



Thursday 27th January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has come to our attention that many of the children in Year 5 and 6 are using social media platforms such as 'WhatsApp' to communicate with one another, both individually and as part of group chats. As a school, we encourage friendships however there have been a several reports from parents of bad language being used and of children feeling intimidated by certain posts. Social apps such as 'WhatsApp' have age restrictions of 16+.

As part of our Online Safety curriculum, we encourage children to think before they send – “Is this comment likely to cause offence?” however online activity still needs monitoring by adults, by checking their history and asking to see the various apps. Children are taught, in our lessons, that messages can be easily misunderstood. We also like to remind children that once it is 'out there' in cyber space it cannot be retracted. We teach children not to delete anything that is upsetting and to take a screenshot if they are worried the sender may delete it. Should anything untoward happen to a child, the Police have the power and ability to obtain conversations that have occurred in these apps, even accessing the deleted messages.

As I am sure you will agree, keeping our children safe, both physically and online is of the utmost importance and we must work together to ensure our children are using any online platform appropriately and safely. I have attached the latest guidance from National Online Safety organisation that gives to tips and suggestions as to what to look out for. I ask that you and your child go through this together to ensure that they understand the consequences of using such a platform in an unsafe and inappropriate manner.

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to speak to myself or your child's class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

L Healey
 IT and Online Safety Lead
 Year 6 Teacher

