



## Barrowby Church of England Primary School

June 2022

Dear Parents/Carers of children in Year 5

This week I have become aware that a number of our Year 5 children have access to WhatsApp, whilst at home and have joined, set up or have been added to chats between other children in their class.

**WhatsApp is a social media platform for 16 years or older, this was raised from 13 years old to 16 years old in 2018 due to data protection laws.**

Unfortunately, the chat that we have been made aware of includes a number of children discussing age inappropriate content which has caused some upset to the children and families involved. In addition to this, it has become apparent that some children also have unsupervised access to online games: Brookhaven on Roblox and are playing in an age inappropriate way which has caused further upset to children.

As children become older, they would like to become more independent but I would urge parents to remember that our Year 5 children are only 9 or 10 years old and are not necessarily well equipped or emotionally resilient to deal with difficult conversations or situations they find themselves in, while online.

**As a school, we recommend that any primary age pupils, working on-line at home access 'age appropriate content' and should be monitored by parents while using any internet-based communication service e.g. iPad, iPod, X-box, e-mail, text, smartphone.**

In light of this recent e safety issue I would like to advise that parents review particular E Safety Newsletters that the school has published:

- WhatsApp: group chats (July 2021 edition)
- Online Games with chat (December 2021 edition)
- setting Parental Controls (April 22 edition),

You can find these by [CLICKING HERE](#). In addition, parents may also find it useful to review the following editions of our E Safety Newsletter:

- Snapchat (March 22 edition)
- Tik Tok (January 22 edition)
- Roblox (October 2021 edition)
- Social Media Apps (September 2021 edition)

Parents should also consider how they can keep their child safe at home, while they are online. Our advice would be for you to:

- **supervise any and all internet access, while at home, by a pupil of our school (4-11 years old) e.g. while children are on-line they should be in the same room as the adult;**
- monitor the applications your child is downloading/using e.g. from iTunes, Play Store
- limit the amount of time pupils have access to technology to avoid excessive usage of age appropriate on-line gaming and internet access
- inform your child/ren that you will periodically check internet search histories and follow through e.g. monthly
- regularly monitor and review access to: age appropriate chat rooms e.g. Kik, Moshi Monsters, and other social media



We recommend that, prior to children accessing the internet through:

- Mobile phones
- Laptops
- Tablets
- Ipads
- Ipods
- or on-line gaming via X-Box etc

**Parents should**

- ensure up to date security software/protocols are installed and enable any:
  1. Fireguards and anti-virus software
  2. Parental controls and
  3. Filters before use by children

**and discuss with their child/ren what they would do, if someone:**

- e-mailed or verbalised
- or text
- or sent inappropriate images
- or posted content

they deemed inappropriate or hurtful **or** they had not given permission to be used i.e. report to parent and/or teacher and appropriate action taken; **or** what they would do if they were asked for personal details e.g. name, age, school, address etc. from someone they did not know i.e. no personal details should ever be shared on-line.

Today, I have visited our Year 5 class to discuss the issues around keeping themselves safe online, whilst at home. I am reassured that the children have a good awareness of strategies they would use to keep themselves safe while working on line.

I would encourage all parents to continue the conversation tonight with your child/ren when they come home and possibly review what your child has access to online, on their tablet, laptop or mobile phone, if needed.

As a school, we would like all our children to feel happy at school. Unfortunately, due to the nature of this e safety incident, which occurred out of school, this is not the case at the moment.

Thank you for your support and I hope that we will be able to avoid e safety issues of this nature in the future.

Yours sincerely



Mr L Batey  
Headteacher

