

22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

Dear Families,

### **Social Media use outside of school**

We are writing to advise you of a few concerns that we have regarding children's use of social media outside of school during evenings and weekends. We are aware that several groups of pupils are using social media and this has, at times, resulted in children being unkind about other pupils over platforms such as Snapchat, WhatsApp and Discord.

We understand that this has included both sharing unkind comments about pupils and sharing unkind images or memes of the pupils. This is leading to a lot of upset and polarisation of some pupils within school and is not in line with our ethos or values.

Most Social media apps are for pupils 13 years and over.

If you do allow your child to access social media, we ask for your vigilance. Just like their interactions in person, online interactions require supervision and support. What is right will vary from family to family but some strategies that are known to be successful include:

- Monitoring their phones for the apps that are downloaded
- Enacting parental controls on phones and consoles
- Reviewing the messages they send on platforms and apps – making monitoring part of a daily routine
- Setting expectations about what space (preferably communal) and times they have access to devices
- Encouraging them to share or discuss with you what they are doing.

Whilst we appreciate the benefits (and prevalence) of these forms of communication, many of our pupils are struggling when any problems or conflict arise as a result of what is being shared outside of school and this is then having an impact on their learning within school.

We are asking for your partnership in dealing with this, as this is happening outside of school. As a school we are responding to this with additional teaching during Computing and PSHE and in 1:1 conversations and teaching opportunities as they arise.

Please also find a link to support you with settings for various apps - <https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/checklists/>

Thank you for your co-operation.

Miss Mills  
Principal