

Maidenbower Junior School

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19th October 2020

Dear Year 6 parents and carers,

I am writing to you to reinforce information that was sent home through the Friday year group email concerning social media. The last few weeks have seen a large number of social media related issues brought to our attention which is taking up valuable staff time and eating into children's learning time. We are reluctant to become involved in issues outside of school as it is a parental responsibility, however many incidents are having a knock-on effect to children's well-being and learning, despite teachers spending time delivering online safety sessions and talking to groups of pupils.

Our main concern is that many pupils are using sites that they are not old enough to use. Here are the age restrictions for the main social media apps:

What's app – 16 years old

Instagram – 13 years old

Snapchat – 13 years old

Facebook – 13 years old

Having a YouTube account – 13 years old

These age restrictions are due to a mixture of privacy settings, keeping children safe and that children below these ages may not have the maturity to cope with the pressures and options available to these sites. This has certainly been the case recently.

If you decide that you are happy for your child to use these sites, please can you monitor their usage very closely to protect them from harm, and also to show them that these sites can be used positively when used well. There have been several cases of disturbing language, very worrying topics of conversation and intent to upset or intimidate other children. Please support us in the following messages that we share with pupils:

- If you have nothing nice to say, then do not say anything.
- Would you willing to show your posts to your family? If not, then it is unlikely to be appropriate.
- Once a post or message has been sent, it cannot be fully deleted and can be used by others straight away and/or in the future.
- Children need to get permission to post pictures of other children.
- If you are unhappy with any content of group chats, then try to stop it and then leave the group.
- Not to be on phones when children go to bed (recent examples of group chats taking place after 10/11pm).
- Not to use Tiktok – you will have read about some disturbing content recently.
- If something inappropriate takes place, alert an adult.

Although we spend time teaching the children about safer internet use, it is out of our control as to what happens once the children leave our gates and we would

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appreciate your close supervision of your child's internet use, should you feel that they need access to these sites.

Thank you for your continued support in trying to keep our pupils safe. Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions about this.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr Pike', written in a cursive style.

Mr Pike
Deputy Headteacher