The Digital Backpack

A Parent's Field Guide to the Modern Tech-Enabled Classroom



NotebookLM

The Parent's Modern Toolkit

The **modern classroom** blends traditional pedagogy with powerful digital environments. To support your child, you need the right tools.



Digital tools in school and at home

Understanding how we use IT in school



The vocabulary

A jargon-buster guide for parents



The HWB platform

Navigating HWB, Microsoft, Google and digital home learning



The Shield

Cyber security, strong passwords and keeping pupils safe online

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Digital tools in school and at home

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Digital tools in school and at home: Digital skills we strive for

Age 3-5 (PS1) Exploration, curiosity and cause-and-effect	Age 5-8 (PS2) Purposeful use, basic creation and safe behaviour	Age 8-11 (PS3) Independence, creativity, adaptability and critical thinking
Inputs (how learners interact with devices) • Use touchscreens to tap, swipe and drag • Use basic buttons (on/off, home, volume) with support • Use simple input devices (mouse, large-key keyboards, pressure-sensitive toys) • Control devices using single actions (tap to select, press to start) **Outputs (what learners create or see)** • Create simple digital marks, drawings or patterns • Record short sounds or voices • Watch content respond to actions (e.g. objects move when touched) • Take photos with adult support **Accessibility & Adaptability** • Use devices with visual cues (icons, pictures, colour) • Begin to choose preferred tools or apps • Experience shared technology use (turn-taking) • Use technology adjusted by an adult (volume, brightness, font size) **Problem Solving & Troubleshooting** • Recognise when something is not working • Ask an adult for help • Repeat an action to see what happens • Begin to explore "What happens if I try this?"	**Inputs** • Use a mouse and keyboard with accuracy • Type simple words and sentences • Use menus and on-screen icons to navigate apps • Use cameras, microphones and basic sensors purposefully **Outputs** • Create digital drawings, posters or simple animations • Record audio and take photos for a purpose • Save and retrieve work with support • Present ideas using images and simple text **Accessibility & Adaptability** • Adjust basic settings (volume, text size, brightness) • Use spell check or text-to-speech when prompted • Choose tools that help them complete a task • Begin to understand that technology can help different learners in different ways **Problem Solving & Troubleshooting** • Identify simple errors (e.g. wrong tool selected) • Try alternate tools or commands • Follow simple instructions to fix problems • Begin to predict outcomes before trying actions	**Inputs** • Type efficiently and accurately • Use multiple input methods (keyboard, mouse, touch, microphone) • Import media (images, sound, video) • Use basic coding inputs (blocks, sequences, conditions) **Outputs** • Create multimodal content (text, images, audio, video) • Structure documents and presentations effectively • Edit and refine digital work • Use digital tools to support persuasive, informative or creative outcomes **Accessibility & Adaptability** • Independently customise settings (contrast, text size, audio support) • Use accessibility tools to support learning (speech-to-text, dictionaries) • Consider audience needs when creating digital content • Make design choices to improve clarity and usability **Problem Solving & Troubleshooting** • Diagnose causes of digital problems • Break problems into smaller steps • Debug simple programs or sequences • Evaluate whether a digital tool is effective and choose alternatives if needed

Digital tools in school and at home: Understanding how we use IT in school

Google for Education

Tools	Description	How we use it
Google Classroom	A digital learning platform.	Assign tasks, share resources, give feedback.
Google Docs	A digital word processor for making things and collaborating with others.	Writing paragraphs of a certain topic or collaborating on projects.
Google Slides	A platform where you can create slides to present to the class.	Making digital slides for class projects.
Google Drive	A digital platform where you can store and save your work on Hwb.	Used to put work into separate files or folders to keep your work tidy and neat.
Google Chrome Music Lab	A digital music platform.	Used to create music for class projects.
Google Forms	A digital voting platform.	Used by teachers to make a poll and used by students to vote for it.

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Just 2 Easy (J2e)

Tools	Description	How we use it
J2Launch	A page to access all J2e tools and resources.	A page to create presentations, databases and etc.
JIT 5	An online creative tool for writing, drawing and presentations.	A younger children version of Word.
J2Code	A coding platform that teaches coding to children.	A way to teach children to code with different options to learn to code.
J2Data	A collection of data tools that allow children to collect and save data.	To create databases to save data.
J2Office	An online office collections that include typing and presentation tools.	To create stories, pesentations online.
J2Stars	A reward that teachers award stars to children for triumph effort or good behaviour.	To give rewards to children with good behaviour or good effort.
J2Blast	Helps upgrade their maths and spelling skills through games and challenges.	To help children with their math and spelling.

Digital tools in school and at home: Understanding how we use IT in school

Microsoft 365

Tools	Description	How we use it
Word	A search engine for scholarly articles and a word processing application for creating and editing documents	Creating reports, drafting letters, making presentation, creating, editing, formatting
Excel	A spreadsheet program for tables	Working out money, scientific stuff, creating charts, organising stuff
Powerpoint	A program for creating slide shows	Making slide shows, student projects
Outlook	An email and calendar application for communication and scheduling	Managing school emails, organising tasks

Other online tools

Tools	Description	How we use it
Adobe Express	A selection of AI supported creative tools	Create images from text, create animations from audio, create posters, videos, infographics, podcasts and webpages
Encyclopaedia Brittanica	Online safe encyclopaedia	Research at pupil level and able to change reading levels
Seesaw	A 'diary' tool for recording group and practical activities	Taking photos and videos of group and practical work, recording oracy work
Scratch	Coding program	Introducing simple coding and de-bugging from Y2-Y6
Micro:bit	Coding program for coding physical devices	Introducing algorithms and coding to Y5 and Y6

Digital tools at home: How to stay safe and have healthy digital habits

Accessing School Apps from home

- **Log in easily – use your child's HWB username and password. If you are stuck, check with their teacher or school for help.**
- **HWB works on phones, tablets, laptops and chromebooks – up to 15 devices per pupil.**

Healthy Digital habits at home

- **Set screen-free times – No screens before bed. No devices during family meals or family time.**
- **Create tech-free zones – Keep bedrooms screen-free to help with sleep and focus**
- **Talk about their tech use – Ask what they've watched, played or created. Show interest and let them teach you something new!**
- **Use technology together –Sit with your child when you can. Explore educational apps, games or videos together as a team.**
- **Use timers or alarms – Help keep track of screen time or breaks during study sessions.**
- **Download apps for offline use – Some HWB tools and educational apps ca be used without internet – great for travel or low-connectivity areas.**

Using Technology with a goal

- **Help your child use tech to do, create or learn something specific – not just scroll or watch. This gives screen time more meaning and focus.**
- **Try setting simple goals - "I'm going to finish my reading task on HWB" "I want to learn three new Welsh words using an app" "I'll create a presentation or drawing on the laptop"**

Encourage

- **Active use (making, writing, building, solving) instead of just watching or swiping**

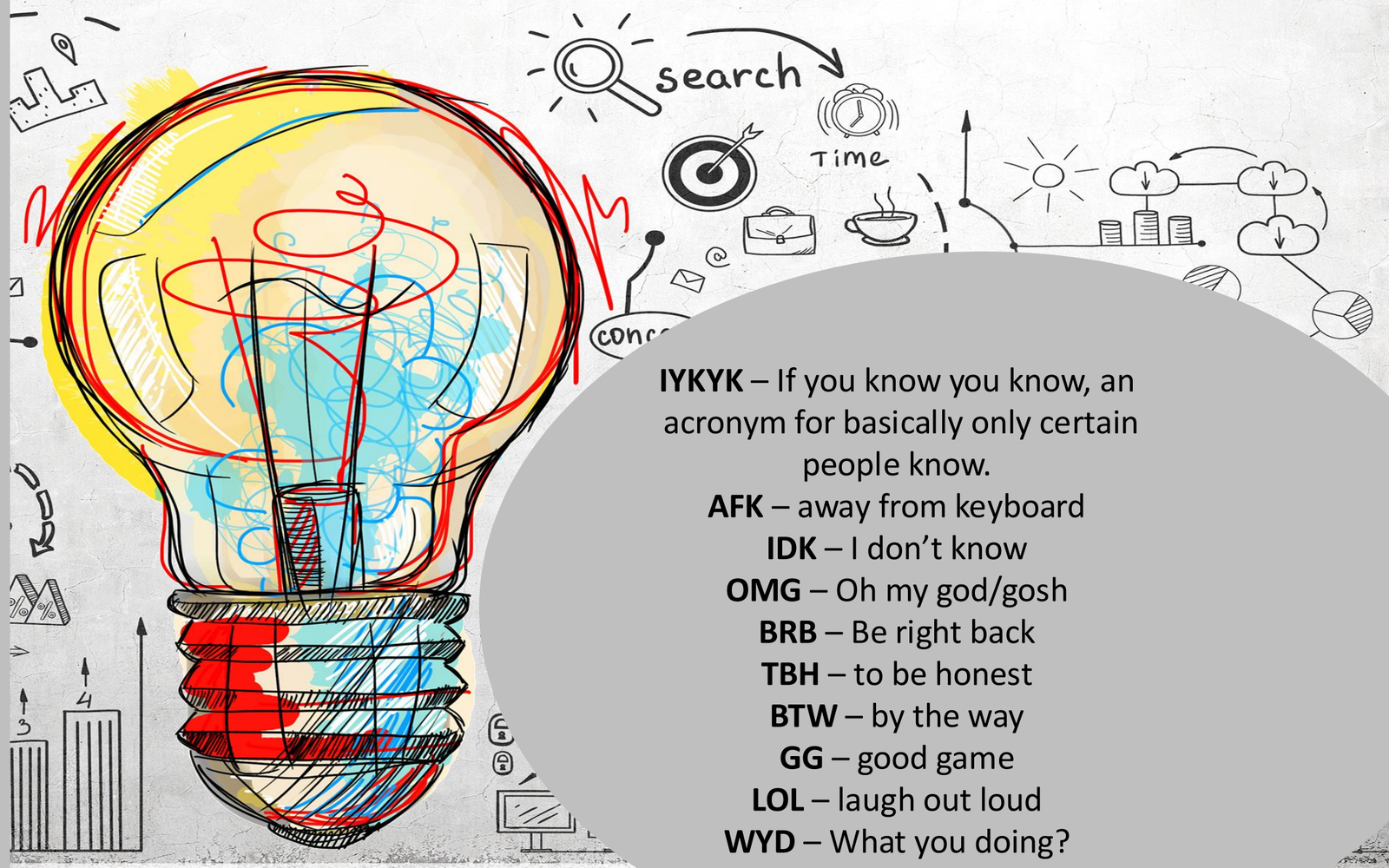


The vocabulary

A jargon-buster guide for parents

The Vocabulary: Jargon buster for parents and pupils

Slay – Doing something good
Sus – suspicious
Noob – a new or inexperienced player
Lag – when the game has a glitch or is going very slow
No cap – Not lying
Cap - lying
Ghosting – weirdly avoiding someone by suddenly stopping contacting someone
U – you
R- are
Rizz/ Rizzler- When you are romantic.
Bet- Agreed
Cooked – when something bad is gonna happen
Aura- When you are very good at everything
Ate- When you did something very well.
Delulu- Delusional
Cook – when you do something good
Touch grass – get away from your keyboard
Sigma - cool or excellent
Skibidi – cool bad dumb or simply random
Its giving – for example its giving bad or good vibes
Mid – average
Chopped - ugly



IYKYK – If you know you know, an acronym for basically only certain people know.
AFK – away from keyboard
IDK – I don't know
OMG – Oh my god/gosh
BRB – Be right back
TBH – to be honest
BTW – by the way
GG – good game
LOL – laugh out loud
WYD – What you doing?

IRL- In real life



The HWB platform

Navigating HWB, Microsoft, Google and digital home learning

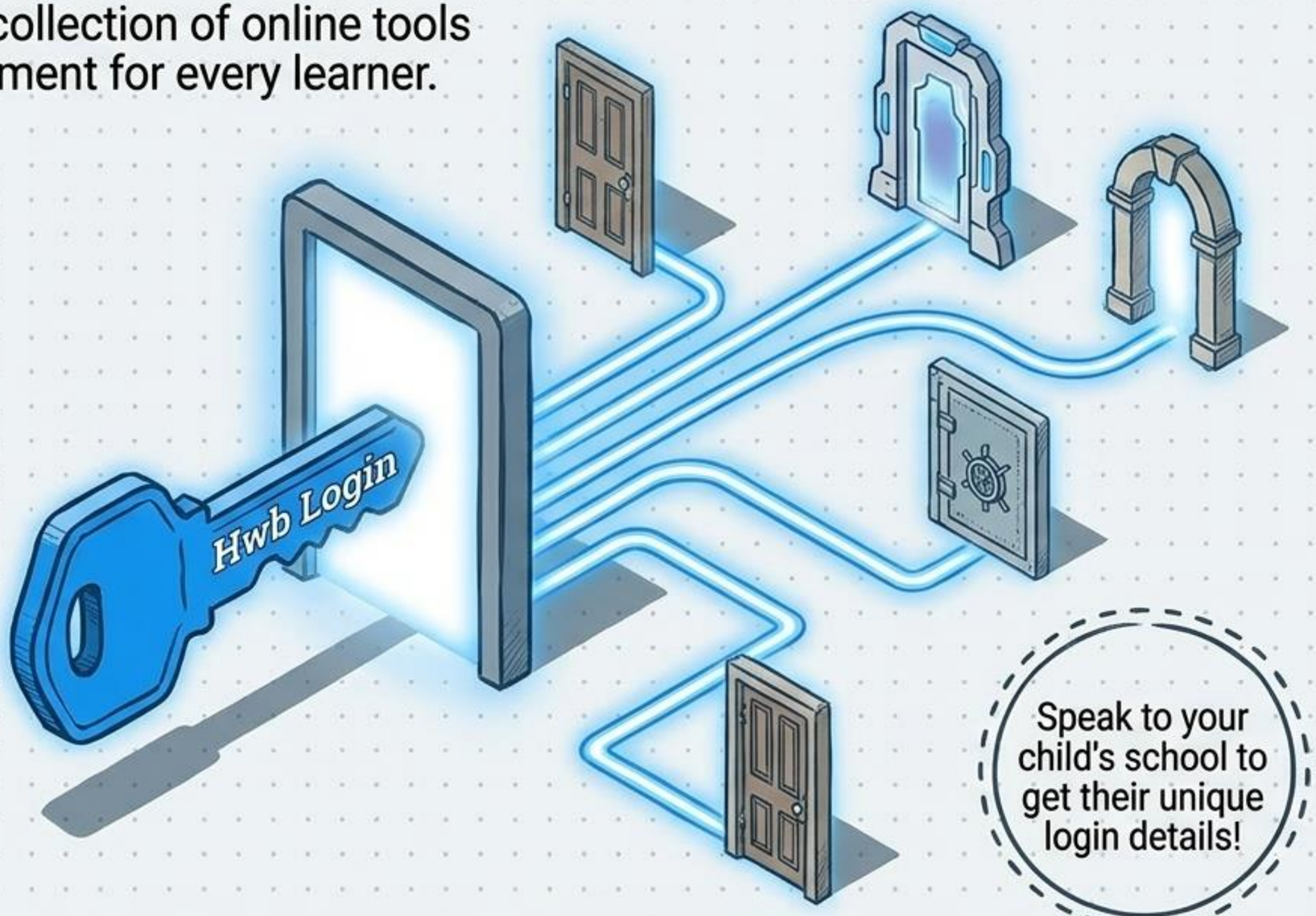
The Platform: Your Child's Digital Key

What is Hwb? It is a bilingual collection of online tools provided by the Welsh Government for every learner.

The Magic of Single-Sign-On

Every child gets one secure Hwb login. They don't need to remember dozens of passwords.

One safe login unlocks a world of world-class technology, free software, and secure virtual classrooms.



Speak to your child's school to get their unique login details!

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The HWB platform: Understanding how we use HWB in school

What is Hwb?
Hwb is the **Welsh Government's digital learning platform** for schools in Wales. Every pupil has their own secure login which gives them access to a wide range of online tools and resources.
You can think of Hwb as your child's **online classroom and learning hub**.

What can children do on Hwb?
Using Hwb, your child can:
- Access school work set by their teacher
- Use Microsoft tools such as Word, PowerPoint and Excel
- Save and edit their work online
- Collaborate with classmates in a safe environment
- Take part in blended learning at home or in school
- Access digital learning resources across all subjects

Is Hwb safe?
Yes. Hwb is designed specifically for schools and is:
- **Secure and monitored**
- **Ad-free**
- **Accessible only with a school login**

Schools also teach children how to use Hwb safely as part of their **Digital Competence** learning.

How Hwb Helps Your Child Grow as a Digital Leader

1. Builds Confidence with Technology
Hwb allows pupils to: Explore digital tools independently, Create documents, presentations and projects, Try new ways of learning
Result: Children become confident users of technology.

2. Encourages Responsibility
Through Hwb, pupils learn to: Keep passwords secure, Communicate respectfully online, Understand their digital footprint
Result: Children develop safe and responsible habits online.

3. Develops Collaboration Skills
Hwb tools enable pupils to: Work together on shared documents
- Give feedback to peers, Learn from each other

Result: Pupils learn teamwork in a digital environment.

4. Supports Problem Solving and Creativity
Pupils use Hwb to: Design presentations and projects, Solve problems using digital tools, Present ideas in creative ways
Result: Children become creative and independent thinkers.

5. Prepares Children for the Future
Digital skills are essential in modern life. Through Hwb, pupils:
- Gain skills needed for secondary school and beyond
- Learn how technology is used in real-life situations

Inside the Hwb Ecosystem



Creation Tools

- Adobe Spark
- Just2easy (J2e) for coding, digital products, and graphing.

Productivity & Classrooms

- **Microsoft Office 365:** Word, Excel, PowerPoint - **Free to install on up to 15 home devices!**
- **Google for Education:** Google Classroom for setting/reviewing work.

Safe Research & Learning

- **Encyclopaedia Britannica:** Safe searching
- **ImageQuest:** Copyright-free images
- **Minecraft:** Education Edition
- **Cyw:** Welsh language games

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The Shield

Cyber security, strong passwords and keeping pupils safe online

The Shield: Staying safe online

Safety rules for children:

1. **Never ever talk to people you do not know.**

2. **Never ever share your personal information, such as your address, your birthday, your name, and your age.**

3. **Always follow the rule SMART.**

It stands for Safe, Meeting, Accepting, Reliable, and Tell.

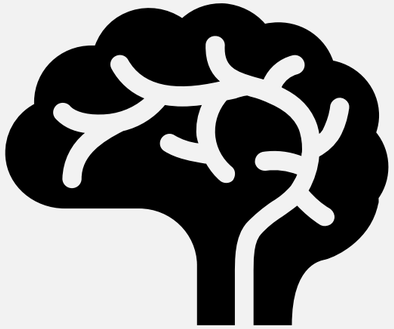
Advice for parents:

1. **Always monitor your children.**

2. **Always look at the age maturities for games that your child wants to play.**

3. **Make sure their username does not include any of their personal information.**

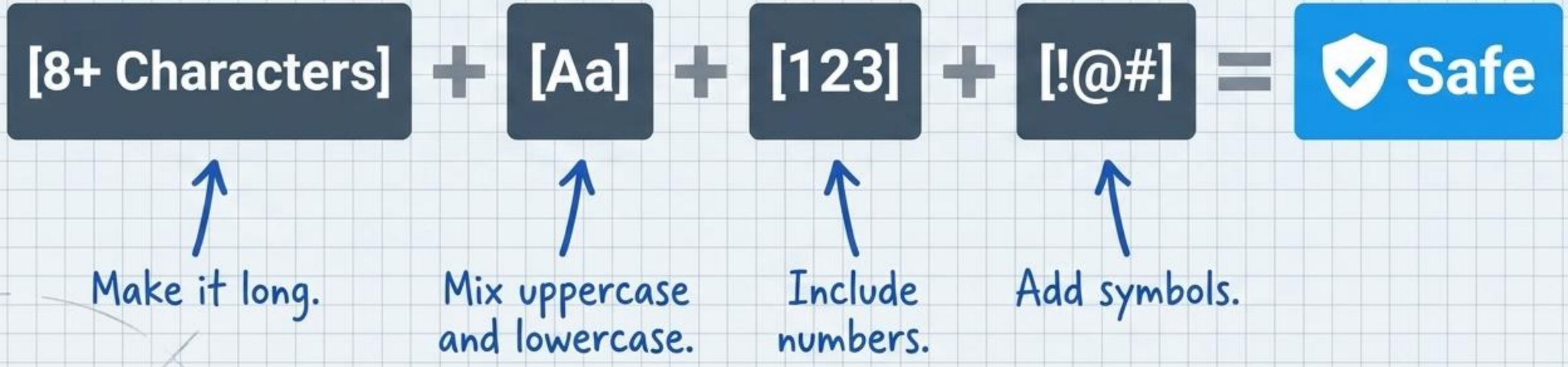
BAD EXAMPLE: KevinCardiff2016
GOOD EXAMPLE: WackyWaffles039





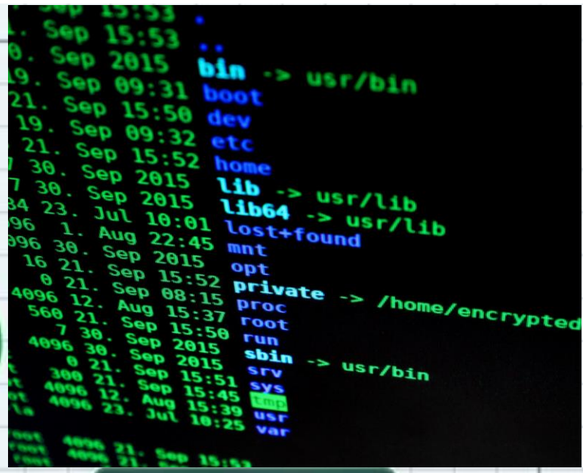
The Shield: Building Unbreakable Passwords

The first line of defense for your child's personal information is a strong password. Teach them this simple formula.



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Diagnostic Check: Spot the Difference



Contains personal info (Name).

Contains an easily guessed date (Birthday).

John2014

No symbols.
Only one capital letter.

Never use your name, easily guessed sequences like '123456', or the word 'password'.

Uppercase (T)

Symbols (!, $)

T!g3r$9b

Numbers (3, 9)

Lowercase (g, r, b)

Does not contain real words or personal data.

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The Shield: Your At-Home Safety Net

Use a Password Manager.

You and your child don't have to remember complex strings. A password manager creates strong passwords and stores them securely.

Golden Rule: Never share passwords with anyone except a trusted adult.

Visit the 'Keeping Safe Online' Zone.

Available on Hwb without a login. It features a dedicated Parents and Carers area full of video guides, distance-learning support (hwb.gov.wales/distance-learning), and cyber-safety tutorials.



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The Shield: Being a good Digital Citizen

Personal information
Keep your name, address, school, passwords, phone number and bank details private

Stand up to cyberbullying!
Don't walk away or join in. Speak up if someone is being bullied.



Respect others so be kind in messages games comments and what you say online matters.

If someone online asks where you live or your name report them immediately and make sure they are blocked.

If you come across a bad short don't watch it but report it.

The Shield: Staying safe online



Advice for parents

1. Parental controls and filters – set up filters to block unsuitable content and manage what your child can access.
2. Screen time settings – Use built-in tools (on iOS, Android, Windows) to limit time spent on certain apps or during bedtime hours.
3. Privacy settings on devices and apps – Check who can see or contact your child online. Turn off location sharing and limit chat features where possible.

Core safety rules for children

Help your child build strong digital habits with simple, easy-to-remember rules:

1. Ask before clicking or chatting – always check with a grown-up before opening links or talking to people online.
2. Don't share personal information – Never give out your name, school, address or photos without permission.
3. Tell a grown-up if something feels wrong - If something online feels confusing, upsetting or scary talk to an adult straightaway.
4. Use child-friendly apps and websites – Stick to sites recommended by school or trusted grown-ups

The Shield: Staying safe online

App guide for parents and children

The Digital Leaders Team (2026) created an online guide to apps and games that our surveys found our pupils were using – scan the QR code to visit the pages:

App guide for parents and children

There are lots of great tips and advice for keeping safe online on the HWB Keeping Safe Online page – https://hwb.gov.wales/keeping-safe-online

There are up to date guides to most common apps and games available on the HWB Keeping Safe Online page – In the Know – https://hwb.gov.wales/keeping-safe-online/in-the-know/