Introduction

Tailored lesson plans for children and young people

Updated for the revised curriculum from September 2014, our lesson plans have been developed by teachers and tailored to specific areas of the curriculum. The focus is to help children and young people:

- Better understand the value and importance of their personal information.
- Know how to look after it.
- Understand the obligations that organisations have.

Children start using the internet from a very young age, but most aren't aware of how the personal information they upload gets used, or how to make informed decisions about what they share online. Protecting personal information is an essential part of adult life, and teaching young people about internet safety from an early age will help give them the knowledge and tools to take responsibility for protecting their own information.

The ICO's primary and secondary level lesson plans include practice guidance and topics of discussion to encourage children to think about what is meant by 'personal information', and what it is appropriate to give out such information, and to whom.

The plans also provide information and activities about the rights of individuals, and the obligations of companies to disclose and make clear how they use the information we provide and share.

Further Reading

[Teacher introduction ↗](#)
For organisations
PDF (309.68K)

Primary school lesson plans

The materials have been developed to give teachers a creative and engaging set of resources for use in the classroom, supplying the tools needed to raise awareness of key issues around personal information.

The primary school lesson plans explore what we mean by personal information, and give children the opportunity to discuss and share their own understandings of the subject, and encourages them to think about what information should be shared and what should be kept private.

The activities help teachers introduce children to their rights and responsibilities relating to data protection and freedom of information, giving them the knowledge and tools to make informed decisions when interacting with companies and organisations. They also provide guidance to teach children about their right to access appropriate information, and where to go for help if they have a concerns or questions.

Lesson plans and resources in more detail

The materials allow teachers flexibility in their approach and encourage active learning, with many opportunities for student talk, discussion and questioning.

Lesson plan 1

What is personal information? ↗
For organisations
PDF (104.6K)

Accompanying PowerPoint slides ↗
For organisations
File (300.08K)

Lesson plan 2

Who needs to know? Why? ↗
For organisations
PDF (81.23K)

Accompanying PowerPoint slides ↗
For organisations
File (260.89K)

Lesson plan 3

Opting out ↗
For organisations
PDF (95.47K)

[] [Accompanying PowerPoint slides](#) ↗
For organisations
File (198.51K)

Secondary school lesson plans

The materials have been developed to give teachers a creative and engaging set of resources for use in the classroom, supplying the tools needed to raise awareness of key issues around personal information.

These secondary school lesson plans explore what we mean by personal information, and give young people the opportunity to discuss and share their own understandings of the subject, and encourages them to think about what information should be shared and what should be kept private.

The activities help teachers to familiarise students with their rights and responsibilities relating to data protection and freedom of information, giving them the knowledge and tools to make informed decisions when interacting with companies and organisations on a day to day basis. They also provide guidance to young people about their right to access personal information from the organisations that hold their details, and the right, as citizens, to request information from public authorities.

Lesson plans and resources in more detail

The materials allow teachers flexibility in their approach and encourage active learning, with many opportunities for student talk, discussion and questioning.

Teaching personal information safety as part of PSHE

Introduction to protecting children's personal information online: infographic

Lesson plan 1

Strictly private? What is personal data? ⤢
For organisations
PDF (308.93K)

Accompanying PowerPoint slides ⤢
For organisations
File (2.79MB)

Lesson plan 2

Private versus public ⤢
For organisations
PDF (142.87K)

Accompanying PowerPoint slides ⤢
For organisations
File (466.52K)

Lesson plan 3

> 📄 **Is there something I should know? Exercising our rights** ⤤
>
> For organisations
> PDF (507.32K)

> 📄 **Accompanying PowerPoint slides** ⤤
>
> For organisations
> File (231.94K)

Lesson plan 4

> 📄 **No secrets? Freedom of information** ⤤
>
> For organisations
> PDF (281.57K)

> 📄 **Accompanying PowerPoint slides** ⤤
>
> For organisations
> File (540.43K)

Each lesson is set out with aims and learning objectives supported by detailed teaching notes and resources. We hope teachers will feel free to customise the materials to suit their own context, perhaps by adapting the learning objectives, or by adding literacy targets for the lessons, highlighting new vocabulary or focusing on key questions. Teachers may also want to take a 'mix and match' approach to the lesson topics, splitting and repackaging the five lessons presented in this pack into shorter sessions.

[Download the full secondary schools lesson pack - lesson plans 1-4](#) ⤤

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> "The students were requested to 'think outside the box' in terms of what they deemed to be personal and private data and who had the right to view this, and who was accountable for the security of this information. There is a great need to impress upon young people that sharing information on social media is not the only matter we should be making them aware of, it is data in the wider context. I would definitely use the resources in the future with both Key Stage 3 and 4 alongside the existing messages"
>
> **Carole Phillips**
> **Student Support Officer**
> **Crickhowell High School**

Find out what other teachers think of our resources, [read these testimonials](#).

Watch [The High Storrs School testimonial on Vimeo](#).

Also take a look at our [primary school lesson plans](#).

Looking for our [lesson plans in Welsh](#)?

Curriculum information

Download the curriculum references for your region.

Further Reading

📄 **England** ↗

For organisations
PDF (164.9K)

📄 **Northern Ireland** ↗

For organisations
PDF (140.75K)

📄 **Scotland** ↗

For organisations
PDF (140.07K)

📄 **Wales** ↗

For organisations
PDF (140.79K)

Protecting personal information online - PSHE

The Information Commissioner's Office is the UK's independent authority based around upholding personal information rights. The internet is a great resource for children in both learning and social interaction, and as more young people start using it at an earlier age, it becomes vital to teach them about protecting their information online.

Teaching internet safety as part of PSHE lessons is a great opportunity to give children the tools and knowledge to take control of their online presence, and understand the value of their personal information and how to protect it.

The ICO has provided PSHE lesson plans for primary and secondary levels to cover all the key areas of personal information and internet safety:

- What personal data is and why it's important.
- How personal information is used.
- How to keep personal and private information safe.
- What our rights are.

You can also view our infographic on protecting children's personal information online.

Protecting personal information is an essential part of adult life, and understanding how it is used by different organisations is key to making informed decisions about what to share online. Around 88% of secondary school children have social networking profiles where they broadcast information about themselves, and publicly communicate with friends and commercial entities.

However, most school children have little idea how their information might be used by social networking sites and commercial organisations, and are not aware of their rights regarding its use. They often also aren't aware of best practices when it comes to personal security, passwords, and private information.

Our PSHE resources provide guidance for enjoyable and interactive plans to get pupils engaged with the subject of internet safety, and give teachers a flexible plan for active learning and encouraging student discussion. Each lesson is set out with detailed aims and objectives, and includes accompanying PowerPoint slides to provide visual teaching aids. They're also designed to be flexible and adaptable so teachers can customise the materials to suit their own requirements.

Further Reading

PSHE lesson plans for primary schools
For organisations

PSHE lesson plans for secondary schools
For organisations

Infographic

Most children have an online presence from the moment they're born, if not before, and grow up sharing and viewing information over the internet. Their early lives are charted on social networking sites with pictures and status updates, until they're old enough to start exploring the internet on their own. This may be as early as 5 or 6 years old, and at that age most parents aren't worried about supervising their children's activities on the internet too much. Even up to the age of 11, children are largely left to their own devices online, maintaining a collection of social media profiles and playing online games.

The ICO has created an infographic which highlights different aspects of children's online activities, showing information from the amount of time spent at the computer, to the level of online social presence for each age group.

The information within the infographic shows how important it is to teach young people about safety online and protecting personal information, and can be used as a springboard for discussion in the classroom. The ICO also provides a series of lesson plans for both primary and secondary schools to teach children about internet safety and encourage them to think about their activities online.

PROTECTING CHILDREN'S PERSONAL INFORMATION ONLINE

The internet offers a world of fun and learning for children, but it can also be a dangerous place. Young people these days grow up using computers from a very early age, and spend a sizable portion of their time using social networks, online games, and doing research for school work. However, they often aren't aware of the risks involved with using the internet, and don't know how to keep themselves, and their personal information, safe online.

Many children are exposed to the internet before they're even born, having been introduced to the world as an ultrasound image on social networks, and having their early lives charted through status updates and photographs, until the day comes when they take control of their own online presence.

ico.
Information Commissioner's Office

82% 5-7 yrs

96% 8-11 yrs

99% 12-15 yrs

Percentage of children using the internet

HARRY

This is Harry. He is 6 years old, and he nearly always uses the internet with one of his parents. He usually spends about a 6 or 7 hours a week online, mostly playing educational children's games, or watching interesting or funny videos with his dad. Most of Harry's friends use the internet too, usually with a supervising adult. One of his friends even has his own social media profile, but his parents, like most of Harry's friends', don't really worry about what he gets up to online.

5-7

82% use the internet

6.7 Hrs a week online

1% active social media presence

72% of parents trust that their children use the internet safely

Embed:

<div style="text-align:center;"><div style="width:100%; margin-left:auto; margin-right:auto;"><img src="https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/training/1043033/ico-schools-infographic.jpg" alt="Protecting Childrens Personal Information Online"><p style="text-align:center; font-size:10px">Protecting Childrens Personal Information Online by ICO Schools

Testimonials

The lesson plans have been tested in a number of schools.

Please let us know whether these lesson plans have met your needs and, if they have, whether you would be interested in working with us to develop or pilot new ones. Email Robert.parker@ico.org.uk or call 01625 545847.

High Storrs School

"We would highly recommend that schools integrate this SOW into their curriculum with consideration about how it can be used to enhance and strengthen the current PSHCE schemes of work where the topics naturally arise e.g. E-safety, rights and responsibilities, Identity, local government and politics."

The High Storrs School testimonial in full ⧉
View a video of the High Storrs School testimonial on Vimeo ⧉

Ian Gage, Headteacher

Crickhowell High School

"The students were requested to 'think outside the box' in terms of what they deemed to be personal and private data and who had the right to view this and who was accountable for the security of this information. There is a great need to impress upon young people that sharing information on social media is not the only matter we should be making them aware of, it is data in the wider context. I would definitely use the resources in the future with both Key Stage 3 & 4 alongside the existing messages we at Crickhowell High School deliver in safeguarding their data online and the consequences of being careless sharing information which potentially could be shared without their knowledge or consent."

Carole Phillips, Student Support Officer

Prees CE Primary School

"In a world where personal information has become more frequently available in the public domain, these materials and lessons are essential in educating young children on how their personal information can, should and may be used. The resources are easily accessed by the pupils, who looked forward to discussing and analysing the stimuli and completing the activities."

Michael Parry

Welsh / Cymraeg

Our lesson plans are also available in Welsh.

- [Adnoddau Cynradd Cyfnod Allweddol 2](#) ⬀
  - Cefnogi sleidiau PowerPoint
    - [Beth yw gwybodaeth bersonol?](#) ⬀
    - [Pwy sydd angen gwybod? Pam?](#) ⬀
    - [Eithrio](#) ⬀
    - [Beth ddylwn i ei wneud?](#) ⬀
    - [Hawliau a rheoliadau](#) ⬀

- [Adnoddau Uwchradd](#) ⬀
  - Cefnogi sleidiau PowerPoint
    - [Cwbl Breifat? Beth yw Data Personol?](#) ⬀
    - [Preifat yn erbyn cyhoeddus](#) ⬀
    - [Oes yna rywbeth ddylwn i wybod?](#) ⬀
    - [Dim cyfrinachau? Rhyddid gwybodaeth](#) ⬀

- [Cyflwyniad](#) ⬀