

Mobile Phone Use – Important Information for Parents

As children go through school into years 5 and 6, we often find that they begin to have more contact with each other through mobile phones. While this can have many positives, it can also lead to some challenges. We want to make you aware of these so you can monitor your child's interactions and ensure messages remain appropriate.

Why This Matters

Many apps, such as **Snapchat** and **WhatsApp**, have minimum age restrictions of 13 years old as younger children are often not mature enough to manage some of the issues that can arise, including:

- Inappropriate comments being made to or about children
- Friendship issues caused by being added or not added to group chats
- Contact late at night if phones are kept in bedrooms
- Sharing photographs or online images that may not be appropriate
- Inappropriate voice messages being sent
- Children feeling unable to switch off from ongoing issues
- Contact with strangers (with the dangers of adults pretending to be a child)

What You Can Do

If your child has a phone, we ask that you **regularly check their messages** and discuss any concerns with them. In school, we continue to teach online safety and remind children to speak to an adult if they experience any problem

Parental Control Tips

To help keep your child safe online, you might consider:

- ✓ **Set Screen Time Limits** – Use tools like *Apple Screen Time* or *Google Family Link*
- ✓ **Restrict App Downloads** – Enable parental controls to approve apps before installation
- ✓ **Monitor Messaging Apps** – Check privacy settings on WhatsApp and similar apps
- ✓ **Disable Location Sharing** – Turn off location services for apps
- ✓ **Keep Devices Out of Bedrooms at Night** – Helps prevent late-night messaging
- ✓ **Regular Conversations** – Talk openly about online safety and encourage sharing concerns

For more guidance and how to set parental controls visit:

- <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/>
- <https://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers/>
- <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/broadband-mobile/>

Thank you for your support in helping us keep all children safe and happy online!

