As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes a part of daily life, we must play a proactive role in ensuring our children's safety when using AI technologies. Throughout the year, we will look at different areas of AI and what advice is out there for parents and carers.

AI SOLUTIONS

Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions are digital tools or computer programs that can learn from information and make smart suggestions, answer questions, or help with tasks. They don't "think" like humans, but they spot patterns and use these to give useful responses. Children may already be using AI without realising it—such as voice assistants, spelling suggestions, maths help apps, or creative tools that generate pictures and stories.

Although there are benefits to using AI, AI tools may:

- Give incorrect or biased information
- Generate content not suitable for children
- Collect or store personal data
- Encourage over-reliance instead of independent thinking

Try asking your child:

- "How do you think the computer came up with that answer?"
- "Do you think a real person wrote that?"
- "What could you change to make the idea your own?"
- "How can AI help with your learning today?"

These questions help build digital literacy and critical thinking.

Advice for Parents & Carers

CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If possible, try to be around when your child uses any type of AI solution and employ content filters to try and reduce the chance of profanity or age-inappropriate subjects appearing in responses. As with any kind of technology, it's important to ensure that children are using AI solutions responsibly and to be there to enable opportunities to discuss their use as part of a safe environment.

DISCUSS BIAS

Talk to your child about the potential biases that may be present in the data that AI solutions are trained on, and how these viewpoints might find their way into the responses that AI generates. Again, with many things children might read online, it's healthy for them to consider whether the information is factual and presented fairly.

PROMOTE CRITICAL THINKING

Explain to your child that AI solutions can be used as one of many tools to help them research and learn, but that they shouldn't simply accept the responses they receive as the truth. Encourage them to question, verify and think critically about the information they get back – all of which apply equally to any website or platform they use.

ENCOURAGE HUMAN INTERACTION

Not only should children supplement any use of software like AI with additional resources such as books and reputable internet sites, but they also should remember what they can learn from interaction with other people. Discussing things with teachers, relatives and friends isn't just an important and often invaluable aspect of learning – it's an essential part of life, too.