Monday 10th June 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Social Media use outside of school

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 become aware of several Whatsapp groups in Upper Key Stage 2 that include many Exeter pupils. Some of these have led to some unkind and inappropriate comments being made, which are upsetting to the children involved. This is not in line with our school value of respect or our rules of, 'Ready, Respectful and Safe'.

We would like to remind you that most social media app guidance, clearly states that usage is for pupils 13 years and over.

If you do allow your child to access social media, we ask for your vigilance. What is right will vary from family to family but some strategies that are known to be successful include:

- Monitoring their phones for the apps that are downloaded
- Implementing parental controls on phones and consoles
- Reviewing the messages they send on platforms and apps – making monitoring part of a daily or weekly routine
- Setting expectations about what space (preferably communal) and times they have access to devices
- Encouraging them to share or discuss with you what they are doing

Please note, online use can lead to exposure to a number of worrying and inappropriate topics. Recently, children have come into school concerned about 'International Rape Day' which has caused lots of worry for some of our children due to the information that has been seen online and then discussed in our older year groups. This is just one example of the nature of the inappropriate content that has been seen online.

As a school we are responding to this with additional teaching during Crew Time about the importance of good online conduct.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Doherty Mrs Crawford
Head of School Head of School

Social Media Settings
Most social media apps are 13+ (WhatsApp is 16+) but - as we are aware some children are using them regularly - we wanted to share some important settings to keep children safe online.
Instagram
Settings
Privacy
PRIVATE ACCOUNT: when this is on, only followers can see your posts and stories and you have to approve followers (recommended: on)
COMMENTS, TAGS, MENTIONS, STORY: allows you to control who can tag you, comment on your posts, mention you in their story and control your story audience
You can also restrict, block or report a user by clicking on their profile and selecting the three dots in the top right.
You can also remove a follower using this method.
Tiktok
Privacy
PRIVATE ACCOUNT: when this is on, only followers can see your posts and you have to approve followers (recommended: on)
SAFETY: Tiktok has lots of options to restrict contact and interaction with video posts (recommended: friends)
COMMENT FILTERS: you can automatically hide comments that may have offensive words in (recommended: on)
You can also block, report or remove a follower by clicking on their profile and clicking the three dots in the top right hand corner.
WhatsApp
Settings
Account
Privacy
PROFILE PHOTO AND STATUS: You can change who can see a profile photo and status (recommended: my contacts)
GROUPS: allows you to stop a contact being able to add you to groups (recommended for when a friend adds you without permission)
BLOCKED: can add a contact to a blocked list so they can't message you.
You can also block or report a contact/ number by clicking on the chat with them, clicking on their number/name at the top then scrolling down!
Snapchat
CONTACT: decide who can message you and send you snaps (recommended: my friends)
VIEW MY STORY: restrict who can see your story (recommended: my friends)
GHOST MODE: if this isn't on, contacts can see your location on a map (recommended: on)
You can also block or report a user by locating their contact, tapping and holding their name and clicking more