

Friday 9 July 2021

Dear Year 5 Parents,

Following on from my email a couple of weeks ago, I'd like to take this opportunity to discuss online safety further.

As you know, it was brought to our attention by parents and children in Year 5 that many children have accounts on social networking sites such as WhatsApp, Snapchat and TikTok. These are messaging, photo and video sharing sites that have age restrictions in place. WhatsApp, 16 and Snapchat and tiktok are both 13. Unfortunately, it has become apparent that some children are using these sites inappropriately both as a tool for making unkind comments towards each other but also to share inappropriate material of an explicit nature including pornography, which we find very concerning.

When used correctly social media has many benefits. When used incorrectly social media can cause upset and anxiety for adults and for children. Research says that children can be affected in many ways – they feel unhappy, vulnerable, left out, bullied, can't sleep and lose confidence.

This is clearly something that we all want to protect our children from. We talk often about this in school but **it remains the responsibility of ALL parents to manage and monitor their child's usage of mobile phones, wider internet usage and what they might be watching on television** as all children are susceptible to this and it could be your child viewing material of this nature.

Whilst we at school, can't stop children accessing these sites we do **suggest that you:**

- Set guidelines for when your child has use of their phone or device and what they can use it for
- Check usage and messages for appropriateness
- Restrict access to certain sites
- Age restrictions on sites are there to protect and safeguard children, check and if in doubt say no!
- Keep phones downstairs and not in bedrooms
- Remove the privilege of a phone or device if it is used inappropriately

- Remind children that digital media leaves a digital footprint; this means that messages and images are stored and are traceable. Think what you say and post
- Put you in control of what your child sees by setting parental controls. Internet Matters has [step by step guides](#) on how to set these up.
- **Use sensibly and safely – look after each other and yourself!**

Grange Park takes e-safety very seriously, and we discuss E-Safety issues throughout the year with our pupils. There is an [e-safety section](#) on our school website that contains resources for parents and we often add key information in our Newsround Ups. If you would like to discuss any of these issues further, please feel free to make an appointment through the school office and we will be happy to speak with you. Because of our duty to all the children in our school, we will take action (which may involve the police) if a problem comes to our attention that involves the safety or wellbeing of any of our pupils.

With thanks for your continued support,

Rebecca Neale

Deputy Headteacher