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

14th September 2023

WPS – Police Information on Internet Safety

Dear Parents/carers

We have received the following information from the police regarding Internet Safety

As a Primary school in our force area we would like to take this opportunity to contact you to raise concerns we have around inappropriate internet use by children starting with children as young as four.

With younger children the content these children are sharing tends to be on parents/carers accounts, who are completely unaware that this has happened until their account is locked, or they have a knock on the door from the Police.

Below are the statistics from our Force to illustrate the increase in this type of referral:

Last year 11 % of our referrals were for safeguarding concerns such as self-generated image uploads, sextortion and sexualised chat between a child and an adult. This year we have seen a huge increase in safeguarding referrals with 26% having been received in the first half of this year (Jan - Jun).

We're not entirely sure why there has been such a jump, but we suspect it is mainly due to online companies improving their safeguarding abilities in readiness for the internet safety bill so is likely to continue unless we can give education/ prevention advice to schools, parents and children.

There also appears to be a change in the gender of the children uploading, previously it was predominantly females now there is a pretty even split between the genders overall.

The largest age group for referrals were those aged between 4-7 and 63% of all of the safeguarding referrals were for children who were of primary school age.

Age Range	Males	Females	Total % of referrals for age group
4 to 7	15%	20%	35%
8 to 11	12%	17%	28%



Artsmark
Silver Award
Awarded by Arts
Council England



12 to 15	23%	8%	32%
16+	5%	0%	5%
Total % for gender	55%	45%	

Please note the information in this email concerns behaviour of children much younger than we speak to and the information contained in this email is for Parents/Carers of all children to be aware of and act on, if required.

Please see links below for websites where up to date information can be obtained about internet issues, in-depth details around apps, platforms, etc that children may be using and also guides how to set up accounts safely.

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/>

https://www.internetmatters.org/?gad=1&qclid=CjwKCAjwrranBhAEEiwAzbhNtZnNCFH88qfhUZTeUkITMiOzijn2mNpKldnpb2vcjamrEq38WrhPKBoCA_QQAvD_BwE