

Elmhurst School

Making a Positive Difference to the Quality of Learning
Headteacher ♦ Mrs Rachel Lee



6 June 2019

Dear Year 6 Parents,

It has been brought to our attention that several children in Year 6 are part of group messages on WhatsApp. We have viewed several of the messages sent within these groups and are concerned that the language being used is inappropriate.

WhatsApp guidelines recommend that no child under the age of 16 has a WhatsApp account. We strongly recommend that you monitor your child's use of the internet and if they have an active WhatsApp account, you may wish to remove it. Information from WhatsApp about age requirements and how to deactivate accounts can be found here:

<https://faq.whatsapp.com/en/general/26000151/?category=5245250>

Having consulted First Response (Buckinghamshire's service for reporting safeguarding concerns) we have been recommended to advise all parents to remove access to WhatsApp. If we feel that parents are not safeguarding their children out of school, through the inappropriate use of social media or for any other reasons we have a duty of care to report this.

It is also important to remind parents that anyone is able to report concerns. You can call Buckinghamshire County Council's First Response Team on 01296 383962 (out of hours telephone: 0800 999 7677). They will listen to your concerns and decide on the appropriate course of action.

It is stated in the school's Social Networking Policy that Elmhurst has a strong commitment to safeguard both its staff and children. We hope you support us with this.

Excerpt from Elmhurst School's E-Safety Policy:

- The school will control access to social networking sites, and consider how to educate pupils in their safe use e.g. use of passwords.
- Pupils will be advised never to give out personal details of any kind which may identify them or their location.
- Pupils and parents will be advised that the use of social network spaces outside school brings a range of dangers for primary aged pupils.
- Pupils will be advised to use nicknames and avatars when using social networking sites.
- Pupils will be encouraged to report any problems they encounter if using any social networking site and these will be reported by a member of staff on Behaviour Watch.

If you have any questions, please speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Miss Moore.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs C Bunce
Interim Headteacher