

31st October 2023

Dear families

Keeping Children Safe: Staying Safe Online

As you may know, internet safety is a key part of our safeguarding duty. We have a range of assemblies, PSHE sessions and workshops that we do around keeping safe online. We also have a *never seen, never heard* policy for mobile phones in school. Phones that are seen, are confiscated.

I am writing to advise you of ways you can help keep your child safe and potential issues around their use of social media. Apps such as Snapchat, Tik Tok, Instagram etc. all have an age restriction of 13 years old. This is because children younger than this often find some of the boundaries of social media too complex and they should proceed with caution. Quite simply, they are often not mature enough to manage this level of communication. Children above 13 still struggle and there are ways you can support them to manage communication – just like in real life, children need supervision and support. Some strategies we know are helpful are:

- ➔ Monitoring your child's phone and apps that are downloaded
- ➔ Enacting parental controls on phones and consoles
- ➔ Reviewing the messages they send on platforms and apps – making monitoring part of a daily or weekly routine
- ➔ Setting expectations about what space (preferably communal) and times they have access to devices
- ➔ Encouraging them to share or discuss with you what they are doing.

If a child is using social media to be persistently unkind to other pupils, we will take appropriate action; unkind behaviour and bullying – in real life or online – does not align with our school values and cannot be tolerated. If a child says something online, we consider this as an equivalent to saying something to someone directly. At school, we use these questions to help children think about whether or not something is appropriate to post:


- ➔ Would you be happy if your family heard/ saw what you said?
- ➔ Would be happy if your teachers heard/saw what you said?
- ➔ Would you be happy if this post was publicly available?

If the answer is no, do not post it.

At Greyfriars, we see families as part of our school family and we need to work in partnership to keep children safe online. This website offers useful support for parents when dealing with online safety: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/social-media-guides>

Thank you for your understanding and continued support.





Yours faithfully

Mr S Masterson
Deputy Headteacher