

Important Online Safety Update for Parents and Carers

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to share an important online safety message following a recent incident involving children in the local area over the weekend - Police are involved.

We have been made aware of a situation where children were exposed to really inappropriate content through social media, linked to contact from an unknown individual (potential Grooming). While this did not originate within school, it highlights the importance of ongoing vigilance around children's use of technology and online platforms.

As a school, we have and will continue to address these issues with the children involved and will be reinforcing key online safety messages with pupils.

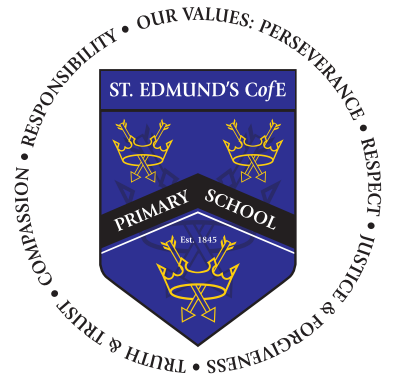
We would strongly encourage all parents and carers to:

- Regularly check the apps your child is using and who they are communicating with
- Ensure privacy settings are in place and understood
- Talk openly with your child about online risks, including contact from people they do not know
- Remind children never to share personal information (such as their location, school, or contact details)

We would also like to highlight that apps such as Snapchat have a minimum age requirement of **13+**. These age restrictions are in place because:

- Children may be exposed to inappropriate or adult content
- There is a risk of contact from people they do not know
- Features such as messaging, image sharing and location services can increase safeguarding risks
- Younger children may not yet have the maturity to recognise or respond safely to online behaviours

We would also like to highlight a feature within Snapchat called '**Quick Add**', which allows users to connect with people they may not know. This can increase the risk of contact from unknown individuals. You may wish to review your child's settings and consider whether this feature should be disabled.



For further guidance on how to support your child's safe use of Snapchat, please see the following parent guide from Internet Matters:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/social-media/snapchat/>

If you have any concerns about your child's online activity, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Thank you for your continued support in helping keep our children safe.

*Learning through faith, we dream,
we believe and achieve.*

Kind regards,

Anthony Bandy-Webb
Headteacher

ST. EDMUND'S CofE

