

08/12/2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: Continuing concerning behaviour on Whatsapp

Dear Year 7 Parents and Carers,

I am writing to inform you of some concerns that have recently been raised regarding the use of WhatsApp within several Year 7 group chats.

We have been made aware of instances where inappropriate language, unkind comments, and unsuitable images or links have been shared between students. This has caused distress for some children and is beginning to impact their wellbeing and relationships in school.

As you may know, WhatsApp has a minimum age requirement of 13, meaning its use by younger children should only occur under close adult awareness and supervision. While we understand that many students use group chats to stay connected with their peers, it is essential that these platforms are used safely, responsibly, and respectfully.

We kindly ask for your support in the following:

- Please monitor your child's WhatsApp activity regularly. Talk with them about what is appropriate to share and what is not.
- Remind your child to be respectful in all online interactions. Messages shared as "jokes" can still be hurtful or harmful.
- Ensure your child does not share or forward any inappropriate images, videos, or messages. Once something is sent, it can be very difficult to remove or undo.
- Encourage your child to speak to you or a trusted adult if they see anything that makes them uncomfortable. We want children to feel confident in reporting concerns early.

All year 7 forms have recently been visited by a member of the Safeguarding team to discuss in greater detail their own online conduct and how their behaviour can impact others.

We take online safety very seriously, and we will continue to address any incidents brought to our attention in line with our safeguarding and behaviour procedures. Our priority is ensuring that all students feel safe, supported, and respected both in and out of school.

If your child has concerns about the content or tone of messages within a WhatsApp group, we encourage you to support them in removing themselves from the group if necessary. Any offensive, threatening, or harmful behaviour should be reported to the police as appropriate including:

- Threats
- Racist language
- Homophobic language
- The encouragement of serious self harm.
- Sharing or making of indecent imagery – including deep fakes and deep nudes.

The Online Safety Act 2023, outlines all of the above as criminal offences. You can report these to the Police by calling 101 or by reporting information online, on the following link:

<https://www.suffolk.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

Thank you for your continued cooperation in promoting a positive and safe online environment for our Year 7 students.

Yours sincerely,



Miss C Hankers

Safeguarding Manager and Online Safety Lead.