



Concern around use of WhatsApp and Snapchat

To all Parents/Carers in Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6,

I wouldn't normally write to you directly about a specific issue but I am becoming increasingly concerned about the number of children becoming involved in and/or being directly affected by the use of WhatsApp and Snapchat. I appreciate that most Y3 and Y4 children won't have WhatsApp or Snapchat but I still think it is a message for all parents/carers and children in Key Stage Two.

Over the last few years, we have seen a sharp increase in the number of children using WhatsApp/Snapchat and being part of various groups linked to their year groups. With this in mind, I would like to draw your attention to the following article written by the NSPCC:

[Is WhatsApp safe for my child? | NSPCC](#)

Beyond this, our concern as a school is around two apparent areas:

1. The age rating for WhatsApp/Snapchat is 16 (to be reduced to 13+ in April 2024)
2. The perceived need for WhatsApp/Snapchat and their negative consequences

With regards to the second point, some children say they use the apps to call and message others but, what is becoming apparent, is that WhatsApp/Snapchat seems to bring more frustration, anxiety, worry and sadness into their lives than anything else.

This appears to derive from:

- **Swearing and the use of other inappropriate language in messages.**
- **FOMO (fear of missing out).** Some WhatsApp groups that are being set up are experiencing extremely high volumes of messages. Children often worry about missing messages so find it hard to come off their phone or not respond. This can lead to children, on occasion, messaging late at night or finding it difficult to come away from their phone.
- **WhatsApp/Snapchat Groups.** Groups are created and some children are not invited. This makes them feel left out, worried and wondering why they have not been included. Similarly, some groups are created and children are evicted by the Admin. This has equally negative repercussions.

All of the above issues have, at one point or another, spilled over into school.

Whilst I am fully aware that mobile phones and the use of WhatsApp (plus other social media platforms) are an inevitable consequence of growing up, there are age restrictions for a reason and I would urge you to have a conversation with your child about the impact it is having.

For a child to delete WhatsApp/Snapchat or sufficiently regulate their own use would be a big step for them but based on what we are being told I believe it is a step worth taking. For any further information or guidance please visit our E-Safety section on the website: [E-Safety | Parkview Primary School \(secure-primariesite.net\)](#)

Kind regards

Miss Jarvis