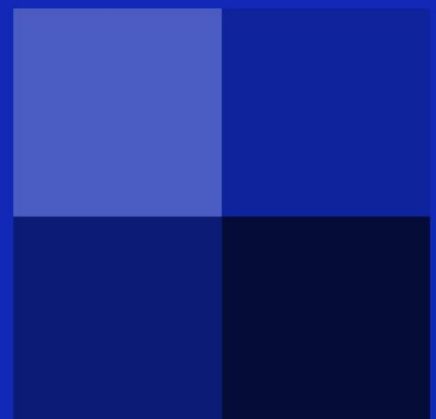




## **A young person's guide to having a Bank Card**

# **E-Sussex, E-Safe**

**Safeguarding all children in East Sussex all the time**



**I have a savings account and have just been given a debit card. I want to show all my friends. Should I?**

No. The fact that you have one is private. You cannot be certain that they won't tell others, and you can be bullied at school if lots of people know you have access to money.

**I also have a username and a PIN number for online banking.**

And again, that is private information that only you (and your parents/carers) need to know that you have.

**Does it mean I can buy what I want, when I want it?**

Learning to handle money is a life skill and one that you need help to acquire. Advertising exists to make you want to buy things, and over the years, more and more advertising is targeted at young people. You may think that you really want an item, but you should listen to trusted adults with regard to whether it is value for money.

**But it's my money. Why shouldn't I do what I want with it?**

There are several aspects you need to consider about this.

- 1) If you become known at school as someone who always has new things, you could attract the wrong sort of attention.
- 2) Having money is one thing, keeping it is quite something else. You may have been given money, or left it in a Will. Whoever gave you that money will want you to use it sensibly.
- 3) You need to be very certain that your bank or building society account does **not** let you have an overdraft. The last thing you want is a debt that you cannot pay off.

**Are you telling me not to use my account?**

Not at all. We are suggesting, however, that you learn to use it sensibly. It is all too easy to spend, spend, spend, these days. Some items, particularly if they are linked to films or TV shows may be very expensive for what they are. (It is possible, for example, to pay over £200.00 for a "Harry Potter" wand that is mass produced and was never used in the film.) What we are saying is that managing money, knowing when to spend it and when to save it is a life skill that takes years to acquire and that you need help to understand.

You only have to look at the Christmas adverts to see how aggressively children are targeted to get them (or their parents) to spend their money.

**Can I go to a cash point?**

That depends on the type of account you have. Most debit cards work in cash points, but unfortunately, not all cash points are free. Some charge a percentage of the money withdrawn, and some have a minimum charge. It is not wise to turn up at school each day with lots of money in your pocket. Also, you need to be very careful of your PIN number. Children at cashpoints attract the attention of thieves who may well be bigger and stronger than you are. You need to protect your PIN number by putting your hand OVER the hand typing the PIN number in. Try to use cash points that

are inside banks or building societies. Not only will you be safer, the machine will probably not have been tampered with. This is a risk with every machine that is out on the street. If you find a cash point that looks odd – use another one.

### **Why do banks and building societies let young people have credit cards.**

Fortunately, no banks or building societies let young people have credit cards.

### **What is the difference between a credit and a debit card?**

A credit card allows you to spend money you do not have and charges you interest for doing so. (Usually, quite a lot of interest). A debit card only lets you spend the money you have in your account, **but** if that account has an overdraft facility, that, again, is spending money you do not have.

### **So, in general, what is your advice?**

- Never take your debit card to school.
- Only take it from the house when you know you are going to buy something.
- Talk about what you want to buy with your parents/carers.
- Be careful about buying things online. Always look for https://
- Get into good money habits from the start – always check your bank statement, and compare the money out with what you have spent. Remember, Banks can charge you for things too. If you think you are being charged too much, then ask them about it. Banks can also make mistakes too. The sooner you know about it, the better your chances of getting it put right.