



The WISH Centre

Unit A4 Livingstone Court, 55 Peel Road,
Wealdstone, Middlesex, HA3 7QT
Tel: 00 44 (0)208 416 7277
Email: info@thewishcentre.org.uk
<http://www.thewishcentre.org.uk>

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you are aware, access to and use of social media is common these days and has become second nature to many of us. With this in mind, we wanted to provide some advice that is intended to help safeguard your children and yourselves as parents/carers.

Social media is a good example of how online behaviour can present e-safety risks. Users can express themselves with online personalities and chat and socialise with peers. They can publish and share multimedia content such as music, photos and video clips. If used inappropriately however, users can put themselves and others at risk.

Most social media sites set age restrictions. Instagram, for example, sets an age restriction of 13 years of age for users of its site. However, there is no verification and younger children often ignore the terms and conditions of use, unaware of the risks this might pose. In relation to explorer pages on Instagram once uploaded your images can be in use by another account unless reported. Something to remember is that if your child is using false information to obtain an account on a social media site, other people can do so as well.

Most social media sites allow users to set their profiles to 'private' for viewing only by approved contacts. By not using these settings, users can put themselves at risk. Children and young people can also put themselves, and others, at risk when they:

- Upload inappropriate, offensive or even illegal content to their own online spaces
- Post material that could damage their reputation or the reputation of others
- Post inappropriate comments on other people's profiles that is humiliating or results to cyber bullying via social media platform(s)
- Accept friend requests or engage in chat with people who they do not know.

If you, as parents and carers have any concerns about matters taking place at school, please address them through the appropriate channels, i.e. a discussion with the class teacher or head teacher, rather than expressing your concerns online. In this way, your school can work with you to address any concerns that you may have.

To find out more on social media apps your children are using, risks, advice and tips on how to talk to your children and educate yourself with further knowledge:

- www.childnet.com
- www.internetmatters.org
- <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety>
- <https://parentzone.org.uk/blog>
- <https://www.ceopeducation.co.uk/parents/>

To make a report:

Concerned about online grooming or sexual behaviour online?

Contact CEOP: www.ceop.police.uk

If you stumble across criminal sexual or obscene content on the internet you should report it to the Internet Watch Foundation: www.iwf.org.uk

Yours Sincerely,

Shanice Grant

Digital Sexual Exploitation Specialist,

The WISH Centre

Vestry Hall

336-338 London Road

Cricket Green, Mitcham, CR4 3 UD.

Tel: 0208 640 6767 Mobile: 07534991931

Email: merton@thewishcentre.org.uk