

HOLY CROSS SAFEGUARDING BULLETIN



November 2025 | Holy Cross Primary

Emojis

Children are beginning to explore the digital world at a younger age, whether through games, messaging apps or learning platforms. Alongside this, they're also discovering emojis: colourful little symbols that help them express feelings, reactions and sometimes much more. With the release of Netflix's *Adolescence*, attention has been drawn to how emojis can carry hidden or inappropriate meanings, even among younger users. While this series focuses on teenagers, it's a reminder that even younger children are seeing and copying what they encounter online. While most emojis are harmless and fun, a growing number of them are being used to communicate hidden messages.

How you can support your child:

Talk early and often: ask your child what emojis they like and what they mean to them.

Set age-appropriate boundaries: keep communication apps limited to age-safe platforms. Model good digital habits: let them see you using emojis kindly and appropriately.

Stay curious, not critical: if you spot something that concerns you, ask questions gently before jumping to conclusions.

UNDERSTANDING EMOJIS

What do these emojis really mean?

Emoji	Meaning
	Body parts, often sexual innuendo
	Sexual references
	'Plug' or drug dealer
	Reference to being on drugs or emotionally numb
	Delivery, sometimes drugs
	Mischief or risky behaviour
	'Lean' or drug-laced drinks
	"Red Pill" ideology-part of online misogynistic group
	Drop the truth-sometimes linked to extremist or aggressive views
	Used to mock people who haven't woken up to Red Pill views
	Refers to the belief that 80% of women are only attracted to 20% of men - used to justify misogynistic beliefs

⚠ NOTE: THESE SYMBOLS ARE NOT INHERENTLY HARMFUL, BUT CONTEXT IS KEY. WHEN USED TOGETHER OR IN SPECIFIC COMMUNITIES, THEY CAN REFLECT EXPOSURE TO TOXIC OR EXTREMIST ONLINE CONTENT. THE SYMBOLS MAY ALSO HAVE DIFFERENT MEANINGS DEPENDING ON AREA AND AGE OF CHILDREN.

Additional support for parents on keeping your children safe online:

<https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/>

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Incel Culture

As our children grow up in a digital world, they are exploring the internet earlier and more independently than ever before. While the internet can be a great place to learn, play and connect, it also has some corners that are not safe or suitable for children.

What is 'incel culture'?

The word 'incel' stands for 'involuntary celibate.' It refers to a group of mostly men and boys who gather online to express anger and frustration, often blaming women or other people for their problems. Some of this content is deeply negative, promotes hate or violence and spreads unhealthy ideas about relationships, gender and self-worth. While this may sound extreme, the early signs often show up in more subtle ways, such as: Videos or memes that make fun of girls or women. Jokes about "nice guys never winning" or "girls only like certain types of boys". Online personalities who talk about 'alpha males', 'dominance', or 'how to be a real man' in aggressive or exaggerated ways.

Here are practical ways to help protect your child and build healthy online habits early on:

01

BE CURIOUS ABOUT THEIR DIGITAL WORLD

Ask open, non-judgmental questions:

- "What do you like watching online?"
- "Who are your favourite YouTubers or characters and what do you like about them?"

- Use YouTube Kids, BBC iPlayer Kids, or Netflix Kids with parental controls.
- Watch with your child to monitor age-appropriate content, even on kids' platforms.

02

USE CHILD-FRIENDLY PLATFORMS – AND MONITOR THEM

In simple terms:

- "Platforms show us things they think we'll like, even if it's not always good for us. So it's okay to skip things or ask for help if something doesn't feel right."

03

EXPLAIN THE BASICS OF ALGORITHMS

Children can understand important online concepts, such as:

- Not everything on the internet is true.
- People may say unkind things online for attention.

04

TEACH EARLY CRITICAL THINKING

