



Barrowby Church of England Primary School

June 2023

Dear Parents/Carers of children in Year 6

Today, I have become aware that one of our Year 6 children has added someone they don't know (and met via another Social Media Platform) to a Whatsapp group that the majority of our Y6 children have access to, whilst at home. This person, who is not a pupil at our school and is allegedly 12 years old has been making threatening remarks in the chat that some of our Year 6 pupil shave been upset by. This was brought to my attention this morning.

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, many children have not informed their parents of the issue. I am being told by the children that this person has been removed from the chat. You may wish to discuss this with your child tonight when they arrive home.

As children become older, they would like to become more independent but I would urge parents to remember that our Year 6 children are only 10 or 11 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.

Parents should 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
- I pads
- 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 6 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

