



# Sacred Heart RC Primary School

WESTHOUGHTON

[www.sacred-heart.bolton.sch.uk](http://www.sacred-heart.bolton.sch.uk)

[office@sacred-heart.bolton.sch.uk](mailto:office@sacred-heart.bolton.sch.uk)

01942 634681

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

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 have been made aware of a Whatsapp group titled 'Add everyone you know', which has been shared with pupils all over Bolton. The group contains inappropriate and adult content, which should not be viewed or shared by children. We are aware that a number of children from school have accessed this group and in some cases, have contributed to sharing/inviting others to join this group. We cannot stress highly enough, the importance of you, as parents/guardians, in being aware of the content which your child/ren are accessing and contributing to online. Whilst we teach and educate our young people in how to stay safe online, we politely ask for your support in supervising and extending this learning at home. We recommend that you check your child's Whatsapp for the above group, before reporting and removing this group from their devices.

Most social media apps (including Whatsapp) have a legal age of 13 years and over. If you as a parent/guardian choose to allow your child to access social media, please may we ask that you're vigilant. 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.
- 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.

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. You are also more than welcome to call into school and speak with Mr Dootson.

Thank you in anticipation of your support with this.

Mr S Dootson (Senior Pastoral Lead / DSL)

## LOVE ONE ANOTHER

