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Dear parents and carers,

Re: Keeping your children safe

Safer Internet Day took place in school on **Tuesday 5th February 2019**. We ran some parent workshops to support you with how to keep your child safe online. We also held assemblies for the children to provide the same key messages about online safety.

Unfortunately, it has been brought to my attention that some children have been sending inappropriate and derogatory messages to each other via '**WhatsApp**'. You may not be aware, but there is a minimum age limit for users of this app. The following is an extract from '**The WhatsApp guide for parents and carers**'

Does WhatsApp have any age restrictions?

As of May 2018, WhatsApp's minimum age of use is 16 years old if you live in the European Union, or a country that has adopted the GDPR, as the UK has. It was previously 13 and WhatsApp has not yet said what will happen to users between 13 and 16 who already held accounts under the old terms and conditions. By using WhatsApp, a user agrees to provide certain personal information such as their mobile phone number, billing and mobile device information.

If WhatsApp learns that identifiable information of a child under 16 has been collected on the WhatsApp Site or WhatsApp Service, then WhatsApp may deactivate the account.

As with all social media, caution is advised over your child's digital footprint, particularly the content (photos, videos and messages) they choose to share via WhatsApp. Once shared, it can be copied, re shared and posted anywhere online'.

The full version of this guide can be found here:

<https://parentinfo.org/article/whatsapp-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers>

The following comes from the NSPCC website, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk> regarding age restrictions for social media:



I am advising you to monitor your child's internet and mobile phone use very carefully and strongly suggest that you install parental controls on your children's phones in order to prevent them from using inappropriate apps. I am sure that I do not need to remind you that once contact details, images, messages and status updates are circulated online, they can be shared widely and are extremely difficult to block or remove.

If you need any guidance regarding this matter, please speak to a senior member of staff.

Thank you for your support

Kind regards

Manda George
Headteacher