

BROOMWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Together we believe. Together we achieve

08.2.22

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has come to our attention that children within Year 5 are using the social media platform WhatsApp. As with any form of social media it is easy to use and children are able to access it despite being below the minimum age. The recommended age for WhatsApp is 16 years. This is because, as a user, your personal data is compromised - people you don't know could have access to your contact details and as an individual you have little control over what is happening. Unfortunately, what might start out as a friendly group keeping in touch and sharing funny stories can easily turn into something wholly inappropriate as people feel they are protected when hiding behind a screen.

Within our school, we take online safety very seriously and we speak to the children regularly about how to stay safe, only last week they had an assembly all about e-safety. This is not just about what they post but about how they conduct themselves and to ensure that they report any online abuse they are a part of or witness. However, the pure nature of social media usage is that it happens outside of school and this is very difficult for us to manage as we are unable to monitor it but issues do get brought in to school and it is our job to respond to it when it does and we take a very firm line on it. Any issues linked to online bullying would be treated as they would in school and a fixed term exclusion would be considered – in this instance, the content of the chat **does not** involve bullying but is inappropriate for their age and maturity and can cause upset to others within the group. Please make sure your child is not a part of any groups online and speak to them about the appropriateness of the content.

As parents, we need to ask for your help in monitoring your child's social media usage. I have included a link to the common-sense media website which gives you all the information you need to know about different social media apps and how to keep your children safe. Your children are going to use social media and so we need to work together to educate them on what appropriate online behaviour looks like and to monitor their usage.

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/social-media/most-popular>

Thank you for your support with this.

If you have any questions, or need further advice please contact school.

Many thanks

Dr. Owen and Mrs McCarthy

Achieve, believe and succeed for a brighter future.

