



A GUIDE TO SAFER LIVE LESSONS



An online lesson occurs when teachers use video conferencing software to 'live stream' lessons to their pupils. Some of the most popular apps and websites that support this include Zoom, Google Hangouts, Skype and Microsoft Teams. Online lessons can be a great way to replicate classroom interaction, ask immediate questions and gather instant feedback. It's also convenient and allows learning to take place anywhere with an internet connection. However, live lessons aren't always accessible to everyone and younger children will need a lot of parental supervision, which isn't always practical.

What teachers need to consider

CONDUCT

If you decide to host an online lesson, it's important that you maintain a level of professionalism and treat any online lesson in the same way you would treat a classroom lesson. Dress appropriately and find a setting which has a plain background and has no personal information on display. Remind pupils of acceptable behaviour and their conduct during class. It's worth remembering that live streaming means screenshots and video recordings of your lesson could occur so you should always observe professional conduct at all times.



COMMUNICATION

Hosting a live lesson means that you will have to think about how you communicate and through what channels. Children will need access to the internet, have the appropriate technology and will need to download the relevant software or application. Some, or all, of these may not be widely available to everyone. It's also important to consider that the software that you choose to use is secure and has the relevant privacy and security settings in place. Any contact should only be through a platform provided by the school and not through personalised accounts open to public viewing, comments or sharing.

CONTENT

Planning your content will be a key factor to consider prior to hosting an online lesson. It's important to ensure that all content is age-appropriate and that any tasks that you set which require use of the internet won't lead children towards anything offensive or inappropriate. Always try to ensure that live lessons take place with the whole class but bear in mind that some pupils may work slower than others depending on the type of tasks you set.



What parents need to consider

CONDUCT

It's important to remind your child that despite being at home, the same level of behaviour and conduct exists as if they were at school. Encourage them to remain polite and remember their manners. Position your computer or webcam in an open environment where you can monitor their activity, preferably not in a bedroom. Try to keep the background neutral with good quality lighting and sound.



COMMUNICATION

If your child is part of an online lesson, they may need support in setting up the relevant software and communication platforms in order to take part. Your school will usually provide the relevant details on how to do this however it's worth ensuring that you have some awareness of the privacy and security settings so that you know that all communication is secure. It's important to raise any concerns that you have with the school if you are unable to accommodate an online lesson for any reason.

CONTENT

Try to take an interest in your child's live lesson if you can and stay close so that you can aid them if necessary. Try to find out who is hosting the lesson, what the lesson is about and what tasks they will be set. If they are required to conduct internet searches, ensure parental controls are in place. If you're using Zoom, make sure that screen sharing is only shared with the host. This will avoid 'Zoombombing' whereby uninvited guests use the screen-sharing feature to broadcast porn or other inappropriate content.



Some commonly used platforms

SOURCES:
<https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2020/03/what-you-should-know-about-online-tools-during-covid-19-crisis>
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115000538083-Attendee-attention-tracking>
<https://hangouts.google.com/>
<https://support.skype.com/en/faq/fa34649/protecting-your-online-safety-security-and-privacy>
<https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoftteams/security-compliance-overview>

zoom

Zoom is one of the most popular video conferencing apps at the moment. Schools using Zoom can monitor attendee's activity while screen-sharing, track real-time activity, record live lessons and recall video, audio, transcript and chat files. Admins can also see the IP address and admin information of all attendees.

Safety Tips

- Change privacy controls so that screen sharing is limited to the host only.
- Turn file transfers off to reduce any risk of hacking or installing a virus/malware.
- Create a strong password for your account incorporating letters, numbers and symbols.
- Keep the software as up to date as possible with the latest security patches.

Google Hangouts

Google Hangouts allows communication through video, audio or messaging, although isn't end-to-end encrypted. During the COVID-19 outbreak, Google has been making the advanced features in Hangouts Meet available to all schools around the globe using G Suite for Education.

Safety Tips

- Ensure that any call made via the app is private or by invite only.
- Customise who you can receive invites from through the privacy settings to block unwanted contact.
- Keep all anti-virus software up-to-date and instate a firewall.
- Always sign out after use to prevent anyone else from accessing your account.

skype

Microsoft owned Skype is a well-known communication tool that specialises in providing video chat and voice calls. It is one of the biggest apps in the world, providing end-to-end encryption between Skype users, as well as facilitating screen sharing and the ability to record calls.

Safety Tips

- Ensure you have the latest anti-virus software installed on your computer and set up a personal firewall.
- Keep profiles hidden and don't share any unnecessary personal information on your profile.
- Don't download anything from profiles you don't know and block any suspicious contacts.
- Always adjust privacy settings, including only allowing children to communicate with approved contacts.

Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams describes itself as a 'group chat software and collaboration tool'. It provides the ability to chat, meet, call and collaborate from anywhere and is popular given it's ability to seamlessly integrate with other Microsoft applications like Word and Excel.

Safety Tips

- Turn off guest access so only school issued email addresses communicate.
- If linked to an Office 365, enable Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) to help prevent against threats via emails, links, and attachments.
- Make sure your operating system has the latest updates and security patches.
- Beware of phishing emails asking for your password - Microsoft will never ask you it.