



FREE CLASSROOM PACK · AGES 7–9 · KEY STAGE 2

Teacher's Guide

Cyber Squad and the Quantum Cube

One 45-minute lesson on how strangers really approach children online. Timed plan, four discussion scenarios, a pledge to take home, and guidance for the disclosure you hope you won't get.

WHAT'S IN THIS PACK

Pages 3–4 The 45-minute lesson, minute by minute, with what to say.
Page 5 Four 'what would you do?' scenarios and what to listen for.
Page 6 If a child tells you something during this lesson.
Page 7 Three free browser games, and how to use them.
Page 8 Photocopiable pledge and a short note home to parents.

You do not need to have read the book to teach this lesson. Everything you need is in these eight pages, and the two chapters you read aloud are self-contained. A single copy of the book is enough for a whole class.

Free to photocopy, share across your school, and send home. Please don't sell it.
Written by Tahir Alvi — CISSP, CISM, ISO 27001 Lead Auditor — who has spent twenty years working in cyber security, and wrote the book for his own children.

Before you teach this lesson

Tell your DSL beforehand

This is the single most useful thing you can do. Lessons about online approaches from strangers prompt disclosures — that is a sign the lesson worked, not a sign it went wrong. Let your Designated Safeguarding Lead know the day before, so that if a child does tell you something, the person you need is already expecting it. Page 6 covers what to do in the moment.

What the lesson teaches

Children are usually taught to avoid 'strangers' and to spot obvious danger. The pattern in this lesson is quieter and far more common: someone friendly, who seems the same age, who asks nothing alarming. They collect small, harmless facts one at a time — a first name, a town, a school — until those pieces together locate a child in the real world.

The book calls this the puzzle piece rule, and it is the one idea children remember long after the story ends.

The puzzle piece rule

Your name is one piece. Your town is one piece. Your school is one piece.
On their own they are nothing. Put them together and they are a map to your front door.

What you need

- One copy of the book. You read Chapters 4 and 5 aloud — about ten minutes.
- One pupil worksheet per child, printed double-sided. It is the second file in this pack.
- A board you can write three words on and draw a circle around.

Curriculum links

These are the strands this lesson sits under. Map it to your own scheme of work — the wording of each framework changes from time to time.

- England, Relationships Education (statutory): online relationships, and being safe.
- Key Stage 2 Computing: using technology safely and respectfully, and knowing where to go for help.
- PSHE Association Programme of Study: Health and Wellbeing — keeping safe.
- UAE Ministry of Education: Digital Citizenship and online safety.

A note on tone

Keep it matter-of-fact. The aim is a class who can name a pattern, not a class who are frightened of the internet. The book is careful to say that most people online are fine, and that if something does go wrong it is never the child's fault. Say both of those out loud during the lesson.

45 minutes, minute by minute

Timings are a guide. The two parts worth protecting are the reveal on the board and the pledge at the end.

Warm-up: secrets and surprises

Three questions, no writing. 1) What is the difference between a secret and a surprise? 2) Who counts as a stranger if you have been talking to them for weeks? 3) Is your school name a private thing or a normal thing?

5 min

Read aloud: Chapters 4 and 5

Chapter 4 is the chat with Echo99. Chapter 5 is Aisha explaining what just happened. Hand out the worksheet first and ask children to tick each thing George gives away as they hear it. Do not stop to comment — let it run.

15 min

The reveal

Write GEORGE, FINCHLEY and MERRY HILL SCHOOL on the board, well apart. Ask whether any one of them is dangerous. Take answers. Then draw one circle around all three and say nothing for a moment. Let the class get there.

5 min

What would you do?

Four scenarios in pairs, on page 5. Two minutes each, then take answers from the floor. Prompts and what to listen for are on that page.

15 min

The pledge

Side 2 of the worksheet. Children sign it and take it home. This is the part that reaches the parents, so protect the five minutes.

5 min

Short on time?

If you only have 30 minutes: cut the four scenarios to two (numbers 1 and 3). Do not cut the reveal or the pledge — the reveal is where the idea lands and the pledge is what leaves the room.

The warm-up and the reveal

Warm-up — the three questions

These are asked cold, before any reading. You are finding out what the class already thinks, not correcting them yet.

1. What is the difference between a secret and a surprise?

Listen for: a surprise is something everyone finds out in the end, and it is usually happy. A secret is meant to stay hidden. If an adult or an older child asks you to keep something secret from your parents, that is worth telling someone about. This distinction does a great deal of work later in the lesson.

2. If you have been talking to someone for weeks, are they still a stranger?

Listen for: children usually say no. That is the answer to hold onto, gently. Time spent talking is not the same as knowing who someone is. Echo99 talked to George for twenty minutes and felt like a friend the whole way through.

3. Is the name of your school a private thing or a normal thing?

Listen for: almost everyone says normal. That is the honest answer and you should agree with it. Then come back to it after the reveal.

The reveal — how to run it

Write the three words on the board with plenty of space between them. Ask, one at a time, whether that single fact could hurt anybody. Let the class say no, because on its own the answer really is no.

Then draw one circle around all three. Pause. Someone in the room will get there before you say anything.

Say something close to this

"Now somebody knows a boy called George, in Finchley, at Merry Hill School. How long would it take a stranger to find him on Tuesday morning?"

Then, straight away:

"George didn't do anything stupid. He was chatting to someone friendly and answered three ordinary questions. That's how it works. That's why we're learning to spot it — not because any of you would be silly."

That last part matters. Children who feel judged in this lesson are less likely to tell an adult later, which is the opposite of what you want.

Four scenarios

Two minutes per scenario in pairs, then take answers. There is no trick in any of them: in every case the right answer involves telling an adult, and in no case has the child done anything wrong.

1 The friendly one

You have been gaming with someone for three weeks. They are funny, they are good, and they have never asked you for anything. Today they ask which school you go to.

Ask: What would you do? Does it change anything that you have known them three weeks?

Listen for: 'three weeks' feels like a long time to a nine-year-old and like nothing to an adult. The point to land is that time does not turn a stranger into a friend. A good answer is simply not answering that question and carrying on playing.

2 The trade

Someone offers you a rare skin you have wanted for months. All you have to do is send them a photo of yourself so they know you are real.

Ask: Is this a fair swap? What are they actually asking for?

Listen for: children spot this one quickly, but push on the second question. The skin is the bait. A photo of a child is the thing being collected. Nobody needs a photo of you to give you something in a game.

3 Your friend tells you

Your friend says they have been messaging someone who told them to keep it secret from their mum. They tell you because they are worried. Then they say: don't tell anyone.

Ask: What do you do? Is telling an adult the same as telling on your friend?

Listen for: this is the hardest and most important one. Children are loyal, and loyalty is what keeps this kind of thing hidden. Land it clearly: telling a trusted adult is helping your friend, not betraying them. You cannot fix this on your own, and your friend has already asked for help by telling you.

4 The warning

A message appears saying your account will be deleted in 24 hours unless you type in your password to prove it is you.

Ask: What is this really? How would you check?

Listen for: the fear is the trick. A real game already knows your password and would never ask for it in a pop-up. The right move is to not touch it and show a grown-up. 'Ask someone' is always a correct answer in this lesson.

If a child tells you something

Your school's own safeguarding policy comes first, always. This page is a reminder of the shape of it, not a replacement for it, and not legal advice.

In the moment

- Listen. Let them finish. Silence from you is fine — they will fill it.
- Do not promise to keep it secret. If they ask, say something like: "I can't promise that, because I might need to get someone who can help. But I will tell you who I'm telling." Say it kindly and say it early.
- Do not investigate. Do not ask who, when, or what happened next. Questions feel natural and helpful, and they can compromise a later investigation. "Is there anything else you want to tell me?" is enough.
- Do not react visibly, however much you want to. Shock reads to a child as "I have done something terrible".
- Tell them clearly that they have done the right thing by telling you, and that they are not in trouble.

Straight afterwards

- Write it down as soon as you can, in the child's own words, not your summary of them. Note the date, the time, and who was present.
- Pass it to your Designated Safeguarding Lead the same day. Not at the end of the week, and not after you have decided whether it sounds serious — that judgement is not yours to make alone.
- Follow up if you hear nothing back.

If it comes up mid-lesson

Children sometimes start disclosing in front of the class, often disguised as "my friend had this happen". Acknowledge it briefly and neutrally — "that's exactly the sort of thing worth telling an adult, come and find me afterwards" — then move the lesson on and make sure you are free at the end.

Numbers to have to hand

NSPCC Helpline (adults) 0808 800 5000

Childline (children) 0800 1111

Report abuse online ceop.police.uk

Worth writing the Childline number on the board at the end of the lesson.

Three browser games

All three run in a browser on a phone, tablet or school laptop. None of them ask for a name, set cookies, or store anything at all, so they can be used without a data protection conversation. Find them at cybertak.co.uk.

Spot the stranger Messages arrive while you play. Which are normal, which are collecting pieces of you, which need an adult? Two minutes.

Spot the scam Pop-ups and fake offers, based on Chapter 1. Click the wrong one and the computer freezes. Two minutes.

Shut the padlock Build a password strong enough to close a padlock, and watch how fast a computer guesses the weak ones. Open-ended.

Spot the stranger works well as a five-minute starter in the following lesson, before the pledges come back. Shut the padlock suits a computing lesson better than a PSHE one.

Extending it

- Writing: a child writes the same conversation from Echo99's side. Uncomfortable, and extremely effective with a confident Year 4 class.
- Computing: design a poster for younger children explaining the puzzle piece rule without using the word 'stranger'.
- Reading: the book runs to ten short chapters and works as a class reader over a fortnight. Chapters 7 and 8 are the action; Chapter 10 is the conversation with the parent that this whole lesson is trying to make possible.

What good looks like afterwards

Not silence, and not children announcing they will never talk to anyone online again. What you want is a class who can say why three harmless facts are not harmless together, and who know that telling an adult is a normal thing to do rather than an emergency.

Class sets of the book are discounted, and every order ships with printed copies of this guide. Email schools@cybertak.co.uk for a quote or a pro-forma invoice. Evaluation copies are available to schools on request.

A short note home

Copy this onto the back of the pledge, or send it separately. It is written to be read by a parent in about forty seconds.

Today your child took part in an online safety lesson based on the book Cyber Squad and the Quantum Cube.

The lesson is about one specific thing: how somebody online can collect small, harmless facts — a first name, a town, a school — one at a time, until those pieces together are enough to find a child in the real world. We call it the puzzle piece rule.

Your child has signed a pledge and brought it home. It would help enormously if you asked them about it. Two questions are enough:

- What are the three puzzle pieces?
- Who would you tell if something online worried you?

One thing we said in class, and would ask you to repeat: if something does go wrong online, it is never the child's fault, and they will not be in trouble for telling you. Children stay quiet mainly because they are afraid of losing their device or being told off. Saying otherwise out loud makes a real difference.

If you would like to read more, the book is written for ages 7–9 and there are three free browser games at cybertak.co.uk.

Before you finish the lesson

- Every pledge signed and in a book bag.
- Childline's number on the board: 0800 1111.
- Anything a child said to you passed to your DSL today, not tomorrow.



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