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Thursday, 25th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Inappropriate use of social media and mobile phones

As you are aware, access to and use of social media is common these days and has become second nature to many of us. With this in mind, we wanted to provide some advice that is intended to help safeguard your children and yourselves as parents/carers.

Social media is a good example of how online behaviour can present e-safety risks. Users can express themselves with online personalities and chat and socialise with peers. They can publish and share multimedia content such as music, photos and video clips. **If used inappropriately however, users can put themselves and others at risk.** Most social media sites set age restrictions. Facebook, for example, sets an age restriction of 16+ years of age for users of its site. However, there is no verification and younger children often ignore the terms and conditions of use, unaware of the risks this might pose. Something to remember is that if your child is using false information to obtain an account on a social media site, other people can do so as well.

Unfortunately, I have been informed that some of our pupils are not using their mobile phones in a responsible and safe way when they are outside of school.

We advise that you check your child's phone regularly to ensure they are safe and keeping themselves safe online.

We would like to remind parents of the following age restrictions:

Age Restrictions for Social Media Platforms

What is the minimum age for account holders on these social media sites and apps?



Sourced from NSPCC website October 2019

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Social media sites can pose a number of risks to our children, including the following:

- Being exposed to inappropriate or upsetting content such as mean, aggressive, violent or sexual comments or images
- Uploading inappropriate content like embarrassing or provocative photos or videos of themselves or others
- Sharing personal information with strangers e.g. phone number, date of birth and or location
- Cyberbullying
- Exposure to inappropriate advertising and marketing

Please ensure appropriate measures are in place to safeguard your child against these potential risks.

If you would like to discuss the content of this letter further or have any questions, please feel free to contact me via the school office. We would like to work in partnership with our parents and children to tackle any form of online abuse and safeguard our children.

Further information about 'safe online learning' and the consequences of social networking can be found on **Think u know** www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_13/Need-advice/Ready-for-social-networking is always a good place to start – you will see the report abuse button that your child will know about from school.

<https://www.childnet.com/resources/supporting-young-people-online>

If you have any further questions, please feel free to speak to one of our Safeguarding Team at any time who will be able to provide you with additional support and assistance.

Thank you in advance for your ongoing support and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,
Mr Lorrain Black (MCCT)
Interim Headteacher