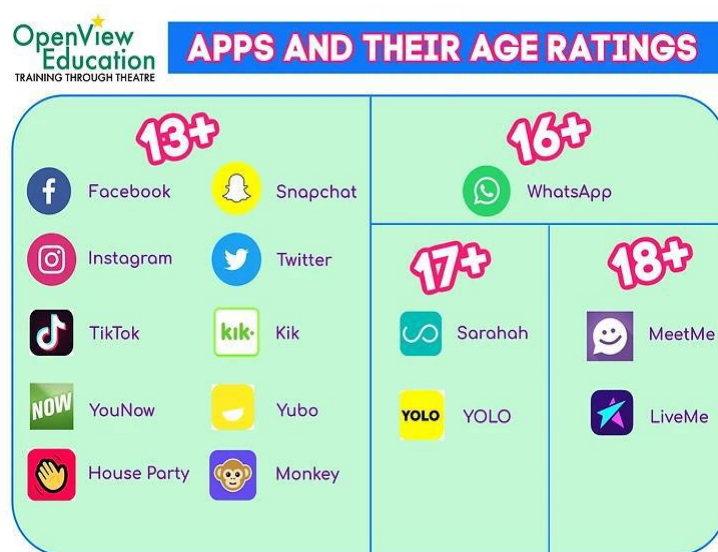


Staying Safe Online – School Safety Newsletter

We have online safety running through numerous areas of the curriculum and staff are often having conversations with children about keeping themselves safe when online. However, from our experience the majority of issues stem from children not having the maturity to appreciate the technology they are using and also parents not being aware of the extent of their online profile. Often, it comes as a surprise to parents when we have to inform them of something which has happened and then has spilt over into school. Therefore, one of the best ways to keep your child safe on the internet is to ensure you are aware of what apps your child is using and whether they are suitable. I appreciate it can be a real battle area in the home, as children want more independence and to be using the same things as their peers, but once they have seen something, sent or been sent something, it can't be undone.



WhatsApp

What do parents need to be aware of?

Age restrictions

In Europe and the UK, the minimum age of use for WhatsApp is 16 years old. It had previously dropped to 13 years old but in April 2018 returned to 16, as a response to data-protection legislation.

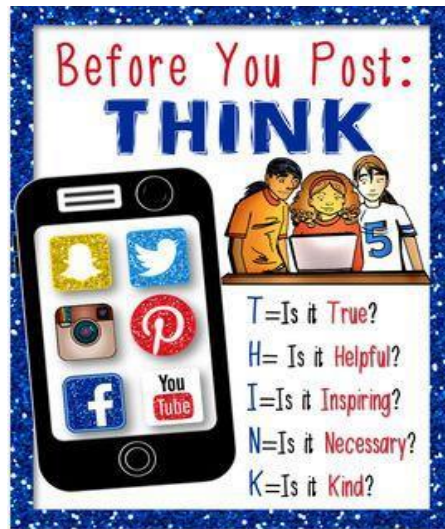
Like many age restrictions on social media apps, some children may choose to ignore this and sign up for WhatsApp when they're younger.

WhatsApp's main purpose is to send messages to friends. It isn't public in the same way that Twitter is, and people can only message friends who are already added on their phone. As long as a child only has trusted people as contacts on their phone, it is a relatively safe social media app.

The main thing to discuss with them is how to act in group chats, as here people not in their contacts will be able to see all the messages and send them messages.

Group chats

Anybody in the group, even if they're not one of your phone contacts, will be able to see messages that you post, and you will be able to see theirs. If you are added to a group with someone you have blocked, that person will still be able to contact you in the group chat. You can't always control if you're added to a group chat; but remind children that they can always control their own participation within it – they can leave whenever they want to.



SnapChat

What is Snapchat?

Snapchat is a popular messaging app that lets users exchange pictures and videos, called snaps, that are meant to disappear after they're viewed. The essential function is to take a picture or video, add filters, lenses, or other effects, and share it with friends.

How do I monitor Snapchat and use the settings?

The app's Family Center gives parents and caregivers some visibility of their child's usage, including who their child has been communicating with. Adults have to install the app and link their accounts by adding their child as a friend. Their child then needs to accept an invitation to opt in to the Family Center functionality. You won't be able to see specific content your child has sent or received—just their friend list and who they've sent messages, photos, or videos to in the last seven days.

If you decide to say yes to Snapchat, focus on the privacy settings. Sit down with your child and together go into the app's settings. This is a perfect time to talk with your kid about using their Snapchat account safely and responsibly. Discuss when and how often you'll check in on how they're using it, and how they're feeling about it. Explain that you understand that social media is important to them, and that, at the same time, your role is to protect them. Don't forget to ask your teen to show you some of their snaps and some of the cool features they like in the app. That'll make it a little less scary for you—and send the message that you're on the same team.

Online safety Bill:

You may have heard in the news recently that on the 26th October, a new set of rules called the Online Safety Act became law. It is designed to protect children from seeing harmful content on social media and the internet and has been over five years in the planning.

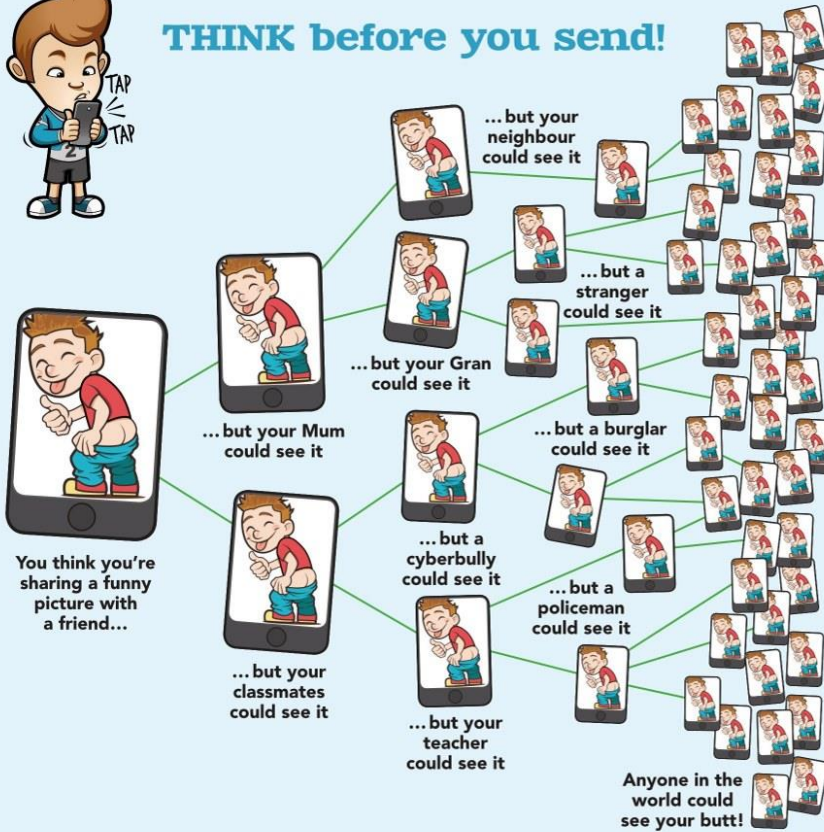
Under the new law, social media companies are now legally responsible for keeping young people safe online. They are required to remove anything which is harmful for young people to see or illegal. One of the key parts of this is that companies such as Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok, which require users to be at least 13 years old, will have to check users age. Anyone under 13 won't be able to have an account and the companies could be fined if they don't follow the law. They also need to provide clear and easy methods to report problems or content which people come across and feel should not be accessible on the internet. It will be interesting to see how social media companies respond to these changes.

If you ever have any queries, concerns or questions then please don't hesitate to contact the school.

Parent Guides to Online Safety



THINK before you send!



scan the QR code with your phone's camera for Parent Guides on how to help keep your children safe online



If you share it, you are involved

If you have, or forward an indecent image of someone under 18, it is a criminal offence. It can affect your future.

Online safety is when young people know who they can tell if they feel upset by something that has happened online.

Parents please contact your school to enquire attending their next e-safety workshop or have any concerns.

Working with Home Office 'PREVENT', The Police and Crime Commissioner and Children's Safeguarding Partnerships to help keep children safe online.

Skips Educational Email: info@skipsed.com Tel: +44 121 227 1941

Developed in partnership with

