Keeping safe on social networks

Social Networking sites are websites where you can create a profile all about yourself and contact other people. You can also upload photos, music and videos to share with other people, and on some sites, chat to other people on forums. Popular social networking websites include MySpace, Facebook, Habbo Hotel, and Twitter but there are lots of others. They are used by people of all ages and some people have profiles on more than one website.

Children should post only what they're comfortable with others seeing. Some of your child's profile may be seen by a broader audience than you — or they — are comfortable with, even if privacy settings are high. Encourage your child to think about the language they use online, and to think before posting pictures and videos, or altering photos posted by someone else.

Many social networking sites and chat rooms have adjustable privacy settings, so you can restrict who has access to your child's profile. Talk to your children about the importance of these settings, and your expectations for who should be allowed to view their profile. You may also want to limit your children's online "friends" to people they actually know personally in the 'real world'. The web links will help you to understand more about the privacy settings on the most popular sites.

Facebook Privacy settings:
https://en-gb.facebook.com/help/privacy

Twitter Privacy settings, and how to protect your tweets:
https://support.twitter.com/articles/14016-about-public-and-protected-tweets

Bebo Privacy Settings:
http://www.bebo.com/Safety.jsp

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