



Beckingham Primary School

Head teacher: Mr. P. Phillips BA (Hons)

“Ensuring every child succeeds and THRIVES becoming a life-long learner, prepared for the world of tomorrow”
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Tuesday 19th March, 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: WhatsApp

Recently there have been several incidents related to the misuse of WhatsApp. I wanted to inform you that these incidents are involving several Class 3 pupils being part of/invited into chat groups, and, in the latest incident, being exposed to unsuitable images/content.

WhatsApp is a chat application which can be used on a mobile phone or tablet, it lets you send messages, images and videos to friends. You can have one to one and group conversations.

This letter is to make you aware that your child may be using WhatsApp without your knowledge and you should be mindful that the minimum age for WhatsApp is currently 16 or over.

We have investigated this latest incident, however I ask that you carefully monitor what your child is viewing online, and that they are reminded that they must tell you if they receive anything inappropriate from any application.

As a school we strongly advise you to remove the chat groups involving any other children, given the age limit for the use of the application and that often the children are randomly added to these groups, often with people that they do not know.

Beckingham Primary School continue to educate your children in online safety through a number of teaching strategies including lessons in PSHE and Computing, whole school assemblies and through the DAaRT and Web Warriors programme every 2-years (our Year 6 pupils undertook this last year and the Year 5 children will undertake the programme in the academic year of 2024-25).

If you require any further advice, please come and speak to me.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Phillips
Head teacher



ONLINE CONTENT

10 tips to keep your children safe online

The internet has transformed the ability to access content. Many apps that children use are dependent on user-generated content which can encourage freedom of expression, imagination and creativity. However, due to the sheer volume uploaded every day, it can be difficult for platforms to regulate and moderate everything, which means that disturbing or distressing images, videos or audio clips can slip through the net. That's why we've created this guide to provide parents and carers with some useful tips on keeping children safe online.



1 MONITOR VIEWING HABITS

Whilst most apps have moderation tools, inappropriate content can still slip through the net.



2 CHECK ONLINE CONTENT

Understand what's being shared or what seems to be 'trending' at the moment.



3 CHECK AGE-RATINGS

Make sure they are old enough to use the app and meet the recommended age-limit.



4 CHANGE PRIVACY SETTINGS

Make accounts private and set content filters and parental controls where possible.



5 SPEND TIME ON THE APP

Get used to how apps work, what content is available and what your child likes to watch.



6 LET CHILDREN KNOW YOU'RE THERE

Ensure they know that there is support and advice available to them if they need it.



7 ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING

Talk about what people might post online and why some posts could cause distress.



8 LEARN HOW TO REPORT & BLOCK

Always make sure that children know how to use the reporting tools on social media apps.



9 KEEP AN OPEN DIALOGUE

If a child sees distressing material online; listen to their concerns, empathise and offer reassurance.



10 SEEK FURTHER SUPPORT

If a child has been affected by something they've seen online, seek support from your school's safeguarding lead.



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