

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Re: Online behaviour**

Dear Parents and Carers

It has come to our attention that many children in Y6 (and below) have their own mobile telephones and, as technology develops, so their use of it changes. Unfortunately, we have been made aware of a few incidents of unkind messages being sent about each other either as comments on videos posted on TikTok or as part of a group chat on WhatsApp. Whilst these incidents are happening outside school, it has become clear that one or two of these issues are now affecting relationships in school and therefore the ability to learn.

Both these apps (TikTok and WhatsApp) have age restrictions as a guide to appropriate and legal ages that young people should have accounts. TikTok minimum age is 13+ although it does have a “restricted” option where children can create videos but not post them, and they can view only videos deemed appropriate for children. This maybe something that you would like to consider using for your child/children. Interestingly, WhatsApp minimum age changed from 13+ to 16+ in May 2018.

We regularly talk to all the children about staying safe online and appropriate behaviour online. We always reiterate the need to behave in the same way as you would face to face (kind and respectful) when communicating online via whatever means, be it text messages, social media platforms, voice messages or games consoles.

The best advice that we are given by the police and other agencies working with children and young people around online safety is to regularly talk to your children about their online use, check devices (and let them know that you are checking it) and, whenever possible, have an open door policy to use of technologies in your house – i.e. anyone could come into the room at any time whilst they are on their devices.

Please do be vigilant when your children are playing games or communicating with each other and do also let us know if there is anything we can do to help.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Hardy  
Head Teacher

Nicole Ramsey  
Deputy head

Guy Willatt  
Deputy head