (aged 2-10).
- There was a big focus on recruitment during the year as we expanded our team of staff from two to four, to include an Admin Officer and an Education Officer.
- The Company developed a series of policy 'asks', which were circulated to representatives of all of the political parties to include in their election manifestos, ahead of the next general education.
- The Company launched its 2018 Annual Report at PTSB's Digital Hub on 10th September 2019.

Our Staff

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The team of staff is made up of Alex Cooney as CEO, Philip Arneill as Head of Education (appointed in September 2019), Cliona Curley as an advisor, Aoife Keogh as the Marketing and Admin Officer (appointed January 2019) and Louise O'Hagan (appointed April 2019) as the Education Officer. Huge thanks to all the staff for their work and dedication towards the delivery of CyberSafeIreland's Mission throughout 2019.

Our Panel of Trainers

Much of our outreach work in schools, libraries and workplaces is delivered by a dedicated team of trainers. The charity consistently receives very positive feedback and this is down to the high degree of professionalism and enthusiasm of CyberSafeIreland's trainers. We now have 6 fantastic trainers in the team: Ann Harte, Aoife Boyle, Brendan Noone, Enda McGahern, Martyn Wallace and Rachel Lynch.

Our Volunteers

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The trustees are very grateful to the unpaid volunteers who have supported the organisation over the past year. Particular thanks and recognition must be extended to the diligent team of "CyberNinja" volunteers led by Michelle Garrigan who provide technical research and who help us to keep on top of the constantly changing landscape of what children are doing online.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Structure

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The company does not have a share capital and consequently the liability of members is limited, subject to an undertaking by each member to contribute to the net assets or liabilities of the company on winding up such amounts as may be required not exceeding one Euro (€1).

The charity was established under a Constitution which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Constitution and managed by a Board of Directors.

Governance

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The charity has 8 trustees who meet on a quarterly basis and are responsible for the strategic direction of the charity. The charity is ran on a day to day basis by the chief executive officer, who is responsible for ensuring that the charity meets its long and short term aims and that the day to day operations run smoothly. The CEO and Programme Director delegated authority, within terms of delegation approved by the trustees, for operational matters including finance, employment and programme development.

Management

There is clear division of responsibility at the company with the Board retaining control over major decisions. The board of directors retain overall responsibility for the strategic development of the company in close liaison with the executive officers. All directors have signed the charity's Code of Conduct as well as the Child Safeguarding Policy.

Directors are unpaid and no director received any payment during this period.

Review of Activities, **Achievements and Performance**

The main achievements of the company during the year

- The Education Programme directly reached 4,814 children aged 8-13 in school settings and 1,306 parents in schools, workplaces and other public settings such as libraries in 2019. We delivered sessions to children and parents in 13 counties across Ireland (Cavan, Dublin, Clare, Cork, Galway, Kildare, Laois, Limerick, Longford, Mayo, Meath, Westmeath and Wicklow).
- We succeeded in launching a behaviour change measurement project in partnership with UCD and the Children and Young Persons Committee (CYPSC) for Dun Laoghaire Rathdown. This involved:
 - Agreeing the parameters for the project during April and May
 - Selecting schools that met the right criteria with support from the local Education & Welfare Office in May/June
 - Securing ethical approval from UCD in August for a control group study involving four schools in the intervention group and four schools in the control group.
 - Organising a Principals' Briefing for all participating schools in September
 - Securing consent from the parents of participating pupils and assent from the pupils themselves.
 - Rolling out the project from October.
 - The final project report findings will be finalised in 2020 and a review of our education content will follow, based on the findings.
- There was a big focus on recruitment during the year as we expanded our team of staff from two to four, to include an Admin Officer and an Education Officer, which was made possible with the support of grants from the Ireland Funds Flagship Awards and Social Entrepreneurs Ireland (SEI) Impact Partnership Programme. We also appointed a new Head of Education to lead the Education team once our Programme Director left to start a Phd in September. Our former Programme Director, who is also a co-founder of the organisation, has remained on in an advisory capacity.

- The Company conducted a major Sales and Marketing review between April and November and developed a related strategy during this period, which included contracting a dedicated salesperson from September on a part-time basis to provide additional support on sales.
- The Company launched a successful Safer Internet Day campaign in February with a new resource targeting parents of younger children (aged 2-10) and circulated to all Early Start Centres around the country. The press release we released in support of the event received excellent media coverage.
- The Company held its first Staff Away day in June with repsenatives from the Board, the staff, the trainers and the volunteers in attendance.
- The Company developed a series of policy 'asks', which were circulated to representatives of all of the political parties to include in their election manifestos, ahead of the next general education. They focused on calling for a national strategy on online safety, with key measures including the regulation of online service providers and a comprehensive education programme in all schools focused on digital literacy and healthy online behaviours. The Company was also represented on the newly-appointed National Advisory Council on Online Safety (NACOS) throughout the year.
- Keynote presentations were delivered at the UNESCO Child and Family annual conference in June and at the Mental Health Summit in September as well as presentations at a number of other events including the Data Summit in September.
- The Company launched its 2018 Annual Report at PTSB's Digital Hub on 10th September 2019 with Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor in attendance.
- The Company was successfuly awared its Triple Lock status by the Charities Institute of Ireland
- The Company reviewed the need for a CRM system and made recommendations to the Board to implement such a system. In December, the Company successfully received a grant to support this implementation, which will begin in Q1 2020.
- The Company's CEO, Alex Cooney won the Newstalk WMB Social Entrepreneur Award 2019.

Financial Review

Against the backdrop of limited resources and insecurities over funding, it has continued to be challenging to plan or develop services. Nevertheless the charity, with the aid of sound financial management and the support of its staff, trainers and volunteers generated a very positive financial outcome for the period.

The principal sources of funding for the charity are philanthropic grants and fees generated through services. Philanthropic grants were secured from Trend Micro, Social Entrepreneurs Ireland and the Ireland Funds Flagship Awards as well from donations through the year from CommSec. Particular thanks to all of our funders listed here, as well as Lifes2Good and Jim Quinn. We really couldn't do what we do without that invaluable support.

Financial Results

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At the end of the financial year the charity has assets of €52,322 (2018 - €91,101) and liabilities of €7,696 (2018 -€3,077). The net assets of the charity have decreased by €(43,398).

Reserves Position and Policy

The charity has a draft Reserves policy in place, which will be reviewed and signed off at a Board meeting in 2020.

The charity needs reserves to:

- Ensure the charity can continue to provide a stable service to those who need them.
- Meet contractual obligations as they fall due;
- Meet unexpected costs;
- Provide working capital when funding is paid in arrears;
- Meet the costs of winding up in the event that was necessary.
- Be adequate to cover 3 months of current expenditure.

The total restricted funds at year end are €8,088, which are not included in the trustee's view of the charity's reserve needs because these restricted funds are held by the charity only for as long as is necessary to organise the necessary programmes. Normally these funds are spent within 12 months of receipt.

The reserves includes funding from both restricted and unrestricted sources. The unrestricted funding remaining was €36,538.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

In the first half of 2020, the outbreak of COVID-19 spread throughout Asia, Europe and Worldwide. The initial impact of this has been severe and has resulted in a significant worldwide slowdown in economic activity. In Ireland, the economic impact of this pandemic has been characterised by the temporary closure of many businesses in "non-essential" areas to ensure that people's movements are restricted in order to slow down the spread of the virus. The effect of COVID-19 presents many risks for the company, the effects of which cannot be fully quantified at the time of approving the financial statements.

As a result, the directors consider the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic to be a significant uncertainty at the time of approving the financial statements. Although the effects cannot be fully determined, the directors believe that the main risks associated with COVID-19 are an initial slowdown in trading activity during the period of government restrictions.

Reference and Administrative details

The organisation is a charitable company with a registered office at 93 Upper Georges Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin . The Charity trades under the name CyberSafeIreland CLG. Its Company Registration Number is 568651.

The charity has been granted charitable tax status under Sections 207 and 208 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997, Charity No CHY 21711 and is registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority with the charity number 20104108. The charity has a total of 8 trustees.

The CEO is Ms. Alex Cooney who has over 20 years of experience in the not-for-profit sector. She is a co-founder of the charity. The day to day management of the charity is also directed by the following:

Up to September 2019: Programme Director and co-founder: Ms. Cliona Curley who has extensive experience as a cybercrime investigator and analyst as well in the delivery of education programmes. Since September 2019, she has remained involved in the charity in an advisory capacity

Since September 2019: Head of Education & Innovation: Mr Philip Arneill who has over 20 years experience in the field of education.

Directors and Secretary

The directors who served throughout the financial year, except as noted, were as follows:

- Ms. Ursula McMahon
- Prof. Joseph Carthy
- Prof. Brian O'Neill
- Ms. Avril Naughton
- Mr. John Fitzsimons
- Ms. Fiona Conway
- Ms. Derval Blehein
- Mr. Michael Moran

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The secretary who served throughout the financial year was Ms. Ursula McMahon.

Compliance with Sector-wide **Legislation and Standards**

The charity engages pro-actively with legislation, standards and codes which are developed for the sector. CyberSafelreland Company Limited by Guarantee subscribes to and is compliant with the following:

The Companies Act 2014

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The Charities SORP (FRS 102)

Future Developments

At the time of approving the financial statements, the company is exposed to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which has had a negative effect on activities since the year end and has resulted in a lower than expected level of activity since the year end. In planning its future activities, the directors will seek to develop the company's activities whilst managing the effects of the difficult trading period caused by this outbreak.

The directors anticipate making some necessary changes to the nature of the business in the near future, which will involve moving the service offering from in-person delivery to also include online service delivery via webinars . Whilst the directors anticipate that these changes will enable the Company to make some traded revenue, it is unlikely to equate to normal revenue levels during this period.

Auditors

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The auditors, Veldon Tait have indicated their willingness to continue in office in accordance with the provisions of section 383(2) of the Companies Act 2014.

Statement on **Relevant Audit Information**

In accordance with section 330 of the Companies Act 2014, so far as each of the persons who are directors at the time this report is approved are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the statutory auditors are unaware. The directors have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and they have established that the statutory auditors are aware of that information.

Accounting Records

To ensure that adequate accounting records are kept in accordance with Sections 281 to 285 of the Companies Act 2014, the directors have employed appropriately qualified accounting personnel and have maintained appropriate computerised accounting systems. The accounting records are located at the company's office at 93 Upper George's Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 22 April 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

Deval Sillie Jacost

Ms. Derval Blehein

Director

Prof. Joseph Carthy Director

DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The directors are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable Irish law and regulations.

Irish company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under the law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the Companies Act 2014 and FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" issued by the Financial Reporting Council. Under company law, the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the charity as at the financial year end date and of the net income or expenditure of the charity for the financial year and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014.

In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (2015);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the relevant financial reporting framework, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The directors confirm that they have complied with the above requirements in preparing the financial statements.

The directors are responsible for ensuring that the charity keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the charity, enable at any time the assets, liabilities, financial position and net income or expenditure of the charity to be determined with reasonable accuracy, enable them to ensure that the financial statements and the Directors' Annual Report comply with Companies Act 2014 and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the Republic of Ireland governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 22 April 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

Ms. Derval Blehein | Director

Denal Sellie

Prof. Joseph Carthy | Director

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

We have audited the charity financial statements of Cyber-SafeIreland Company Limited by Guarantee for the financial year ended 31 December 2019 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account), the Balance Sheet and the related notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies set out in note 2. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is Irish law and FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the charity as at 31 December 2019 and of its net incoming resources for the financial year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland", as applied in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act 2014 and having regard to the Charities SORP; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard for Auditors (Ireland) issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which ISAs (Ireland) require us to report to you where:

- the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the directors have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other Information

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The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our Auditor's Report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

Based solely on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- in our opinion, the information given in the Directors' Annual Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- in our opinion, the Directors' Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014.

We have obtained all the information and explanations which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit.

In our opinion the accounting records of the charity were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited. The financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified any material misstatements in the Directors' Annual Report. The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions required by sections 305 to 312 of the Act are not made. We have nothing to report in this regard.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of directors for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 9 the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditor's Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Further information regarding the scope of our responsibilities as auditor

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (Ireland), we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our Auditor's Report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our Auditor's Report. However, future events or conditions may cause the the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities.

Our report is made solely to the charity's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume any responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Keith Murphy for and on behalf of

VELDON TAIT Statutory auditor

Kun de

4 Clarinda Park North, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

22 April 2020

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)

for the financial year ended 31 December 2019.

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2019	Restricted Funds 2019	Total 2019	Unrestricted Funds 2018	Restricted Funds 2018	Total 2018
Incoming Resources							
Voluntary Income	3.1	€2,010	-	€2,010	€36,199	-	€36,199
Charitable Activities							
Grants from governments and other co-funders	3.2	€137,223	-	€137,223	€70,961	€56,000	€126,961
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		€139,233	-	€139,233	€107,160	€56,000	€163,160
Resources Expended							
Charitable activities	4.1	€138,055	€44,576	€182,631	€79,489	€14,318	€93,807
Net incoming/outgoing resources before transfers		€1,178	(€44,576)	(€43,398)	€27,671	€41,682	€69,353
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR		€1,178	(€44,576)	(€43,398)	€27,671	€41,682	€69,353
Reconciliation of Fund	Reconciliation of Funds						
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2019	11	€35,360	€52,664	€88,024	€7,689	€10,982	€18,671
BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 DECEMBER 2019		€36,538	€8,088	€44,626	€35,360	€52,664	€88,024

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the financial year.

All income and expenditure relate to continuing activities.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 22 April 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

Ms. Derval Blehein | Director

Denal Sellie

Prof. Joseph Carthy | Director

Jacky Castly

BALANCE SHEET

		2019	2018
Current Assets	Notes		
Debtors	8	€4,818	€13,406
Cash at bank and in hand		€47,504	€77,695
		€52,322	€91,101
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	9	(€7,696)	(€3,077)
Net Current Assets		€44,626	€88,024
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		€44,626	€88,024
Funds			
Restricted funds		€8,088	€52,664
General fund (unrestricted)		€36,538	€35,360
TOTAL FUNDS	11	€44,626	€88,024

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure relate to continuing activities.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 22 April 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

Ms. Derval Blehein | Director

Dewal Sellie

Prof. Joseph Carthy | Director

PARENT TESTIMONIAL

"Very informative, well delivered talk by Ann. Took home a lot from it and very handy to have the useful links to help with it all"

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

1 | GENERAL INFORMATION

CyberSafeIreland Company Limited by Guarantee is a company limited by guarantee incorporated in the Republic of Ireland. The registered office of the company is 93 Upper George's Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin which is also the principal place of business of the company. The CRO number is 568651. The financial statements have been presented in Euro (€) which is also the functional currency of the company.

2 | SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the charity's financial statements.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)".

The charity has applied the Charities SORP on a voluntary basis as its application is not a requirement of the current regulations for charities registered in the Republic of Ireland.

As permitted by the Companies Act 2014, the the charity has varied the standard formats in that act for the Statement of Financial Activities and the Balance Sheet. Departures from the standard formats, as outlined in the Companies Act 2014, are to comply with the requirements of the Charities SORP and are in compliance with section 4.7, 10.6 and 15.2 of that SORP.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2019 have been prepared on the going concern basis and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)" and FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

Cash flow statement

The charity has availed of the exemption in FRS 102 from the requirement to produce a cash flow statement because it is classified as a small charity.

Incoming Resources

Voluntary income or capital is included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to it, its financial value can be quantified with reasonable certainty and there is reasonable certainty of its ultimate receipt. Income received in advance of due performance under a contract is accounted for as deferred income until earned. Grants for activities are recognised as income when the related conditions for legal entitlement have been met. All other income is accounted for on an accruals basis.

Resources Expended

.

All resources expended are accounted for on an accruals basis. Charitable activities include costs of services and grants, support costs and depreciation on related assets. Costs of generating funds similarly include fundraising activities. Non-staff costs not attributed to one category of activity are allocated or apportioned pro-rata to the staffing of the relevant service. Finance, HR, IT and administrative staff costs are directly attributable to individual activities by objective. Governance costs are those associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Trade and other debtors

Trade and other debtors are initially recognised at fair value and thereafter stated at amortised cost using the effective interest method less impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts except where the effect of discounting would be immaterial. In such cases the receivables are stated at cost less impairment losses for bad and doubtful debts.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash at bank and in hand, demand deposits with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. In the balance sheet bank overdrafts are shown within creditors.

Trade and other creditors

Trade and other creditors are initially recognised at fair value and thereafter stated at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method, unless the effect of discounting would be immaterial, in which case they are stated at cost.

Debtors

.

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due. Income recognised by the the charity from government agencies and other co-funders, but not yet received at year end, is included in debtors.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand comprises cash on deposit at banks requiring less than three months notice of withdrawal.

Taxation

.

No current or deferred taxation arises as the charity has been granted charitable exemption. Irrecoverable valued added tax is expensed as incurred.

The company is exempt from Corporation Tax as it is a registered charity with a registered charity number 20104108.

3 | INCOME

3.1 DONATIONS AND LEGACIES	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2019	2018
Donations	€2,010	-	€2,010	€36,199

3.2 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2019	2018
Services	€57,223	-	€57,223	€53,961
Grants	€80,000	-	€80,000	€73,000
	€137,223	-	€137,223	€126,961

4 | EXPENDITURE

4.1 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Direct Costs	Other Costs	Support Costs	2019	2018
Delivery of services	€66,438	-	€111,917	€178,355	€90,525
Governance Costs (Note 4.2)	-	-	€4,276	€4,276	€3,282
	€66,438	-	€116,193	€182,631	€93,807

4.2 GOVERNANCE COSTS	Direct Costs	Other Costs	Support	2019	2018
Charitable activities - governance costs	-	-	€4,276	€4,276	€3,282

4.3 SUPPORT COSTS	Charitable Activities	Governance Costs	2019	2018
Salaries,wages and related costs	€87,478	-	€87,478	€27,622
General office	€24,439	-	€24,439	€12,489
Audit and accounting fees	-	€4,276	€4,276	€3,282
	€111,917	€4,276	€116,193	€43,393

5 | ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Basis of Apportionment	2019	2018
Salaries,wages and related costs	Time	€87,478	€27,622
General office	Support	€24,439	€12,489
Audit and accounting fees		€4,276	€3,282
		€116,193	€43,393

6 | EMPLOYEES AND REMUNERATION

Number of employees

The average number of persons employed (including executive directors) during the year was as follows:

	2019 Number	2018 Number
Administration	3	1
Training	1	1
	4	2
The staff costs comprise:	2019	2018
Wages and salaries	€119,252	€49,837
Social security costs	€12,753	€5,407
	€132,005	€55,244

7 | EMPLOYEE REMUNERATION

There are no employees who received employee benefits of more than €70,000 for the reporting period.

8 | DEBTORS

	2019	2018
Trade debtors	€4,818	€13,406

9 | CREDITORS

Amounts falling due within one year	2019	2018
Trade creditors	20	-
Taxation and social security costs	€3,099	-
Other creditors	€1,327	€1,327
Accruals	€3,250	€1,750
	€7,696	€3,077

10 | RESERVES

	2019	2018
At 1 January 2019	€88,024	€18,671
(Deficit)/Surplus for the financial year	(€43,398)	€69,353
At 31 December 2019	€44,626	€88,024

11 | FUNDS

11.1 RECONCILIATION OF MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
At 1 January 2018	€7,689	€10,982	€18,671
Movement during the financial year	€27,671	€41,682	€69,353
At 31 December 2018	€35,360	€52,664	€88,024
Movement during the financial year	€1,178	(€44,576)	(€43,398)
At 31 December 2019	€36,538	€8,088	€44,626

11.2 ANALYSIS OF MOVEMENTS ON FUNDS					
	Balance 1 January 2019	Income	Expenditure	Transfers between funds	Balance 31 December 2019
Restricted income					
Restricted Funds	€52,664	-	€44,576	_	€8,088
Unrestricted income					
Unrestricted General	€35,360	€139,233	€138,055	_	€36,538
Total funds	€88,024	€139,233	€182,631	-	€44,626

11.3 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND	Current assets	Current liabilities	Total
Restricted funds	€8,088	-	€8,088
Unrestricted general funds	€44,234	(€7,696)	€36,538
	€52,322	(€7,696)	€44,626

12 | STATUS

The charity is limited by guarantee not having a share capital.

The liability of the members is limited.

Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of its being wound up while they are members, or within one year thereafter, for the payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before they ceased to be members, and the costs, charges and expenses of winding up, and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributors among themselves, such amount as may be required, not exceeding € 1.

13 | POST-BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

In the first half of 2020, the COVID-19 virus spread worldwide. In common with many other countries, the Irish government issued guidance and restrictions on the movement of people designed to slow the spread of this virus.

This has had a negative impact on the company since the year end and trading activity has reduced as a result. The directors are confident that the company will be able to adapt its operations to trade through these restrictions as outlined in the directors report.

14 | APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors on 22 April 2020.

TEACHER TESTIMONIAL

"The CyberSafety session delivered to my 6th class was excellent and pitched appropriately at the children's level. Our facilitator was both engaging and informative and knew precisely the social media apps and digital challenges facing the children. She answered their questions comprehensively and raised awareness as to the importance of checking their privacy settings and considering their digital footprint. Thanks Aoife for a wonderful session!"

TEACHER, ST. BRIGID'S NS, CASTLEKNOCK

CYBERSAFEIRELAND'S **ACADEMIC YEAR IN REVIEW 2019 - 2020**

Overview

In this part of the report, we provide an overview of the data we have collected over the past academic year (September 2019 up to school closures on 12th March 2020) and also a more in-depth focus on some of the key findings. The data is gathered from children via an anonymous online survey before we go into each school. This allows us to get a picture of trends and usage within the classroom and also to tailor the session more specifically to their needs. We will also provide some data gathered during our summer programme from April to August. Where appropriate and of interest, we have also provided a comparative analysis of the data against last year's data. Finally, there is both some data and testimonials collected from parents and teachers following these sessions.

Key Numbers

- Since January 2016, we have spoken to almost **24,000** children aged between 8 and 13.
- In this academic year we spoke directly to 5,986 children and to 1,554 parents
- We provided sessions to **56 schools** over the academic year. These schools were based in Leinster and Munster as follows:

0	Total:	56
0	Wicklow	4
0	Westmeath	2
0	Meath	5
0	Louth	1
0	Limerick	3
0	Laois	1
0	Kildare	5
0	Dublin	23
0	Cork	12

- As of 21st August, 400 children and 300 parents had attended our online webinars.
- We have gathered data from 3,764 children aged 8 - 12 through our anonymous online survey, 53% of which were male and 47% were female. The data related to children aged 13 was too small to be reported on, so we've focused on 8 - 12 years.

A breakdown of ages that we have surveyed is provided in Table 1 below:

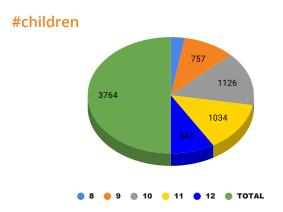


TABLE 1

Children who own a smart device

The figures outlined below indicate that ownership of smart devices for the 8 – 12 age group is high. **Our data shows** that overall 93% of the children surveyed state that they **own a smart device.** The most popular devices are tablets (55%) and games consoles (52%) with smartphones being the third most popular (44%). There is a significant gender divide in relation to the ownership of games consoles with 71% of boys owning one vs. 30% of girls (Table 3).

What smart devices do you own?

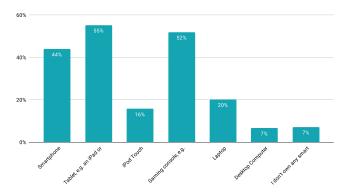


TABLE 2

What smart devices do you own?

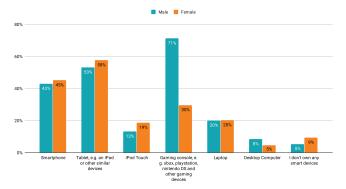


TABLE 3

Table 4 shows that ownership rises incrementally with age, starting at 82% of 8 year olds and rising to 97% of 12 year olds. This suggests that a very small proportion of children in this age category do not own any smart device at all. These figures are very consistent with last year's findings. The ownership of tablets remains fairly consistent across all ages with 42% of 8-year olds and 53% of 9-year olds owning one at the younger end and 58% of 11-year olds and 52% of 12-year olds stating that they own one. Smartphone ownership however, rises with age with 20% of 8-year olds and 24% of 9-year olds owning one as compared to 73% of 12-year olds.

As we noted in last year's report, this suggests that many parents are holding off on buying their child their first smartphone until 11 or 12. Many parents ask us what the right age is to give a child a smartphone. The reality is that is that the age at which you give a child ANY smart device should depend on the maturity levels of the child in guestion and the readiness of the parent to be involved in their child's use of the device.

Smart device ownership by age

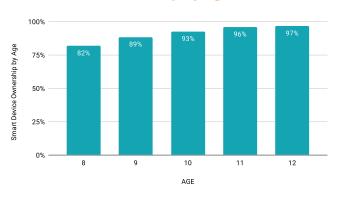


TABLE 4

Use of Social Media & **Messaging Apps**

Our data shows that 65% of the 8 - 12 year olds we surveyed are using social media and messaging apps and 35% are not. Interestingly, we noted this was an 8% increase on last year's figures. This is despite minimum age restrictions on all of the popular apps being 13 or more (WhatsApp for example has a minimum age restriction of 16). Table 5 below provides an age breakdown and it shows that almost half of the 8- and 9-year olds surveyed (48% in both cases) had a social media and/or instant messaging account in their name. This rises with age, with 60% of 10-year olds, 74% of 11-year olds and 82% of 12-year olds signed up.

Using Social Media & Messaging Apps (by Age)

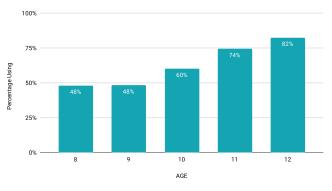


TABLE 5

We wanted to get a better understanding of what those children who reported that they were on social media were doing, so we did some further analysis and found that **most** of them (65%) were active users meaning that they were actively posting on their accounts and about a third (33%) were merely consumers and not actively posting. We furthermore found that about 22% of children reported posting selfies and 73% said that they 'never did' (5% weren't sure if they did or didn't). Just under a third (30%) of the children who reported using social media said that they had added strangers as friends or followers, which means that most children are not (see more on this later in the report). When we're talking to children in the classroom, we really encourage them to keep their personal information private and to be discerning about what and with whom they share online. It's interesting to see that whilst 65% of children reported having a social media account, a third of these were just consumers as opposed to sharing information through their accounts.

Table 6 provides a breakdown of the top five most popular apps. TikTok has replaced Snapchat as the most popular app for this age group with 40% of those surveyed signed up to it. Last year, it was the fourth most popular app with 24% of children using it. Forbes magazine noted that it was the most downloaded non gaming app in February 2020 and this trend is likely to have increased during lockdown.1 Twitch, a live-streaming app for gamers, which did not feature in the top ten most popular last year, is now in the top five.

Top Five Apps

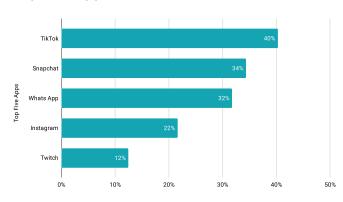


TABLE 6

Table 7 below illustrates some interesting differences in usage between genders, with TikTok being more popular with girls (50%) than boys (32%) and Twitch being significantly more popular with boys (31% vs. 3%). This latter difference is likely explained by more boys gaming than girls.

Top Five Apps (by Gender)

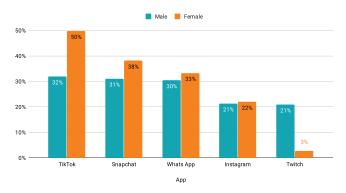


TABLE 7

GDPR and the digital age of consent

One year ago in 2019, on the first anniversary of the GDPR's introduction, CyberSafeIreland commissioned research to examine the measures social media services, at least those that are popular with children, had introduced in response to the new regulation. The research specifically considered sign-up procedures and age verification mechanisms. To coincide with the second anniversary of GDPR, this study was repeated, which provided an opportunity to see if anything had fundamentally changed. You can read a related blog by Professor Brian O'Neill and Cliona Curley on our website here.

The 2020 review of age verification mechanisms for the 10 most popular social media apps used by children found that it is possible to get around age restrictions simply by lying about their age. One difference between the 2019 review and the 2020 review was that if a user is initially honest in entering their age and tries again to access as an under-13 year old, some companies, notably TikTok, have made it distinctly harder to go back and try to sign up with a false age. This might be best described as a deterrent (rather than a barrier) to underage users, and can be easily bypassed by switching browser, re-downloading or clearing history.

¹ Bellan, Rebecca, Forbes, February 2020; source: https://www.forbes.com/sites/rebeccabellan/2020/02/14/tiktok-is-the-most-downloaded-app-worldwide-and-india-is-leading-the-charge/

Rules for going online

This year we added some new questions into the survey so that we could get a better sense of what, if any rules, there are at home about going online. One of our key messages to parents with regard to their children being online is to put in place clear boundaries and to consistently apply them. Rules will differ between households but as with other areas of children's lives that involve any kind of risk, such as crossing the road or riding a bike, it's important to have them.

We asked children when they were usually allowed to go online and Table 8 provides an overview of the responses. A small proportion of children (4%) said they were never allowed to go online and this was very consistent between boys (4%) and girls (5%). The vast majority of children (96%) however, were allowed to go online and most of these (68%) indicated that there were some rules in place. It is notable that a significant proportion of children (28%) answered 'I can go online whenever I want to'. There was a small gender variation on this with slightly more boys (29%) saying they could vs. 27% of girls.

When are you usually allowed to go online? (8-12 year olds)

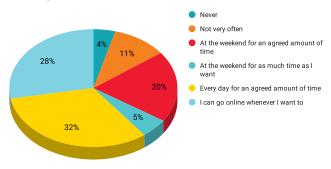


TABLE 8

We delved more deeply into this specific response 'I can go online whenever I want to' and noted that it steadily increased with age (see Table 9 below) with 23% of 8- and 9-year olds providing this response rising to 31% of 11-year olds and 39% of 12-year olds, which is a significant proportion.

I can go online whenever I want (by age)

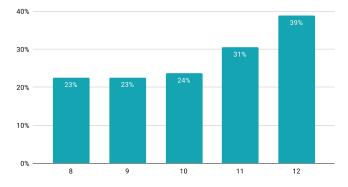


TABLE 9

In order to explore this further, we also asked children what specific rules they had at home for going online and asked them to tick any that applied to them. Table 10 provides an overview of responses and as can be seen, most children indicated that there were rules in place. Most children (54%) reported that they were not allowed to chat to people online that they don't know in real life and 53% said that they were not allowed to add friends that they didn't know in real life. 38% said that they were only allowed online at certain times and 38% also reported not being allowed online around bedtime. 21% responded that they could not use devices in their bedrooms. On a positive note, 27% stated that a parent or carer can always see what they're doing. A small but notable percentage of children (13% - 506 children) stated that there are 'no rules' at home for going online.

If you have rules at home for going online, which answers best describe the rules?

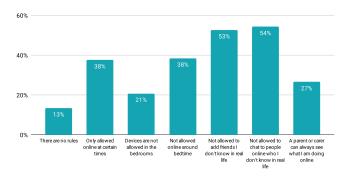


TABLE 10

We felt it was worth further exploring the online activity of this cohort of children (who reported 'no rules' at home about going online) so we did some further analysis and found that these children were more likely than the average to be active online (see Table 10.a.) with 72% on social media for example, vs. 65% overall. We also found that they were significantly more likely to be playing over-18s games, gaming with strangers and more likely to have been bothered by something online (50% of these children said yes to this). These numbers emphasise the importance of putting in place good ground rules at home about when, where and for how long children can be online (and sticking to them) as well as monitoring what children are seeing and doing online.

	"NO DIN EC"	A1.1
	"NO RULES"	ALL
Number of children	506	3764
% on social media	72%	65%
% posted on YouTube	26%	15%
% playing over 18 games	48%	26%
% gaming with strangers	50%	31%
% bothered by some- thing	50%	32%
% diff if parent watching	25%	16%
% with a device	93%	93%
% stranger chatting or adding	68%	60%

TABLE 10A

Notable differences between genders

In general, girls reported having more rules in place than boys. Table 11 below provides an overview. It was notable that boys (17%) were more likely to report having 'no rules' vs. 10% of girls. Almost half of girls (46%) reported that they were not allowed to go online around bedtime as compared to a third of boys (32%). More girls (59%) than boys (47%) reported that they were not allowed to add friends they didn't know in real life and more girls (61% vs. 48% of boys) reported that they were not allowed to chat people online that they didn't know in real life. Girls are also more likely to be watched by a carer or parent whilst online (33% vs. 21%).

If you have rules at home for going online, which answers best describe the rules? (by gender)

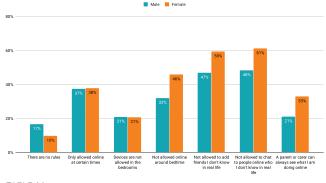


TABLE 11

TEACHER TESTIMONIAL

"Rachel was brilliant with the class today, the content matched well to the age of the children. Excellent for me as a teacher to be clued in to what the children are doing online"

TEACHER, SCOIL EIMHIN NAOFA

What children are doing online

We asked children if they had seen something online in the last year that they wouldn't want their parents to know about. On a positive note, the vast majority of children (78%) said that they had not, but almost a quarter (22%) said they had. Table 12 below shows the age breakdown and the figure remains fairly consistent across the age groups with 21% of 8-year olds and 20% of 9-year olds reporting that they had seen something online that they wouldn't want their parents to know about and this increased to 28% of 12-year olds.

Have you seen something online in the last year you wouldn't want your parents to know about? (by age)

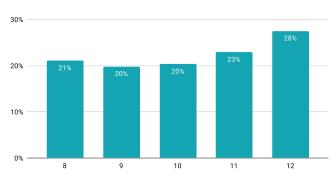


TABLE 12

We did note a gender difference in those reporting that they had seen something in the last year that they wouldn't want their parents to know about, with 26% of boys and 18% of girls providing this answer (see Table 13 below).

Have you seen something online in the last year you wouldn't want your parents to know about? (by gender)

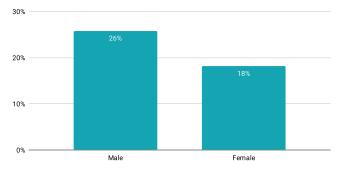


TABLE 13

We also asked children if they would do some things differently online if they knew a parent was watching and most children (54%) reported that they would not. 16% said they would and almost a third (30%) said they weren't sure (see Table 14 below).

Would you do some things differently online if you knew your parent was watching?

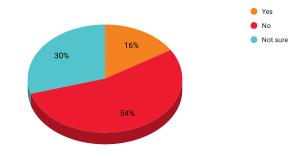
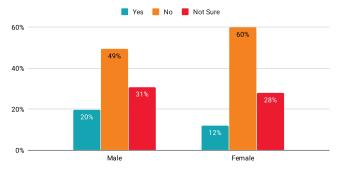


TABLE 14

Again, boys were more likely to report that they would do things differently online with 20% responding 'yes' vs. 12% of girls. See Table 15 below.

Would you do some things differently online if you knew your parent was watching? (by gender)



Gaming online

We know from our conversations with children in the classroom that **online gaming is very popular**, with about 70% of the children we surveyed stating that they played at least one online game. Minecraft (25% of children reported playing it), Roblox (19%) and Fortnite (17%) are all particularly popular with this age group. We also asked children whether or not they played games with an age-rating of over-18 in the last year. As we have noted in previous reports, the concern with children playing overage games is that they contain content that is not appropriate for a child. It may contain sexual, or particularly violent content or contain bad language or content of a discriminatory nature. As shown in Table 16 a notable proportion (26%) of children stated that they had played an over-18s game. Following a similar trend to last year, this was particularly prevalent amongst boys with 39% of boys reporting that they had versus 11% of girls (see Table 17). When we explored this further we found that those children who reported playing over-18s games were more likely than the average to say that they had 'never' spoken to a parent or carer about online safety (17% vs. 13%). It is essential that children who come across inappropriate content online have a trusted adult that they can talk to about any concerns.

Have you played a computer or video game that has an age rating of over 18s in the last year?

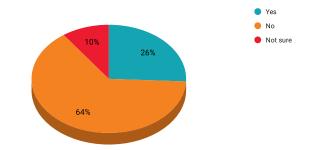


TABLE 16

Have you played a computer or video game that has an age rating of over 18s in the last year? (by gender)

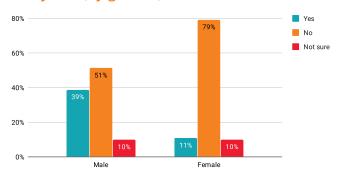


TABLE 17

Contact with strangers online

In previous years we have focused on asking children if they ever chat to strangers online. This year, we wanted to explore the context in which children engage with strangers online. Whilst many children will tell us in the classroom that they know they shouldn't be engaging with people online that they don't know in real life, they don't always apply this knowledge in practice and as we've noted in previous reports, many will value popularity over privacy. We know from chatting to children in the classroom that they will often be talking to strangers in an online game so we asked them in the survey if they ever game with people they have not met in real life. Table 18 below indicates that most children (60%) said they did not. Almost a third (31%) said 'yes' and 8% said they weren't sure. These numbers were fairly consistent across all ages with 30% of 8-year olds and 37% of 12-year olds reporting that they game with people they have not met in real life.

Do you ever game with people you have not met in real life?

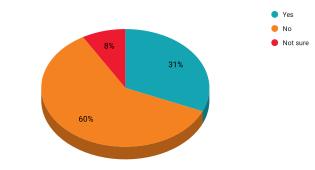


TABLE 18

There was a significant difference in how boys and girls reported on this (as shown in Table 19) with 40% of boys reporting that they game with people they don't know online as compared to 22% of girls.

Do you ever game with people you have not met in real life? (by gender)

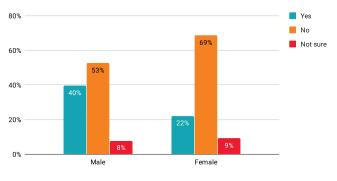


TABLE 19

We also asked children if a stranger (defined as someone they had not met in real life) had ever tried to chat to them or add them as a friend in a game. Table 20 below illustrates that 40% of children said 'never' whilst most children (61%) said that a stranger had tried to contact them in a game with 40% saying that this had happened 'a few times' and 21% saying it had happened 'lots of times'. Many games are designed to encourage online interactions with others, so asking children to never chat to people they don't know can be a challenging message to get across since many see it as part of the game and entirely normal. Whilst we would always encourage children to never engage online with people they don't know in real life, we say if they ever find themselves chatting to strangers in a game, they should never share personal information with someone they do not know, never add them as a friend or follower and never engage in private messaging with someone they don't know. We also urge them to to talk to a trusted adult if anything or anyone they encounter online makes them feel scared or uncomfortable.

Has anyone ever tried to chat with you or add you as a friend in a game that you have never met in real life?

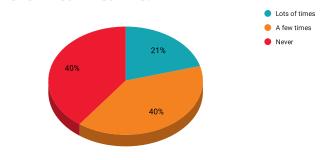


TABLE 20

Table 21 below illustrates that as with previous questions, there is a difference in how the genders report on this with regard to a stranger contacting them in a game with more boys saying that this had happened lots of time (25%) and 'a few times' (43%). This is likely explained by a higher proportion of boys gaming online.

Has anyone ever tried to chat with you or add you as a friend in a game that you have never met in real life? (by gender)

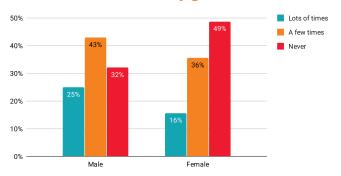


TABLE 21

Friends and followers on social media

We also wanted to explore if those children who reported being on social media were engaging with strangers online so we asked them if they have friends and followers on social media apps that they have not met in real life. As Table 22 shows below, most children (62%) responded 'no', which is really positive. Almost a third (30%) said that they did have friends and followers that they didn't know - 9% of children said 'lots' and 21% said 'some'. A small percentage (8%) weren't sure.

Do you have friends and followers on social media apps that you have not met in real life?

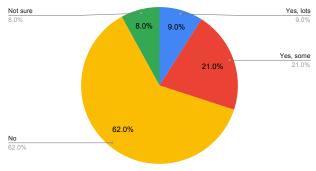


TABLE 22

In terms of the gender breakdown, boys were more likely to have friends or followers that they didn't know than girls (33% of boys vs. 27% of girls). In Table 23 we provide an age breakdown and from this we can see that about a quarter of 8-, 9- and 10-year olds who reported being on social media have friends or followers that they don't know offline. There is a sharp rise to 32% of 11-year olds and 40% of 12-year olds.

Children who have added strangers as followers on social media

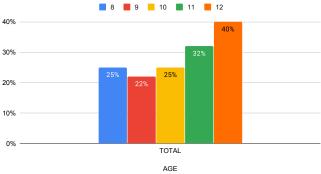
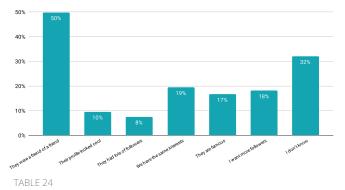


TABLE 23

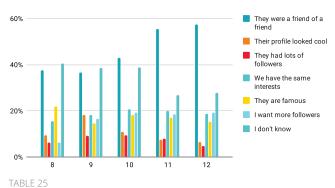
We wanted to explore this further so we asked those that had said 'yes' to this last question why they had decided to accept the friend request and we provided a number of options as can be seen in Table 24 below. The most common response was because 'They were a friend of a friend' (50%) and this reason significantly increased with age as can be seen in Table 25, with 38% of 8-year olds and 57% of 12-year olds providing this as their reason. We know from talking to children in the classroom that they think a 'friend of a friend' seems like a safer option than a total stranger, but (as we remind them) they could still be a total stranger! A significant number of respondents (32%) said 'I don't know' and girls were almost 50% more likely to provide this response. 19% said that they'd added them because they shared the same interests and 18% said that they just wanted more followers.

These numbers serve to illustrate that we need to find better strategies for educating children on the importance of keeping their friend and followers lists to just those people they know well in real life.

If you have friends and followers on social media that you have not met in real life, why did you decide to accept them?



If you have friends and followers on social media that you have not met in real life, why did you decide to accept them?



Who do you talk to about staying safe online?

We asked children, as we do each year, about how often they talk to their parents/carers about what they see, hear and do online and we provide examples such as videos, photos or posts that they might have seen online or games that they are playing. As can be seen from Table 26 below, most children are talking to their parents fairly regularly, which is really positive. The majority (61%) reported that they spoke to them 'most days' (36.7%) or 'about once a week' (24%)'. This is something that we encourage parents and children to do in all of our talks - regular conversations are an extremely important strategy in empowering and protecting children online and they also make it more likely that children will come to a parent if something has bothered them online. Girls were more likely to be talking to their parents regularly (daily or weekly) - 66% of girls vs. 56% of

How often do you talk to your parents about what you see, hear and do online?

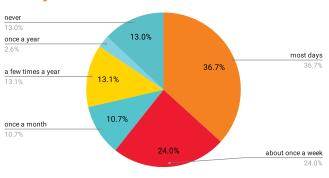


TABLE 26

A small cohort of children (13% - 489 children overall) say that they 'never' talk to their parents about what they see and do online (see Table 27 below) and this is of **real concern**, especially as children spend more of their time online. Boys were more likely to say 'never' than girls (15% of boys vs. 11% of girls). It would be easy to assume that perhaps these children are not active online yet, so we decided to take a deeper dive into their online activities. We found that a significant number of them are active online with 60% on social media, 40% gaming online with people they don't know in real life, 16% posting on YouTube and 33% saying that they had been bothered by something they had seen online. Many of these are higher percentages than the averages that we have reported on across this report. Children who are active online need to have a trusted adult who is guiding, supporting and monitoring what they are doing online. Without that essential oversight, children can be very vulnerable, especially in the age categories we are focused on in this report.

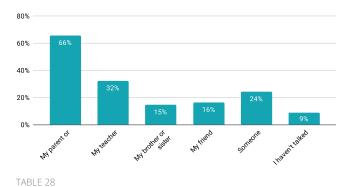
Percentage of children who never talk to their parents about what they see, hear and do online

25% 15% 10%

TABLE 27

Staying with the theme of to whom children are talking about staying safe online, we asked them who they'd talked to in the last year. Table 28 below outlines that most children (66%) say that they are talking to their parents. About a third (32%) are talking to their teacher, which is lower than we expected given the importance of addressing this topic in schools and about a quarter (24%) had had someone come into their school to deliver a talk. A small percentage (9%) said that they hadn't talked to anyone about how to stay safe online. There were no significant differences across the age groups although 11- and 12-year olds were more likely to have had someone come into their school to talk about online safety (33% and 32% respectively).

Who have you talked to in the last year about how to stay safe online?



Overall, girls were much more likely to be talking to a parent and slightly more likely to be talking to a teacher. See Table 29 below.

Who have you talked to in the last year about how to stay safe online? (by gender)

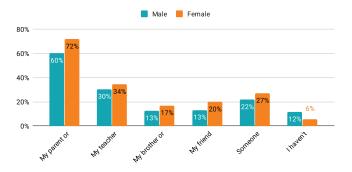


TABLE 29

Children encountering disturbing content online

We wanted to get a sense from children if they generally had positive experiences online or if they ever came across content that bothered them (and we defined this as something that made them upset, scared or something they wished they hadn't seen). As Table 30 outlines below, fortunately, most children (56%) said 'no' they hadn't but almost a third (32%, which equates to 1,198 children overall) said 'yes' they had seen something that had bothered them online and 12% weren't sure. There were no significant age or gender deviations although girls were more likely than boys (34% vs. 30%) to have been bothered by something online.

In the last year, have you seen or experienced something online that bothered you?

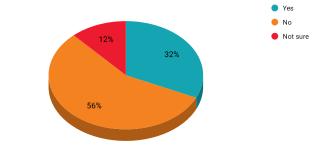


TABLE 30

We then asked those children who had reported 'yes', what they had done about it. Table 31 below outlines the various options that we provided (with more than one answer being acceptable) and it indicates that more than half of the children we surveyed (57%) told a parent or another trusted adult, which is a positive indication. Most other children told a friend or a sibling (42%). A fifth of the children (20%) who had seen something that had bothered them online kept it to themselves, which is a real concern. Boys were slightly less likely to tell a parent or trusted adult (54% of boys vs. 60% of girls) and slightly more likely to keep it to themselves (22% of boys vs. 18% of girls). It's vitally important that children talk to a trusted adult if they find themselves in this situation as it will hopefully alleviate their anxiety and/or help them to find a remedy if further action is required (i.e. to block or report someone).

If you saw something that bothered you online, what did you do?

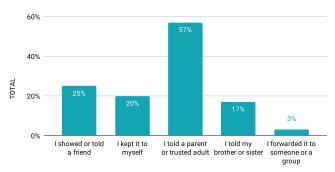


TABLE 31

Moving our **Education Programme Online**

As noted earlier in the report, COVID-19 impacted on our ability to deliver our services in person. After the closure of schools in March we quickly adapted our educational delivery model to webinars, via a secure online platform, and have delivered over 130 webinars to more than 400 children and 300 adults since then.

For children aged 8-13, we developed a new series of daily, interactive, child-centred sessions based around the fictional brother and sister team of 'Emma & Eoin'. Around half of these were funded by Permanent TSB. Across the 5 sessions from Monday-Friday children explored a range of topics key to online safety and digital literacy:

- privacy and settings
- social media & gaming
- harmful content and/or contact
- misinformation/disinformation and targeted advertising
- cyberbullying
- positive digital footprint

Each week finished on a Friday with an interactive review quiz of the week's key learning using the online Kahoot! platform. Metrics we took pre- and post-interventions suggest positive learning outcomes in all areas measured with, for example, a 50% increase in children reporting that they know how to fact check information from online sources post the sessions.

We also adapted existing parental content to address the new challenges around increased time online as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and lockdown. This content was also delivered via a secure online platform to different groups of staff and/or parents in a mixture of corporate and public settings, such as the South Dublin Libraries network. In partnership with the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI), over 5 weeks our education team delivered training sessions on the benefits and challenges of the online world for young people to over 100 of their youth workers across the country.

Feedback from Teachers and Parents

We gather feedback from parents following our parents' talks and also from teachers following the sessions with children. Feedback is voluntary and can be anonymous unless the respondent wishes to add their name to a testimonial.

Teachers

We collected a range of data from 147 teachers this year, some of which was qualitative, to give us a sense of how well they felt the session was presented to the children, whether the content was comprehensive or if anything was missing. Other questions were geared towards helping us to understand trends and further improve our offering. We have highlighted responses in some of the categories in the section below. Encouragingly, 99% said that they would recommend our sessions to other teachers.

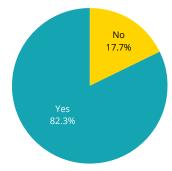
How significant is online safety as an issue in your school?

We asked teachers whether they considered online safety to be a significant issue in their school. Table 32 indicates that the vast majority of teachers (82%) felt that it is a significant issue in their school.

Would you consider online safety to be a significant issue in your school?



TABLE 32



Teach online safety in the classroom

We asked teachers how often they delivered online safety education in the classroom and Table 33 paints a positive picture with 58% covering the topic 2 - 4 times a year and 16% are covering it five times or more in a year. 24.5% are covering it just once a year and a minority of 3% said that they never cover it.

How often do you as a teacher deliver online safety education in the classroom?

147 responses

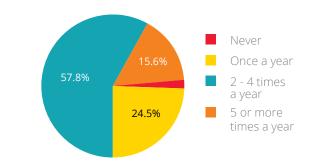


TABLE 33

Are teachers equipped with the skills and knowledge to teach online safety to children?

The good news is that most teachers (59% - see Table 34) said that they did feel that they were equipped with the skills and knowledge to teach the topic in the classroom as compared to 41% who did not. This is an improvement on all previous years where we have reported on this question, and indicates a positive trend.

Do you feel you have sufficient knowledge to effectively deliever educational messages relating to online safety?

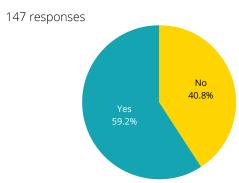


TABLE 34

Dealing with online safety issues over the past year

We asked teachers to outline how many online safety issues they have had to deal with over the past year. In our experience, most incidents relate to some form of cyberbullying. Table 35 below shows that 41% of teachers did not have to deal with any incidents, which is entirely consistent with last year's figures. The majority however, had dealt with at least one incident. 26.5% dealt with one incident and 30% dealt with 2 – 5 incidences. A minority of teachers (2.7%) dealt with more than 5 in the course of the school year.

How often have you had to deal with online safety incidents (cyberbullying etc) in your school over the past year?

147 responses

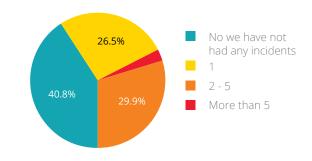


TABLE 35

How is cyberbullying dealt with in your school?

Table 36 provides an overview of the responses to a question on whether or not schools have a policy in place that covers cyberbullying. Two thirds of teachers stated that their school did have such a policy. A small minority (2%) responded 'no' and a third of respondents said they weren't sure if such a policy was in place.

Do you have a policy which covers cyberbullying in your school?

147 responses

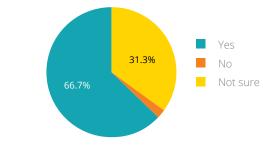


TABLE 36

In follow-up to the above question, we asked those teachers who had responded 'yes', if they felt confident of the steps they would take in response to an incident. Table 37 below indicates that the majority of teachers (59%) felt 'mostly' confident and 18.5% said they were 'very' confident that they would know the steps to take. It is notable however that 22% said either 'not really' or 'no' in response to this question, which suggests that more work needs to be done to familiarise the school community on how cyberbullying incidents are dealt with in their school.

If you answered 'yes' to the question above, are you confident of the requied steps to take if there has been an incident?

108 responses

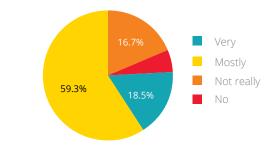


TABLE 37

Availability of resources on online safety

We asked teachers what resources were currently available to them to keep them informed on online safety. Most teachers (49%) were using materials from Webwise, the Irish Internet Safety Awareness Centre, which falls under aegis of the Department of Education. A further 42% were using CyberSafeIreland's resources and 5% were using Childnet's resources (part of the UK Safer Internet Centre). A small but significant number (22%) said 'none'. Whilst there are really good resources available to teachers, this figure suggests that awareness levels amongst teachers about what is available, could be improved.

Parents

We spoke to 1,159 parents over the course of the school year both in schools and in the workplace. Only 6% (68) completed the online survey following the sessions so feedback is based on those responses. Like the teacher feedback forms, many of the questions are focused on the quality of delivery but a key objective of our education programme is to reach parents and enhance their awareness of the risks, opportunities and safeguards relating to Internet use so we also gather data around what they've learnt. 100% of the parents surveyed said they would recommend our session to other parents.

We ask parents how much the session has enhanced their knowledge. As Table 38 below indicates, the vast majority of parents said 'hugely' (47%) or 'a lot' (38%) and 15% said 'a little'.

How much has the session enhanced your knowledge of Internet Safety?

68 responses

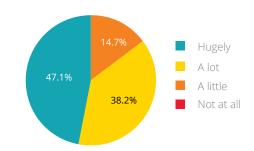


TABLE 38

We also ask parents how confident they feel that they can apply what they've learnt in the session at home. As Table 39 illustrates the vast majority (90%) felt 'very' or 'quite' confident that they could apply what they'd learnt at home, which is very important in terms of achieving the objective we have set around empowering parents to take simple steps towards online safety at home.

How confident are you that you can apply what you have learned at home?

68 responses

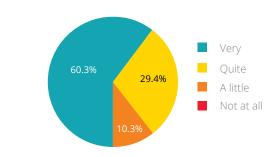


TABLE 39

CONCLUSION

The experience of COVID-19 has reminded us how much we rely on the Internet. Many of us became increasingly dependent on our devices and our access to the Internet in order to go about our daily lives and there is evidence to suggest that we were spending considerably more time online than normal. Children have been no different, especially with schools closed for the last 3 months of the academic year.

It would be entirely remiss not to acknowledge the enormous opportunity that the online world provides to us every day. Children, as we have outlined in this report with our data, are very active online. We know from our conversations in classrooms throughout the country that they are largely very enthusiastic about their digital lives and there is no question that they will require a good range of digital skills for future learning and employment opportunities.

The data we have highlighted in this report paints a varied picture. We can see many positives with most children talking to a parent or trusted adult on a regular basis and most children reporting that they would tell a parent or a trusted adult if something had bothered them online. These are really important strategies for keeping them safe online. We can also see that lots of children are also making good choices. The opportunity however, always has to be balanced against the risks that children face online. We have outlined in this report where there are vulnerabilities - for example, some children engaging with strangers online, some children not talking to parents or a trusted adult, some children reporting that there are 'no rules' about when, where and what they do online or that they can go online 'whenever they want'. Some children are coming across content that upsets them

and don't feel that they can tell a trusted adult about it. Some children and particularly boys, are playing over-18s games and being exposed to age-inappropriate content.

Risks that children face online can and must be minimised by equipping children with the skills and knowledge they need to safely and smartly navigate the online world both in school and crucially, at home with oversight and support from parents and carers. It is vital that we empower children to become critical thinkers online - questioning what they see, what they trust, and being aware that people are not always who they say they are. We must also educate them on communicating with kindness and with empathy, which can be more challenging without the benefit of eye contact, tone of voice, gestures and facial expressions.

We must put more onus on Online Service Providers to put proper safeguards in place to protect all users, but particularly the most vulnerable, which includes children. Privacy by design and by default should be the norm. There should be zero tolerance policies and practices in place for those who seek to exploit vulnerable online users for commercial or sexual purposes. There is huge inconsistency in this regard and that is simply not acceptable.

We welcome a greater focus in the new Programme for Government on measures that will support and protect children online. These measures are vital and must therefore be robust, comprehensive and properly resourced. The onus is on all of us to make sure children of this generation and all future ones benefit from the many opportunities that the online world presents to them, without putting themselves in harm's way.

PARENT TESTIMONIAL

"Very very good and extremely well presented."

RECOMMENDATIONS

We need a long-term (five-year) government strategy that outlines how we are going to address the issues that arise from children's use of smart devices and access to the online world. This strategy must set clear goals and measurable targets. Measures should include:

- **Industry Regulation & Accountability:**
 - We must ensure that there is robust monitoring and regulation of the online service providers to ensure the timely removal of harmful and illegal content, including an individual complaint mechanism available to the public
 - We need a clear focus on ensuring the safe and ethical design of apps and games so that all users, but particularly the most vulnerable, benefit from a safer user experience.
- Public awareness campaigns targeting parents and children: with the aim of creating social norms around online safety. We must get to a place where parents can make informed decisions about their children's online use and access.

- Education: There needs to be much greater focus given to the education of children and parents on online safety and digital well-being:
 - We believe that it is essential that all children benefit from a good Digital Literacy education at both primary and secondary level in schools. Digital literacy will need to become the fourth pillar of our education system, alongside reading, writing and arithmetic. This will require investment in curriculum development, teacher training and supplementary support materials resources.
 - Every school needs a digital champion (a teacher or principal) who can lead on policy development, support and delivery of digital literacy and digital wellbeing education to children, parents and teachers. This will involve training teachers, developing new resources and signposting to the many good resources that are available.

PARENT TESTIMONIAL

"Absolutely excellent! All parents, no matter how much they think they know, should attend a talk by CyberSafeIreland".

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