



Sacred Heart RC Primary School

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‘Where Every Heart is Sacred’

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Dear Parents / Carers,

It has come to my attention that some of the children in Year 5 and 6 are using social media platforms such as ‘WhatsApp’ to communicate with one another both individually and as part of group chats. I am deeply saddened and shocked that a small number of children are using this app to exchange seriously inappropriate and offensive language and content with one another. They are also using this app to exchange messages well into the early hours of the morning.

If you have enabled your child to use such social media platforms, recommended advice is that parents should regularly monitor the way children are using this to communicate with one another. Vital questions to consider are:

Are you aware who your child is talking to on social media?

Are you aware of the content your child is sending and receiving?

Are parental controls installed effectively on all devices?

The age requirement to use Whatsapp is 16+. If you have chosen to allow your underage child to use Whatsapp and other similar apps, they should not be using them unaccompanied. A trusted adult should carefully monitor the content of ‘chat’ to ensure that children are not using inappropriate language with one another and that the nature of the conversation and content is appropriate.

Our digital footprint is with us for life and that what is posted online, even within private messages, can have a detrimental impact on a person’s future and general mental health and well being. As I am sure you will agree, keeping our children safe, both physically and online, is of the up most importance and we must work together to ensure our children are using any online platforms appropriately and safely.

All the children at Sacred Heart are taught how to stay safe online, the importance of self respect and respecting others and they are not allowed to use social media apps at school. I have spoken to the children about the serious concerns that have been brought to my attention and reminded them of the importance of reporting any worries to their parent or carer or a teacher. I will be arranging for additional workshops for children and parents led by an online safety specialist to discuss the risk to children of social media, how to make a report to the app providers and any other concerns on this issue.

I appreciate your support and cooperation in this and I would recommend that all families have an open and frank discussion about the use of social media platforms the children may be using and reconsider whether they are appropriate.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Walker
Headteacher

