

Chatroom Advice

From the Safeguarding Officer of the Association of Ringing Teachers

These ringing 'rooms' are a great facility but do remember that there are some potential dangers and both parents and children need to be aware of them.

Some people use the internet and such 'rooms' as a method to gain contact with children and subsequently enter into inappropriate and illegal relationships, as they can create false identities and remain anonymous. This is known as 'grooming', which involves using deceiving techniques to entice them to meet. These may include building trust using different personas.

There is a government website which gives a more comprehensive overview of this activity and has a version for parents and children which sets out the possible dangers of communicating with strangers online and how to make chatrooms a safer place to be - <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

A few basic tips are -

- **Never give out any personal details**
- **Always be wary; some users on the internet are not who they say they are**
- **Never arrange to meet anyone you have met through a chatroom – always take the advice of a parent or adult friend you know, if you are approached to do so**
- **Never give your password to anyone and don't use the same password for multiple accounts**

