

Newchurch Community Primary School
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Headteacher: Mrs J Narraway

27th September 2024

Dear parent/carer,

The new Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance from the Department of Education states that schools have a responsibility to safeguard children both inside and outside of school. As a community, mourning the loss of Brianna Ghey not too long ago, we are all aware of the impact social media can have on the wellbeing of people and also the safeguarding risks associated with access to such sites.

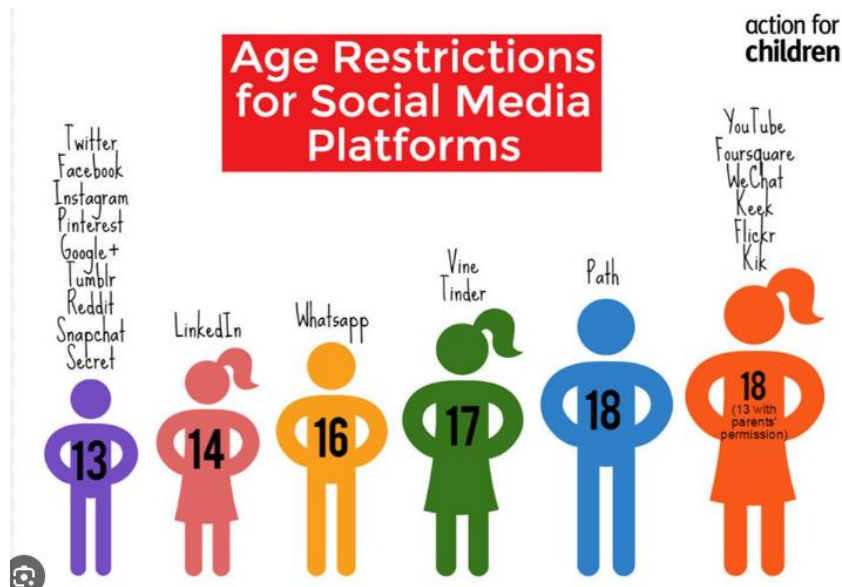
Unfortunately, it has come to our attention that some children are making use of platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook and Snap Chat to communicate with one another – in some cases inappropriately. Whilst such platforms are great for keeping connections between people, they can create a safeguarding issue for children and as a school we are requesting that you support us in keeping your child safe when online.

The current age requirement for WhatsApp is 16+ although it had previously been 13. This was changed due to new data protection legislation enacted in Europe (GDPR) - this is because of some of the information WhatsApp will collect about users such as phone number and information on what device you are using.

The school educate the children on the dangers of such platforms and the age restrictions of them but we are sure you can appreciate that the school cannot enforce that they do not use them, particularly if parents are condoning them. Therefore, it is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure they safeguard their children by adhering to the age restrictions and the older children understanding that they may now be of an age where they can be prosecuted for inappropriate use of such platforms. Should you require any guidance on keeping your child safe online, we would recommend the following website: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Just in case you are not aware of the age restrictions, please see the image below which outlines what they are. It is clear that no children of primary school age should be accessing such platforms.





Thank you to those parents who have made us aware of any incidents that have occurred outside of school so we are able to ensure that they do not cascade into the school day and impact on the children's learning. This has also allowed us to put in some educational reminders to the children around keeping safe. Should there be incidents in school, they will be dealt with promptly and in line with the school's behaviour management policy; however, ensuring children do not access platforms which have clear age restrictions in the first place would ensure that incidents do not happen and valuable learning time to investigate incidents is not lost.

Many thanks in anticipation of your continued and valued support.

Yours sincerely,

Jayne Narraway

Headteacher

