

Tuesday 21st February 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We have been made aware that a significant number of our students are members of various WhatsApp groups. Unfortunately, some of the content on these WhatsApp groups is not always appropriate and can be unpleasant for the students involved, to receive.

If your child has a phone and uses WhatsApp or other online communication apps such as Snapchat and Instagram, then we would recommend that you check their phones and devices periodically to make sure that the content of conversations is appropriate for your children.

In school, we educate your children about E Safety but issues such as this are unfortunately now more commonplace, and we would encourage you to make us aware of any situations which you are concerned about. Please note that WhatsApp is a part of Facebook and their website states:

“If you live in a country in the European Economic Area (which includes the European Union), and any other included country or territory (collectively referred to as the European Region) you must be at least 16 years old (or such greater age required in your country) to register for and use WhatsApp.”

Please be vigilant and monitor what your child is doing on the internet or their phones. It is not an invasion of their privacy; you will be helping them to stay safe. It is important that everyone in our school is aware of modern forms of communication and that we all work together to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students. The following questions are important for you to consider:

Q) Does your child keep their phone on charge next to their bed? If so, is anyone messaging them through the night? Are they accessing inappropriate websites?

Q) Are there specific times every day when phones are switched off to give them a break?

Q) Are your home and phone internet filters and privacy settings robust?

Harassment, bullying and unkindness can follow children everywhere that they go, 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Make sure that this doesn't happen to your child.

Please do make us aware of any instances of bullying, let us know if you need any support or if you are worried about your child's activities online.

We will work with you to ensure that our students are happy and safe, and feel confident enough to report anything that they are worried about.

Yours sincerely

Miss Murray

Deputy Headteacher