

# Cherry Tree Primary School and Nursery

*Caring, Thriving, Preparing, Succeeding*



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Headteacher: Mrs N Barrand, BSc (Hons), M.Ed., PGDE, PGCE, NPQH, CMgr. MCMI

3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2021

Dear Families,

## Re: Use of social media platforms and your child

The start of a new academic year is an ideal time to remind you about some of the issues with allowing children unsupervised access to social networking and the need for us to support one another in keeping our children safe online.

As parents it is important that you are aware that social networking platforms (or apps if on a smartphone) have age limits. Some social networks use technologies that may not be right for some ages or engage with communities that are made up of people much older than your child. Examples are shown below:

To use:

You Tube

Twitter

Facebook

Snapchat

TikTok

Instagram

Omegle

**you must be 13 or older.**

To use:

WhatsApp

Flickr

Vimeo

MySpace

Periscope

**you must be 16 or older.**

The above are not exhaustive lists but identify some of the more well-known apps/platforms in use today.



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Increasingly, we are seeing children in Years 5 and 6 having access to social media inappropriate to their age, WhatsApp in particular is one that we know a number of children are using even though they are underage. Sadly, there are a number of occasions and incidents that are being shared with us, where, outside of school, children are using these inappropriately. We have had cases reported of bullying, pressure to carry out actions/activities that are inappropriate etc. Whilst we will support families and work with you in supporting the children you, as their parents, ultimately have control of their mobile phones and other technologies.

If your child is experiencing inappropriate behaviours through these sources you can report the offender(s) via the reporting facilities for the individual networks or using CEOP (use the quick link for this on the school website).

In some cases we may consider it appropriate to report incidents to social care as the age limits are there to protect children and by allowing access children are not being protected by their responsible adult(s).

We would ask families to talk to children about the safe and appropriate use of such sites if you are going to allow your children access to them. It is important that children know that it isn't easy to take back comments and information that has been posted and it is impossible if it's already been shared! Sadly, some children think that by deleting a post it is removed, this is not the case. Also, some children, because they are not mature enough to understand the implications of their actions feel that it is alright to be unkind to others they cannot see and they do this in ways that they would not necessarily do if their conversation was face to face. The anonymity of using social media is a significant factor in giving some children a feeling of power to bully others. It should also be remembered that chatrooms and forums provide places where online groomers go to connect with children and they can also be places where inappropriate language can be prevalent.

As part of our work in supporting keeping our children safe and informed about staying safe online and keeping you as their parents informed, children in Y3-6 will be accessing the 'Two Johns' e-safety workshops again this year on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> September. There will also be an online workshop for parents on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> October (8.00 p.m.)

We ask that you support us in helping to educate and keep our children safe in their use of social media and technologies.

Yours sincerely,

*N. Barrand*

N. Barrand (Mrs.)  
Headteacher