



Safeguarding News



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Important WhatsApp information for parents

In its latest updates WhatsApp - the popular Facebook-owned chat application has stopped asking for any age verification for new users - meaning any child in charge of a smartphone can easily use the application to share photographs and videos without their parents' knowledge

What is the minimum age to legally use WhatsApp in the UK?

In the UK you need to be 16 to legally use WhatsApp.

How can parents monitor their child's WhatsApp?

WhatsApp is secure and encrypted so it cannot be intercepted. You can, however, set up a second device allowing you to participate in their chats and conversations. You can access the information and guide on the parentshield.co.uk website [here](#).

What precautions can Parents take?

- * Use a child-safe mobile network
- * Check a child's phone regularly to see what Apps are installed
- * Use Parental Controls to restrict app installation to chosen apps
- * Set privacy settings on any chat applications to restrict sharing with known contacts only
- * Use websites like ParentShield. ParentShield intercepts and BLOCKS any WhatsApp (and Snapchat) setup verification SMS messages and informs parents instantly.

Why is WhatsApp dangerous?

By default WhatsApp allows unrestricted sharing of voice, text images and videos with any other user anywhere in the world.

Personal information, profile picture, and even location can easily be shared with hundreds of strangers.



Roblox

Roblox is a very popular game that many primary aged children online. There was an article in the BBC on Tuesday highlighting the dangerous content and images that children may see when playing Roblox. The BBC reported the Roblox platform as 'The children's game with a sex problem' and highlighted how children can access events called 'condos' allowing them to engage in sexual conversations and virtual activities.

You can read the article by following this link: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-60314572>

We know that many children play a variety of games online, including Roblox. Could you sit with your children when they are playing games, so that you can monitor the content and language that they hear and see. As a parent, you can then decide if you think the game is suitable for your child and can add filters or block the game.

If you do think you need more control over this part of your child's life there are now many parental control apps available to purchase– take a look! It might be the best few pounds you ever spend!

Is your child's mental health suffering?

Did you know parents can now self-refer to CAMHs (Children and Adolescents Mental Health service)? If you feel you need this service, you can call them on 01977 735865 (option 2)

Or go on-line for more information and to find a short referral form:
www.southwestyorkshire.nhs.uk/camhs-wakefield

SAFEGUARDING REMINDERS

As always, keeping our children safe online is vitally important and taking the steps outlined above will help you to do so. Remember, if you wish to discuss anything regarding safeguarding then please use our email address headteacher@stjamesacademy.co.uk or contact Miss Minor, our Designated Safeguarding Lead. You can also contact Mrs Lloyd, Mrs Dent, Mrs Butterworth and Miss McCarthy with regards to this.

