



St Lawrence C of E (Aided) Junior

Friday 1st February 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

Online safety is an important part of keeping children safe at St Lawrence. We have extensive security measures in place in school, which are monitored both internally and externally, to help safeguard pupils from potential dangers or unsuitable material. Any online incidents are recorded and managed in accordance with our Online Policy. Online Safety is taught to all pupils explaining and demonstrating how to stay safe and behave appropriately online.

Over the past few days we have had been made aware of incidents involving children using social networking sites (in particular WhatsApp) in an unsafe and inappropriate manner. This has really concerned us, as **the safety and wellbeing of the children in our school is of the utmost importance.**

Please talk to your child about the dangers related to using social media. Uploading videos or photos on to You Tube or Instagram may seem fun, but can leave children in a very vulnerable position. If children give their full name and are wearing their school uniform in videos it would be very easy for them to be put in danger. Videos and photos that are uploaded can be commented on and messages sent to the person who has made them. Messages sent in group chats, rather than said to someone face-to-face, can often be misunderstood and at times can be deliberately hurtful.

Social media sites have strict age limits set, which parents may not be aware of. These age limits are there to protect children, who may not be mature enough to know that they are getting themselves into an inappropriate or dangerous situation.

Next week will be having Safer Internet day and talking to the children in more detail about using the internet in a safe and appropriate way. **We can only be successful in keeping children safe online if we work with you to ensure the Online Safety message is consistent. Your help is needed to talk to your children about how they can keep safe and behave appropriately online.**

WHAT CAN PARENTS/CARERS DO?

Ground Rules:

- Discuss as a family how the internet will be used in your house. Consider what should be kept private online (personal information, photos etc) and decide rules for making and meeting online friends. Make sure you know what your child is doing online much like you would offline.

Online Safety:

- Install antivirus software, secure your internet connection and use Parental Control functions for computers, mobile phones and games consoles to block unsuitable content or contact.

Headteacher: Mr D Tucker

Church Road, East Molesey, Surrey, KT8 9DR

Tel: 020 8941 0846, Fax: 020 8941 7651





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- Remember that parental control tools are not always 100% effective and sometimes unsuitable content can get past them, so don't rely on them alone to protect your child.

Location:

- Locate your computer in a supervised family area. Always supervise the use of webcams in and applications which allow voice or video chat. Consider your child's use of other devices that allow internet access such as Mobile Phones and Games Consoles.
- Remove electronic devices such as phones and tablets from bedrooms after "lights out". This can lead to interrupted sleep which can have serious effects in the short and long term.

Dialogue:

- Talk to your child and ask them to show or even teach you how they use the internet, learn which websites or tools they like to use and why. Learning together can often open opportunities to discuss safe behaviour with your child.
- Always ensure your child knows how to block or report people online who send nasty or inappropriate messages or content. Encourage your child not to retaliate or reply.
- Make sure your child knows to tell an adult they trust if they see something online that makes them feel scared, worried or uncomfortable.
- It's essential to be realistic - banning the internet or technology will not work and it often makes a child less likely to report a problem. Education around safe use is essential.

Websites for more information:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk - Visit the "Parent/Carer" Section and use the "Click CEOP" button to seek advice and report online abuse

www.childnet.com - Visit the 'Know It All' Section for an interactive guide about online safety

www.getsafeonline.org - Free up-to-date Security advice

<http://clickcleverclicksafe.direct.gov.uk> - Click Clever Click Safe Campaign

www.bbc.co.uk/onlinesafety

www.cybermentors.org.uk - Online support for children



There is also a link to an informative Online Safety website on our own St Lawrence website page.

<http://www.knowthenet.org.uk/articles/kids-not-equipped-coming-digital-age-nine>.

We thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Tucker



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Age Restrictions for Social Media Platforms

Age Group	Platforms
Under 13 <i>(with Parental Consent)</i>	Path, Roblox
13 +	Facebook, My Space, Twitter, Skype, Instagram, iTunes, Pinterest, ooVoo, Google+, Skout, Tumblr, Meet Me, Reddit, Periscope, Snapchat, Ask.FM, LinkedIn, BBM
16 +	WhatsApp
17 +	Vine, Whisper
18 +	Tinder, Yik Yak
18 <i>(13 with parental permission)</i>	You Tube, Play Store, We Chat, Spotify <i>(12 with parental permission)</i> , Kik, Keek, FourSquare, Flickr, Musical.ly, Live.ly, Omegle