

St. Mark's Church of England Primary School



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To: parents of children in Key Stage 2 Classes

Dear Parents

Concern over Social Media and Online Activity

We regularly hear comments from children in school about their online activity. It is clear that many more children than ever before have accounts with platforms and on sites that are wholly inappropriate for children their age. While much of the content and activity on these platforms and sites can initially be completely innocent and fun, the nature of the internet means that it is easy for children to access or be exposed to other content which should be of serious concern to any parent.

We feel it is important to remind parents that all social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and video sharing sites, such as Tik Tok, have a minimum age limit of 13 years.

This means that ***no child in a primary school should have an account with or be using these sites or platforms.***

We teach children in school about sensible and safe use of the internet but far more powerful than anything we can say or teach in school are the messages from, and actions of, parents at home.

We appreciate the challenges of parenting and how difficult it is to monitor and limit screen time and internet use. However, it must be seen as a ***potentially serious threat*** to your children's safety and well-being.

A few things you should consider:

- Ensure that you have put security, filters and parental controls on all devices to which your child has access.
- Consider carefully whether a primary aged child really needs a smart phone (even an old one passed on by a family member)
- Only allow access to the internet in shared parts of the house so that you can be aware of what your child is seeing and doing online.
- Limit screen time and make it something that comes ***after*** other important activities such as homework, reading and family time.
- Research has proven the importance of having at least an hour without looking at back-lit screens before a child sleeps, to ensure the proper rest and quality sleep essential for a child's development.

We have a duty of care to your children and, together with you as parents, are shaping their development. Let's work together to protect them from the harm that could be done online.

Yours sincerely

Mr P Barfoot
Headteacher

