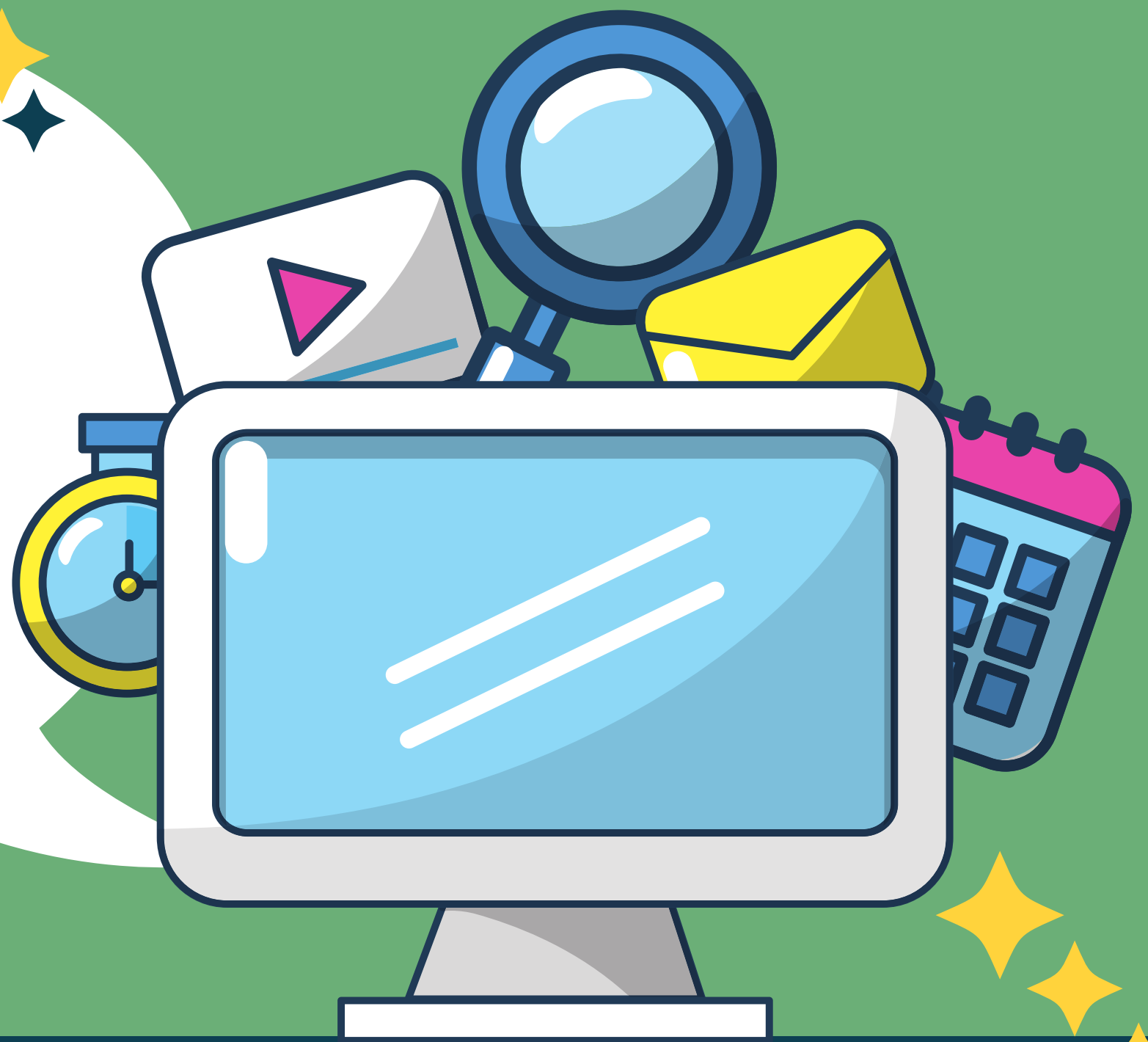




Leigh Academy  
Ebbsfleet

# ONLINE SAFETY



## GUIDE TO MANAGING CHILDREN'S SCREEN TIME

### Effect on behaviour, brain, sleep

- Constant use of a device and features like auto-play on platforms can be habit forming and encourage children to spend longer on screen.
- Screens can have a drug-like effect on the children's brains which can make them more anxious.
- It can make children more forgetful as they rely on things like Google, GPS and calendar alerts to look up information.
- Blue light from phones can trick the brain into thinking it's still daylight making it difficult to sleep.

### What are the benefits

- Gives children access to a wealth of information to build their knowledge
- Technology takes away physical barriers to social connections to make children less isolated
- Exposure to tech has proven to improve children's learning and development
- Online games and activities enhance teamwork and creativity

### TOP TIPS

1. Set a good example with your own device use
2. Have discussions about the risks that they may face based on their online activities
3. Put in place a family agreement and agree an appropriate length of time they can use their device
4. Help them build critical thinking to understand that some features on platforms are designed to keep you watching or playing
5. Encourage them to switch off auto-play on platform to remove the temptation to binge on programmes
6. Use tech tools and parental control to manage the time they spend online and the apps they use
7. Get the whole family to unplug and create 'screen free' zones at home
8. Together find apps, sites and games that will help children explore their passions and make screen time active
9. For younger children find ways to combine touch screen use with creative and active play
10. Encourage children to self-regulate the time they spend online and the activity they do to ensure they are having a positive impact on their wellbeing

### How to start your parental controls activation

1. Start with broadband controls – your home's first line of defence. Set up controls on your broadband to filter inappropriate content across all devices connected to your Wi-Fi.
2. Protect the devices they use – including tablets, smartphones, and gaming consoles. Activate device-level controls to manage screen time and app access.
3. Add extra protection on the apps they love – many apps, games, and streaming services have built-in parental controls. Turn these on to manage what they can see and do.

