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Wednesday, 26th January 2022

Dear Parents / Carers,

It has come to our attention that many of the children in Year 5 and 6 are using social media platforms such as 'WhatsApp' and 'Tik Tok' to communicate with one another both individually and as part of group chats. Social Media apps such as these have age restrictions of 13+. We are aware that many children within Year 5 and 6 are using these apps and other platforms to chat at inappropriate times of the evening, often late into the night and are exchanging inappropriate language and content with one another.

If you have enabled your child to use such social media platforms, recommended advice is that parents should regularly monitor the way children are using this to communicate with one another e.g. Are you aware of who your child is talking to and the nature of the conversations they are having? Children who are under the age limit for these apps should not be using them unaccompanied and a trusted adult should carefully monitor the content of 'chat' to ensure that children are not using inappropriate language with one another, sending inappropriate images and that the nature of the conversation is appropriate.

We do not need to tell you, I am sure, that our digital footprint is with us for life and that what is posted online, even within private messages, can have a detrimental impact. As I am sure will agree, keeping our children safe both physically and online is of the utmost importance and we must work together to ensure our children are using any online platforms appropriately and safely.

We have spoken to the children today about the concerns we have around the use of social media platforms in Year 5 and 6 and the importance of reporting any worries, concerns, and difficulties they have. We appreciate your support and cooperation in this, and we would recommend that all families have an open and frank discussion about the use of social media platforms the children may be using and reconsider whether they are appropriate at this stage, or if a mobile phone / tablet is even necessary on a daily basis.

In addition to this letter, we will be holding a parent workshop over the next few weeks addressing our concerns in more detail and helping you to restrict your children while online. Please look out for dates for these meetings on our weekly newsletter as they are vitally important in ensuring your children are safe online. In the meantime please look at the following website for more information and support <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/>

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Regards

Rebecca Benjamins
Headteacher

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