

Dear Parents/ Carers,

It has been brought to our attention that there have been a number of issues regarding mobile phone and social media use in Year 6. Even though these activities are taking place out of school, we would like to support and educate children as much as possible to ensure the safe usage of these platforms. However, it is important that, as parents, you work with us to take an active role in supporting your children through this and we will continue to address issues as individuals or as a class where necessary.

Firstly, I would like to say thank you to parents who have brought issues to our attention. If, as a parent, you are allowing your child to have a phone and use social media at aged 10 and 11, it is essential that you help your child navigate this. Phones and the internet open up a whole new world (full of potential risks) for children, and it is impossible for them to even begin to understand how to use them safely without guidance.

Our aim as a school is to ensure our children leave us having had a great education, but also as great citizens. Part of this is embodied in our 6Rs, which we hope they take away with them and remember in all aspects of life, including social media. Children should be respectful of one another and themselves, both in person and online. Children also need to be responsible about how they use social media, considering the results of their actions. In PSHE this term, our focus is on digital wellbeing, and we have already had some great conversations surrounding this topic. Unfortunately, it seems that, at present, some of this isn't being transferred into the real world.

I have put together a few tips for you as parents, if you are struggling with how to approach this:

- 1) Keep an eye on what your child is doing on their phone: which apps they are using, who they are talking to and what messages they are being sent. This will allow you to become aware if they are being sent anything inappropriate or unkind, so you can deal with it.
- 2) If allowing your child to use a social media app before the required age, please ensure you help to guide them through this. Apps have age limits for a reason; sometimes this is due to inappropriate content, or simply not quite being mature enough to know how to use it and deal with any potential risks.
- 3) Set screen time restrictions to ensure children aren't spending too long on devices, and that they have the opportunity to go out and to other activities as well.
- 4) Most importantly, talk to your child about their use of social media. This will hopefully allow an open channel of communication where they feel comfortable and able to approach you if they need any advice.

I hope that by working together, we can reduce the number of issues arising, and help children to navigate the digital world with all the right tools to do so. I really appreciate your support with this matter; it is a difficult subject that is often the cause of issues with children around this age, and I don't feel that there will be much improvement without support from both school and home.

If you do have any questions, come across any issues or simply need some advice, please don't hesitate to contact me via the school office. I have also attached here a helpful guide developed by Internet Matters, NSPCC, Parent Zone, and UK Safer Internet Centre.

Kind regards,

Miss Tracy