

E-Safety Policy

Appendix A

Information for Parents:

Castledyke Primary School is committed to promoting the safe and responsible use of the internet and as such we feel it is our responsibility to raise this particular issue, due to the increase in inappropriate use of Skype, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook and group games such as Fortnite . Many of the issues that have been brought to our attention recently have involved the use of:

- **Skype** - a video and messaging app. You are required to be at least 13 years old before you can create an account.
- **Snapchat** - a photo and video sharing app allowing images and texts to be sent and automatically deleted after a set amount of time. You are required to be at least 13 years old before you can create an account.
- **Instagram** - an online mobile photo sharing, video sharing and social networking service which enables its users to take pictures and videos and share them on a variety of social networking platforms. You are required to be at least 13 years old before you can create an account.
- **Facebook** - a social networking site. You are required to be at least 13 years old before you can create an account.
- **WhatsApp** – An instant messaging app for smartphones. The user agreement requires users to be age 16 or older. Children are often creating ‘groups’ to which others are joining. This means that all information is shared with anyone who is in the group so privacy is lost and in some cases strangers have been added to the group. WhatsApp is an American app and in America, it is illegal to sell children’s personal information so if a parent pretends that their child is of the appropriate age limit, then their child’s information will be sold on to third parties.
- **Fortnite** - a group game where children can be muted and excluded from groups. The recommended age for this game is 13 years.
- **TikTok**- A video sharing platform where you can watch and create videos and livestream. The legal age for an account is 13 years old.

We understand that it is increasingly difficult to keep up with the ways that our children are using new and ever changing technologies. Our children are immersed in a society that has become dependent on powerful computers, including smart phones, iPads, interactive online games and virtual communities.

Websites/Apps such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Skype and WhatsApp to name but a few, offer fantastic opportunities for communication and social connections, however they are created with their audience in mind especially sites such as Snap Chat and Instagram which are specifically for those over 13 years old. When monitoring your son/daughter’s internet use, please remind yourself of the concerns of social media:

Many sites use ‘targeted’ advertising and therefore your child could be exposed to adverts of a sexual or other inappropriate nature, depending on the age they stated when they registered. They may have lied about their age to get an account, making them appear older than they are, increasing this risk.

Young people may accept friend requests from people they don't know in real life which could increase the risk of inappropriate contact or behaviour. The general rule is, if they aren't friends in real life, they shouldn't be 'friends' online

- Language, games, groups and content posted or shared on social media is NOT moderated, and therefore can be offensive, illegal or unsuitable for young people
- Photographs shared by users are NOT moderated and therefore young people could be exposed to inappropriate images or even post their own
- Underage users might be less likely to keep their identities private and lying about their age can expose them to further risks regarding privacy settings and options
- Social media sites can be exploited by bullies and for inappropriate contact
- Social media sites cannot and do not verify its members, therefore, it is important to remember that if your son/daughter can lie about who they are online, so can anyone else

Primarily, these occurrences and reported incidents of misuse of social media sites happen at home, after school hours when children have access to web sites that are blocked in school. With this in mind, and in response to concerned parents who have asked for advice regarding internet safety, we feel it important to point out to parents the risks of unregulated use of such sites. This means you can make informed decisions as to whether to allow your child to have a profile or not and when and how to monitor their use, particularly at night-time. **We strongly advise a device free bedroom policy after bedtime to allow for uninterrupted sleep and rest.**

Although we cannot govern matters occurring out of school hours, which is parental responsibility, we will take action if a problem comes to our attention that involves the safety or wellbeing of any of our pupils. This could include reporting the use of inappropriate images of young people to the police, as this is a legal matter. This also refers to inappropriate text messages.

Should you decide to allow your child to have an online profile we strongly advise you to:

- Check their profile is set to private and that only their friends can see information they post
- Monitor your child's use and talk to them about safe and appropriate online behaviour such as not sharing personal information and not posting or messaging offensive /inappropriate messages or photos'
- Monitor your child's use of language and how they communicate to other people, ensuring profanity is discouraged
- Have a look at advice for parents on the social media sites

Make sure your child understands the following rules:

- Always keep your profile private
- Never accept a friend you do not know in real life
- Never post anything, which could reveal your identity including photographs wearing school uniform
- Never post anything you would not want your parents or teachers to see
- Never agree to meet somebody you only know online without telling a trusted adult
- Always tell someone if you feel threatened or someone upsets you

We recommend that all parents visit the CEOP Think U Know website for more information on keeping your child safe online:

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.net-aware.org.uk

www.nspcc.org.uk