

ABBOTSWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL



'Helping **everyone** achieve their best'



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'It Really Does Matter'

20th March 2023

Keeping Safe Online

Dear Parents/Carers,

As somebody who grew up in an age before social media, I am always amazed at how rapidly technology has moved on in such a short time. Although spending time on social media has become a way of life for many of us, it must be treated with extreme caution, especially for children.

In recent weeks, we have been made aware of an increasing amount of inappropriate use of various social media platforms. Much of this behaviour is wholly unacceptable, hurtful and more than a little concerning. It is difficult for us to manage this as it is taking place in the children's homes yet we certainly see the impact it has on the children when they speak of it in school.

I never wish to preach, yet if your child is currently on social media, has access to a mobile phone or plays interactively on their gaming console, please can you check that they are using it appropriately.

We look at Internet Safety with the children in school and hope you can join us in keeping your children safe online. Please talk to them about what social media is, what rules you have for it, its inherent dangers and how it doesn't always reflect an accurate picture of someone's life. It is also important to remind them about the way they speak to others online.

I have completed Safeguarding training today and one of the facts presented was that only 4 in 10 parents know the minimum age requirements for using various social media sites and games. There are so many of them so this is hardly surprising. Interestingly, children are often more aware and knowledgeable of this than their parents!

These are the age restrictions for some popular social media services:

Social Media Service	Age Restriction
Facebook	13
Snapchat	13
Instagram	13
Tik Tok	13
Whats App	16
You Tube	No age restriction; 13 to set up your own account

Here are four simple tips on how to navigate the social media world together:

1. Determine if your child is mature enough and ready to join a social media platform.
2. Talk to your children.
3. Limit screen time and monitor their usage.
4. Model good behaviour.

Lastly, go easy on yourself as a parent when it comes to social media and your children. You're not on your own and social media affects everyone of all ages – good and bad.

Thank you,

Mr Glenn Moore
Headteacher