

# New online safety zone for Welsh learners launched

Safer Internet Day is a global awareness day to promote good practice in online safety and gives advice and guidance on the risks posed by new technologies such as social media and how to stay safe while using them.

Kirsty Williams, who today hosted an event with schools from across Wales in the Senedd celebrating Safer Internet Day, also said countries around the world were now looking at Wales with envy for our work on digital learning and online safety.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“Modern technologies, like social media, are now more prevalent than ever in our lives and can play an important role in informing and educating our young people. It is vital that we continue to promote the safe and positive use of these technologies to our children and Safer Internet Day offers an excellent opportunity to raise awareness to do this.

“I have been hugely encouraged to learn about the large numbers of teachers and pupils across Wales downloading the online safety resources we have made available on Hwb, our national digital learning platform.

“There they can access a range of classroom resources, create and share lesson plans, start discussion forums and access their own school’s virtual learning platform.

“Today we are launching another new exciting initiative on Hwb; the Online Safety Zone. This dedicated area, which has been developed for, and with the sector, will host news, articles and a range of resources on various safety issues to help keep learners safe online. It will also help direct those dealing with the effects of online bullying or any online safety issues towards appropriate support services.

“The success of Hwb is drawing attention from organisations around the world. At the recent BETT education technology show in London, our stand welcomed more than 400 visitors to hear about our distinctive national approach to digital learning“

We recently held a competition to design a logo for the new Online Safety Zone and received over 125 entries from all over Wales. Finalists were invited to attend the Safer Internet Day Keeping Learners Safe Online event in the Senedd today, where all the entries will be exhibited.

✘ The Cabinet Secretary announced the winning entry was by Isabel Bate, a year seven pupil, from Bryn Celynnog Comprehensive School, Rhondda Cynon Taff

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