

Monday 27th March 2023

Dear Parents and carers,

Re: Mobile phone apps and online safety

I am writing to you to clarify the school's approach to the misuse of social media. With an increasing number of students having access to technology, issues with the misuse of social media by primary school age children are increasing. To minimise incidents in school we have a zero tolerance on the use of mobile phones on the school grounds; **children in years 5 and 6 who have permission to walk to school alone may place their phone in the assigned locked drawer in their classroom** but these devices should be in a child's bag the moment they enter the premises and not leave their bag until the end of the school day once they have left the premises. Any child who brings their phone in to school and who doesn't adhere to this rule will have their phone confiscated and their parent will be called.

If any aspect of ICT is misused in the school or using our equipment we will identify and address this misuse. Fortunately, this type of misuse is incredibly rare and this is helped by the fact that students are not able to access any social media sites on our network.

Indeed, most of the inappropriate use of the internet is done from home or on students' mobile devices during evenings, weekends and holidays. This makes it very difficult for schools to investigate and take action and while we are happy to assist, this takes up an incredible amount of school leaders' time.

The responsibility for monitoring a child's use of social media, or indeed the internet in general, must lie with parents/guardians. We strongly encourage you to discuss issues around this with your child. It is also worth noting the age limits for Whatsapp, Snapchat, TikTok, Facebook and Instagram, further information regarding these can be found on our

<https://www.woodhillschool.co.uk/page/?title=Online+Safety+information+for+parents&pid=32>

If your child is the victim of inappropriate use then we strongly recommend that you, as a parent/guardian, report the matter to both the social media service and to the police. However, to support you and your child the school will:

- Continue, through circle times and assemblies, to educate students of the dangers of inappropriate use of apps and mobile phones
- Continue to monitor the use of any form of ICT in normal school hours



- Refer anything that we believe could be defined as, or could potentially lead to, a Child Protection issue to the appropriate external agencies
- Continue to support parents with advice on how to tackle inappropriate use either by their own child or others

I hope that you find this information useful and by working together, as outlined in this letter, I trust that we can keep all our students safe and well.

With best wishes



Mr O Phillips
Headteacher

