

Friday 14th December 2018

Online Safety – Year 5 and Year 6

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been brought to our attention that a number of children in Year 5 and Year 6 have been engaging in online communications which are not keeping themselves or others safe.

Children have been using sites/apps such as Snapchat, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Musically, Fortnite etc. The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) states that children under the age of 13 years old should not be on these sites/apps; some of the age restrictions are higher. The reason for these age restrictions is due to children of this young age not having the emotional maturity and understanding of online behaviour to use social media independently. This not only puts them at risk but also means that they are being exposed to upsetting and/or inappropriate content.

As a school, we include E-Safety as part of our curriculum. In Year 5 and 6, we have planned additional sessions to address current issues which have been reported to us, including: sharing of passwords, cyber-bullying, identity fraud (creation of an account of another person and using this to message abusive comments). If, as a school, we are notified of an E-Safety issue, we will endeavour to contact parents/carers.

Class teachers, the Inclusion team and the Principal team have spent a significant amount of time dealing with the emotional upset and impact from inappropriate social media use. These incidents, which occur outside of school, are affecting friendships within school. Whilst we will always support children who are upset or worried, we need your support as we are unable to monitor or investigate incidents that occur outside of school hours.

Children are not allowed mobile phones in school. Those brought in are locked in the safe as soon as they arrive at school and they are not allowed to retrieve them until they leave at the end of the day; if you choose to allow your child to use any social media, it is your responsibility to oversee their usage. This is not only to ensure that they are using sites/apps appropriately but also for their safeguarding. Children are able to communicate and share content with people who they do not know. If you would like further advice, we recommend you visit the follow website <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/> which has a dedicated section for parents and carers.

Any issues that arise from inappropriate social media use should be reported through the specified site or app, with involvement from police where appropriate.

If you have any questions regarding this, please see Miss Sanders or Mrs McCall.

Thank you for your support in this.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Sanders and Mrs McCall
Year Group leaders for year 5 and 6