Dear parents/carers,

We are just writing to let you know about a new app launched by the BBC called Own It. The app is available to download for free when ‘BBC Own It’ is typed into the app store. The information about the app is as follows:

**Young people getting their first phone will have a new way to help them have a happier, healthier, more positive life online - with the new BBC Own It app.**

The app, which features a special keyboard, combines technology with the ability to keep a diary of their emotions to allow children the chance to record how they’re feeling and why. In response, the app can offer help and support, giving advice if their behaviour strays outside safe and sensible norms. Children can access the app at any time to get instant, on-screen advice and support the moment they need it.

The BBC Own It special keyboard will appear wherever a keyboard would surface normally - and offers real-time, in-the-moment help and advice on whatever a child is typing, for example if a child is typing something which might be upsetting to the person receiving it. It can also recognise if a child types personal details and reminds them to think twice about whether it is safe to share. It can even recognise language that might suggest a child is in trouble and will offer them advice and encourage them to talk to a trusted adult.

The app is packed with specially commissioned content from BBC Own It and across the rest of the BBC. This will give young people a range of resources to help them make the most of their time online and build healthy online behaviours and habits - covering everything from managing screen-time to boosting digital wellbeing.  Most importantly, the app will encourage young people to have open, honest and regular conversations with their parents about their online experiences. But crucially, it won’t provide reports or feedback to parents and nothing the child types ever leaves their phone.

Alice Webb, Director of BBC Children and Education, says: “The digital world is a fantastic place for people to learn and share, but we know many young people struggle to find a healthy online balance, especially when they get their first phones.  Our Own It app gives them a helping hand as they navigate this new experience so that they can make the most of the time they spend on their phones whilst avoiding some of the pitfalls. We’re using cutting edge machine learning technology in a way no one has done before, putting help, support, assistance and a bit of fun too directly into young people’s hands at the moments when they need it most.”

The Duke of Cambridge says: “It is fantastic the BBC has launched an app which will provide support to young people as they navigate the online world. I am delighted to see this positive and practical outcome resulting from The Royal Foundation Taskforce on the Prevention of Cyberbullying.”

The app has been developed with input and support from many of the organisations and individuals that made up The Duke of Cambridge’s Cyberbullying Taskforce.

This is a fantastic resource and we just thought we would share this with you all. It is also a really useful tool to help keep our children safe online in an ever-changing digital world.

Kind regards,

Miss Connolly and Mrs Seamans (Computing/PSHE leads)