



Passwords

Passwords, passcodes and other types of authentication are the front line in defence of the valuable information on our accounts and devices. Some may also offer biometric security such as fingerprints or facial recognition as well as the option of two-factor authentication – where an additional code is sent to an email address or mobile phone in order to increase security.

Easy to remember but hard to guess:

Never use “password”, “123456” or other easy to guess passwords. Using a phrase or short sentence and substituting numbers or symbols for letters makes a memorable but hard to guess password.

What do I need to know?

Many children have access to smart phones at a young age. Whether it is their own or borrowed from a sibling or parent, it can contain a lot of valuable personal information. They may also access adult devices in order to play games or research homework. It is wise to always set a passcode on phones or other devices and to encourage children to keep these private and not to share, even with a good friend. Sometimes children can think it is funny to send a cheeky message on someone else’s device and this can cause distress to those involved.

What to talk about with your child:

- ★ **Talk** about the importance of keeping personal information private and using a strong password or passcode to do so.
- ★ **Help** them to set up a password/passcode on their devices and record it safely somewhere so that you can help if they forget.
- ★ **Show** them how to cover the screen when entering a passcode on a phone so that it is not visible to others nearby.
- ★ **Discuss** what could happen if someone discovered their password/passcode and misused it.
- ★ **Encourage** your child to ask your permission before they create any online accounts that require a password or personal information
- ★ **Explore** together ways of responding safely but nicely to a friend who asks for their password.
- ★ **Reassure** them you will always be there to help, even if they have made a mistake.