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'Enjoyment, Achievement and Learning for life...'

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Pupil use of Social Media – E-Safety advice

Dear Parents and Carers

It has come to our attention that a number of children are using social media accounts at home, in particular Instagram, WhatsApp and YouTube. Social media can be a positive platform for creativity and communication when used appropriately, but unfortunately, there are also dangers.

The most popular social media platforms all have the age restriction of 13-years-old. This is in place to keep safe those who are active online, and ensure they are not exposed to language or content unsuitable for their age.

If you have made the decision to allow your child to open a social media account before they are 13-years-old, please make sure they are aware of the dangers of talking to strangers online, sharing photos, videos or posts publically rather than privately and the permanence of anything posted onto the internet. If you'd like to find out more about these dangers, then the websites below contain excellent guidance on helping children to use the internet safely.

There are hundreds of social media platforms out there and it is easy to download an app, create an account and interact with both friends and strangers across the world. However, less established social media platforms will by nature be less secure, and put the user at greater risk of being exposed to unsuitable or inappropriate content. The most established and popular social media outlets (Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter etc.) will have more security in place for those wishing to access this. Having said this, even with the most secure settings and sensible usage, it is impossible to monitor what other people are posting online and therefore the things your child might be exposed to.

If you allow your child to have a social media account, we highly recommend you regularly check the security settings. It is incredibly easy to locate and access someone's Instagram photos or YouTube videos if they do not have their account set to private. A public account on Instagram or YouTube means anyone in the world can search for and comment on whatever your child posts.

If you would like to research these issues further, then the following websites contain some excellent guidance on keeping children safe online. Alternatively, contact school for further information and guidance.

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/online-safety

www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents

www.internetmatters.org

Yours sincerely

Mr Wallis and Mr Murphy
E Safety Coordinators