



Sacred Heart RC Primary School

WESTHOUGHTON

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Executive Headteacher: Mr M Johnson | Deputy Headteacher: Mrs S Bridge

Friday 1st December 2023

Year 6 Social Media Usage

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are writing to advise you of a few concerns that we have regarding children's use of social media outside of school, during evenings and weekends. We are aware that some pupils may be using social media to be unkind about other pupils, over platforms such as Snapchat, WhatsApp and TikTok. We understand that this has included both sharing unkind comments about pupils and sharing unkind images or memes of pupils. This is leading to a lot of upset amongst some pupils within school and is not in line with our ethos or values.

Most social media apps are for pupils 13 years and over (WhatsApp being 16). If you do choose to allow your child to access social media, please may we ask that you're vigilant. Just like their interactions in person, online interactions require supervision and support. What is right will vary from family to family, but we have put together some advice for parents and carers, so that we can work together to keep our children safe.

- 1. Communicate with your children about their online behaviour.** Ask them what they are doing and which sites they are using. Make sure that children know how to use the privacy tools provided and that they are aware of the importance of keeping their profiles private.
- 2. Support your children in ensuring that they only add contacts that they also know and trust off-line.** Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online is dangerous. One way to keep an eye on how your child uses a social networking site is to connect with them.
- 3. Underline the importance of not publishing or forwarding images and videos which jeopardise their safety or integrity.** Nothing which is published on-line can ever be deleted; everything should be assumed to be permanent. They should also ensure that they have permission from others before posting images of them online. It is a criminal offence to circulate inappropriate images of children, even if they are of you.
- 4. Emphasise the importance of thinking before they post something online.** Remind them that messages can be misunderstood online. If they are not sure and would not be happy for their parents and teachers to see it, it is best not to post it. In the south of England two school girls were recently charged, as comments they had made online were felt to have contributed to the suicide of another girl.
- 5. Limit the time your children spend online and try to avoid letting them take their devices to bed.** Research has shown this to have a detrimental effect on sleep and performance at school. Insist upon device free time during the day; for example at meal times and when your child is doing their homework.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER



We recognise the importance of on-line communication in the lives of young people today and the many benefits of social media and living in a digital world, however we also need to be aware of the potential dangers of these too.

Ultimately, we're aware that you know your child best. You might decide that they need to be a little bit older before accessing certain apps/social media. Likewise, you may feel it is suitable for them, and therefore we just ask for your support in monitoring this. We are asking for your partnership in dealing with this, as this is happening outside of school.

If you would like any further information around social media or any of the information mentioned above, there are lots of helpful links and resources on our school website.

Thank you in anticipation of your support with this.

Please return the tear off slip below by Monday 4th December to confirm you have read this notification.

Mr S Dootson

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Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

I can confirm I have received and read the notification about Social Media ☐

Signed: _____ Date: ____/____/____