Dr Mike Ribble—written evidence (FEO0119)

House of Lords Communications and Digital Select Committee inquiry into Freedom of Expression Online

1. How should digital citizenship and etiquette be taught in schools?

The issue when planning for a digital citizenship or etiquette curriculum is the result expected upon completion. Often the goal is identified as wanting children or students to be "good" digital citizens. Defining good is dependent on an individual's point of view and having it as an outcome can be difficult. This becomes a larger issue if there is no agreed upon definition of what is meant by being good in the digital space. The question that must be answered is what should be expected from a digital citizenship (digital safety, digital health, etc.) program? To come up with a goal or definition there must be some basic understanding of the impact of technology on the community. First, recognize that technology has changed society; either for good or bad; and that all users have been affected and along with it our perception of technology. These changes have become the expectation and the new normal. In addition, it is assumed that everyone has equitable access to the tools and connectivity, which is false belief (which must be understood before embarking on a technology program). Second, there are long-term effects (both intended and unintended) that are caused through the adoption of new digital technologies. Users must become more knowledgeable in the use of these tools through supervised exploration of these technologies. Third, tools such as apps and social media have been created to give children and young adults an advantage. The technology has been designed to be intuitive or at least understandable for those willing to explore. This provides an advantage for children and young adults to figure them out, as they are willing to try and perhaps fail. The issue becomes what are the consequences of these failures. Adults and children need to learn and grow together especially when one or the other is having difficulty.

Creating a digital citizenship program depends on your community and the needs of your school, students, and adults. At the very least, a community-based program like digital citizenship needs to look at the changing aspects and understanding of how IRL (In Real Life) is being affected by DL (Digital Life). All leaders (both educational and community) need to look at these aspects and understand each of the needs for their organization. Before a plan can be set in place, there must be a current understanding of the technology and where it fits within the norms of the community. While many of these aspects will be led by the schools and their administrators, there is still a need for community knowledge and participation. Like every educational program there needs to be an awareness of what is going on before changes can be implemented. There must be a commitment from all elements of the community to assist with this process. The hope is that the action will begin in the homes and parents can create a base for recognizing the capabilities of the

technology and where it fits into their values as well, as how it will be used as the children enter into schools and the community.

The goal of the curriculum should focus on be on expanding digital citizenship to additional grades through the S3 framework. One definition of digital citizenship classifies nine foundational elements in the following three guiding principles: Safe, Savvy and Social (or S3). The tenets of S3 are a way to support, as well as reinforce the framework of the themes of digital citizenship. Each theme/element encompasses three levels of support (Safe, Savvy and Social) which could or should be taught as soon as our children begin using a digital device and interact with it.

The first guiding principal; Safe, focuses on protecting yourself and protecting others and creates the foundation of digital citizenship. The next is Savvy, which directs the concepts around educating yourself and supporting others. Finally, the Social guiding principle commits to helping everyone make decisions exemplifying their commitment to respect themselves and respecting others. A core skill of being a Safe, Savvy, and Social digital citizen is knowing and demonstrating the difference between the digital can and the digital should.

It is here that we fully realize the possibilities of the online experience:

Safety (Protect Yourself/Protect Others)

Savvy (Educate Yourself/Educate Others)

Social (Respect Yourself/Respect Others)

Educators should be creating and sharing resources on implementation ideas across the curriculum. This can be accomplished with the assistance of the Progression Chart (see Figure below), which identifies a building process of skills (like any other curricular area).

An important understanding of the progression chart is the focus on entry levels of cognitive processes through learning content designed to build remembering and understanding (Bloom's Revised - Anderson et al., 2001). While the demonstration of learning and student action should focus on higher levels of cognitive processing through product creation (apply, analyze, evaluate and create). Teachers are the core element in creating a digital citizenship culture and assisting with student growth. Embedding and integrating digital citizenship experiences into all other educational aspects (e.g. content areas, courses, assignments, branding, etc.), is the best solution. The building process of skills mirrors other curricular areas where the information is presented, explored, then added to at the next level. Early introductions of these ideas act as foundation that are reviewed at the next level when new concepts are introduced. Digital Citizenship looks beyond the

tool, the technology, and whatever is popular and focuses on skills and concepts needed for children and adults.

Ribble, M. and Park, M. (2019). *The digital citizenship handbook for school leaders: fostering positive interactions online.* Portland, International Society for Technology in Education.

Anderson, L.W. (Ed.), Krathwohl, D.R. (Ed.), Airasian, P.W., Cruikshank, K.A., Mayer, R.E., Pintrich, P.R., Raths, J., & Wittrock, M.C. (2001). A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Complete edition). New York: Longman.

Digital Citizenship 9 Elements Progression Chart

Main Concept (9 Elements)	S3	Subconcept	Elementary (K-2)	Elementary (3-5)	Middle School (6-8)	High School (9-12)	Touch Points/ Crossover with other Main Concept	Cross-Curricular Connections	Student Digital Citizenship Action & Demonstration of Learning
				Action Verbs: Remember & Understand					Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, Create
1. Digital Access	Safe	Digital Inclusion	■	✓	✓	✓	Digital Etiquette, Digital Rights & Responsibilities	ELA, Social Studies	
		Digital Exclusion	■	✓	✓	✓	Digital Etiquette, Digital Rights & Responsibilities	ELA, Social Studies	
		Accessibility	✓	✓	✓	✓	Digital Etiquette, Digital Rights & Responsibilities, Digital Fluency	Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	Students use Read & Write for Google 's "read aloud" feature to read an eBook.
	Savvy	Home Access/ Homework Gap	☐	✓	✓	✓	Digital Rights & Responsibilities, Digital Fluency	Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	
		Assistive Technology	☐	✓	✓	✓	Digital Communication & Collaboration	Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	Student uses the speech to text function to type their project design report.
		Equitable Access	☐	☐	✓	✓	Digital Etiquette	Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	
	Social	Equal Opportunity	☐	☐	■	✓	Digital Rights & Responsibilities, Digital Fluency	ELA, Social Studies	
		Equal Digital Rights	☐	☐	✓	✓	Digital Rights & Responsibilities	ELA, Social Studies	Students compare and contrast the digital rights under two different current governments.
2. Digital Commerce	Safe	Web Storefronts & Shopping Carts	✓	✓	✓	■	Digital Law, Digital Security & Privacy	Economics, Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	Students research key elements of ensuring a "secure" and legitimate shopping website.
		Identity	✓	✓	✓	✓	Digital Law, Digital Security	Economics, Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	Students create a checklist of what "Personal Information" is and write a summary of what information should and should not be shared online.
		E-Commerce Secure Transactions	☐	✓	✓	✓	Digital Law, Digital Security & Privacy	Economics, Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	
	Savvy	E-Commerce Recommendations & Ratings	☐	✓	■	✓	Digital Security & Privacy	ELA, Economics, Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	
		Digital Advertising	☐	✓	✓	■	Digital Rights & Responsibilities	ELA, Economics, Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	
		Digital Currency	☐	☐	✓	■	Digital Law, Digital Security & Privacy	Math, Economics, Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	
		App Economy	☐	☐	■	✓	Digital Law, Digital Fluency	Math, Economics, Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	
		Digital Economy	☐	☐	■	✓	Digital Law	Math, Economics, Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	
	Social	Sharing Data	☐	✓	✓	■	Digital Etiquette, Digital Law, Digital Security, Digital Communication	Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	
		Product Reviews	☐	✓	✓	✓	Digital Etiquette, Digital Law, Digital Security, Digital Communication	ELA, Economics, Social Studies, Career/ Vocational Studies	Students analyze reviews with a bias lens. Are they anonymous? Are proper disclosures made ("I received a preview copy")? Do extremely high or low star ratings seem justified in detailed explanations?

Source: http://digcit.life/progression

2.   How can digital citizenship and etiquette be promoted among adults?

Constructing a customized plan that meets the needs of hyper-connected digitally charged adults is complex. Everyone needs to be engaged and have ownership in their use of the technology. With the interaction of those users both online and off, understanding where there are boundaries and when they

overlap is critical. With the rapid expansion of technology use, a new relationship has been created between users, their devices, and their digital community. This convergence is making it more difficult for users to separate their Digital Life (DL) from In Real Life (IRL). With a user's life becoming immersed in technology, everyone is forced to question if there is a separation at all.

Digital Citizenship helps users to understand the connection between users and their technology. Instead of focusing on what the technology can do, the aim is to think about how technology should be used in a responsible manner. In the definition from Ribble and Park, *Digital Citizenship is the continuously developing norms of appropriate, responsible, and empowered technology use*. Too often, there is little consideration of the issues or even the opportunities when purchasing or using a new digital technology. Users often focus on how quickly and easily they can communicate with family and friends, to create new content, and how they work, but rarely on the larger concern for the community. It has become about the individual and not the collective good. The focus becomes on the 'latest and greatest' and not a plan of the appropriate use the device. Rarely if ever do users read what they are agreeing to in their latest app or site. This is why users are often confused by the technology and become upset when there are issues with the tool or online interactions. It is not the fault of the technology, it is the failure to prepare and understand the technologies they are using.

Users need to be more focused on the gathering of information that is needed to understand the technology to be good digital citizens. To begin they must understand the foundational questions they must ask, not just with respect to the Internet but all technologies they use. In a society that is so entrenched with technology, users must expand their knowledge in that there are opportunities but there are also costs that come with owning these tools. Digital Citizenship does not provide a list of rules for many reasons: 1) it is better for someone to be involved in the process of doing the right thing; 2) technology changes so quickly, that creating a rule today means it may not be applicable tomorrow; 3) what is right for one family may not be for others. Digital Citizenship is not just for one person or a group of users, it has to be understood by everyone who uses digital technologies. Why is this so important for everyone to understand these issues? Because in a digital world everyone is connected, whether they realize it or not. It is the hope that everyone will be able learn the skills that they need but also differentiate what is considered right and what is wrong. Recognizing that with the rights that have been provided there are also requisite responsibilities that must be addressed. Without the basic knowledge of Digital Citizenship topics users often will not think of the consequences of their actions to others. This is why educating users when they are young about these skills is so important. Often users believe that their actions have no effect on others, but in a digital society, this is an incorrect assumption since all users are interconnected. Young (and sometimes not so young) users will watch others and think, "If someone else can do it so can I."

3. **Are there any international examples of approaches to digital citizenship and etiquette from which the UK can learn?**

The growth of the concepts of digital citizenship are expanding quickly internationally. In the book *The Digital Citizenship Handbook for School Leaders: Fostering Positive Interactions Online* Drs. Ribble and Park collected qualitative responses from around the globe on the needs of Digital Citizenship in their country.

From Egypt – there is the need to embed the concepts of Digital Citizenship within the daily practices of citizens specially children and youth.

In Malaysia – In a nationwide survey showed that 83% of children aged 7-19 years old did not have adequate access to online protection. *Among those, 40% did not know how to protect themselves online. As such, issues such as cyber bullying are rampant.* For example, another nationwide survey noted roughly 25% of schoolchildren experienced cyber bullying at least once.

From Australia – national and state education authorities are reviewing curriculum, assessment and reporting requirements concerning Digital Citizenship. The Australian Curriculum guidelines, essential learnings and standards, and syllabuses now include specific references to Digital Citizenship. National education funding agreements are now including the development of Digital Citizenship as an indicator of quality leadership and teaching in Australian schools.

In China – there are three main focal areas of need. First, security measures should be taken in school Information and Communications Technology (ICT) systems, second, teachers should be adequately equipped to teach with ICT. Third, Digital Citizenship resources should be developed for students and parents. There are not enough educational resources especially for children age 0-8.

There have also been a growing number of studies and research that is being conducted around the globe related to digital citizenship. This research helps to broaden the understanding of the topic in various regions and begins to focus on the needs in each area. Here are a few examples of that research:

Chiang, L., & Lee, B. (2011). *Ethical attitude and behaviors regarding computer use.* Ethics and Behavior, 21, 481-497.
https://doi.org/10.1080/10508422.2011.622181

Chaudron,S., Di Gioia,R.and Gemo,M. (2018) Young children (0-8) and digital technology. A qualitative study across Europe. JRC Science for Policy Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 1-259.

Ghamrawi, N. A. R. (2018). *Schooling for digital citizens.* Open Journal of Leadership, 7, 209-224. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2018.73012

Sanchez, A., Manzuoli, C., and Bedoya, E. (2019). *Digital citizenship: a theoretical review of the concept and trends*. TOJET: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology, April 2019, *18*(2) [online] Available at: http://www.tojet.net/articles/v18i2/1822.pdf (Accessed: 19 October,2020)

Shal, T., El Kibbi, I., Ghamrawi, N., & Ghamrawi, N. A. (2018b). *Principals' differentiated learning through social media: Practices and obstacles.* International Journal of Education and Applied Research, 8, 19-29.

Some programs growing in the European Union as well as in the United Kingdom to help provide resources are:

Council of Europe –
Ahmet Murat Kilic, Administrator – Directorate of Democratic Participation (ahmet-murat.kilic@coe.int)

Their website - Digital citizenship education (www.coe.int/dce) provides a framework to begin to organize how to understand the process of integration of digital citizenship education into European and other schools. Their Digital Citizenship Education Handbook (https://www.coe.int/en/web/digital-citizenship-education/-/being-child-in-the-age-of-technology-difgital-cititzenship-education-handbook) builds on the Council of Europe's Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture and complements the Internet literacy handbook as part of a coherent approach to educating citizens for the society in the future.

Common Sense -
Jenna Khanna (jkhanna@commonsense.org)

A program that is very popular with educators in the United States has begun organizing a similar program for those in the United Kingdom as well. Their site (https://www.commonsense.org/education/uk/digital-citizenship/resources) provides lesson both for primary as well as secondary students. There is also opportunities for educators and schools to be recognized as providing digital citizenship resources to students (https://www.commonsense.org/education/sites/default/files/tlr_recognition_page/2021_uk-recognitionsheet-onepager_final-release.pdf).

4.   How does anonymity change users' behaviour?

The concern for educators and parents is the disconnect between how students (and frankly all users) act when using their technology versus their real world interactions in their schools and homes. The idea of anonymity and

separation from others is causing students to act in a way that they would not want their parents or others to see. It is often shared, "don't post/do anything online that you would not want your parent/grandparent/family to see." However, the technology has become so personal and advanced that much of users' world interaction can be completed from a smartphone or tablet (and not from a desktop or laptop-often by choice) which adds to this freedom. The creation of tools that are easy to use and navigate opens the opportunities for the very young to understand and use these technologies. The technology, which was created for other purposes, has been co-opted for the growth and exploration of young adults. While this can be a positive experience for some, the actions of others can cause damage that can often be unrepairable. Anonymity and the assumption that users are who they say they are online, young adults can become engaged in embarrassing and sometimes dire situations. The question is how are educators and parents going to teach their students that they might be making mistakes today that will follow them for the rest of their lives? Too often users do not see immediate (or even delayed) consequences for their actions, so they assume there will be none.

The focus should be talking and working with children when they are young to address these potential issues. The assumption should be for everyone using technology that someone is watching. If users would read the Terms of Use of most apps and sites, they will identify that they are collecting personal data. The old adage, "Trust, but Verify" is very applicable when online. Users need to verify those who are met only online. The goal should be focusing on others as much as yourself when working, playing, interacting online. It does not suggest being yourself, but to be a better version of yourself and focus on the larger good of the society. Too often in online articles, the comments degrade to some of the basest level of ignorance and vitriol. Being online can be empowering if everyone is able to work toward a civil discourse and interactions. Respecting others and their opinions, even when they are different from your own is the goal, when all act accordingly. Those societies that do not keep this core competency often will fail. It will be up to the decisions of online users which way they wish to see this digital community become in the future.

5. **How could the design of social media platforms be altered to encourage good behaviour?**

The decisions that users make online are and will define them in the future. As a powerful example, institutions of higher education are scanning and taking inventory of the "digital footprint/tattoo" for many potential student candidates in order to make decisions about people they have never met. Businesses are looking at the digital remnants left behind by applicants to determine if they will be a good employee even before the interview. Too often, even the briefest of comments shared through social media show that these individuals might end up sharing information or representing themselves in a less than positive way. Why should a company take that chance? While many may not agree with using these sites to decide on employment, it is

important to know this so that issues do not arise in the future. In a digital society, a balance must be created. As those without an online digital presence might also cause businesses to question why they are not online as well. Some new jobs require that users understand how to use online platforms to share their company's messages. When online, this balance of the use of social media that does not harm the user or their organization is necessary.

In schools, emphasis must be put on the critical importance of empowering students, and being a part of this decision making process. Allowing them to share in their learning process and an opportunity to help identify some of the solutions. Facilitating student's development of their online presence so that they grow and shape their world in a safe, creative way. They will then have the ability to inspire others to do the same. There will be a need to review the Policy and Procedures that have been developed to identify any needs with its implementation.

Educators and parents need to work in partnership on extended learning opportunities to allow teachers and parents to use the technology tools effectively. Everyone needs to understand how to use the technology in effective educational practice. Digital Citizenship should not be seen as a "one-shot" experience for students, staff and parents but an ongoing conversation of how to use technology tools today and into the future. The ongoing interaction between teachers and parents to understand new ideas within digital citizenship will help students become responsible, active citizens (both online and in real life). The hope is to demystify the technology and incorporate it into daily practice. It needs to be an integral part of how students learn, demonstrate, and share their learning. Student outreach through the school offering all students to hear from educational leaders and come to facilitate discussions on the importance of learning how to harness the power of social media.

Today, it is becoming harder to be separated from the digitally connected mainstream. The question today should be who will assist in providing support of how to act online. Will the lesson be how to place your best self to be shared with others, or will it be to be a negative influence to the online community? Many educators are asking the question, "How do we deal with these issues, and how do we help our students?" Helping all users to understand the when and where technology can and should be used is a good first step. The next is to use the most powerful tool they have, the one between their ears, to take a moment, take a breath, think about others, then decide whether or not to post.

Additional Resources and References related to Digital Citizenship:

Council of Europe (2019). *Digital citizenship education handbook.* [online] Available at: https://rm.coe.int/digital-citizenship-education-handbook/168093586f Accessed 11 October 2020).

Ribble, M. and Park, M. (2019). *The digital citizenship handbook for school leaders: fostering positive interactions online.* Portland, International Society for Technology in Education.

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Shal, T., El Kibbi, I., Ghamrawi, N., & Ghamrawi, N. A. R. (2018a). *Web 2.0—A tool for learning or socialization only? Perspectives & experiences of Lebanese school principals.* International Journal of Research in Economics and Social Sciences, 8, 315-347. http://euroasiapub.org

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