



Orleans Primary School

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Wednesday 30th September 2020

Dear Year 6 parents,

Staying safe and being a good friend on apps, sites and games

Children and young people have spent much more time on devices than ever before during lockdown. We wanted to share with you further information about staying safe online and principles you can help us remind your children about.

There is a handy fridge flyer to help parents at toptipscorona.lgfl.net which you may want to print out it is attached to the email. There is also a video you can watch linked here. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OE6fTLB5-gk>

It is really important children get the opportunity to chat to friends, so it's great to hear that many of them have been chatting online during lockdown and are continuing to do so in an appropriate way. We do need you as parents to help us reinforce some key messages about appropriate behaviour to keep everyone safe and happy. In particular the two main concerns regarding phone usage are WhatsApp and TikTok.

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is intended for users aged 16 and over

There have been several reports of children in our Year 6 cohort being upset by unkind and inappropriate messages on chat apps, in particular WhatsApp as well as some distressing images/videos being shared between friendship groups. This can usually be avoided if we remind children and young people to look out for their friends, not say anything that they wouldn't like to hear themselves, and always stop or stand up for others if someone gets upset.

We therefore need to remind all parents of the need to ensure that parental settings on children's phones/devices are set up to monitor and filter inappropriate content. Attached to this email are QR codes that will enable you to do so. We also would like to remind parents of the need to have open communication with their children regarding chats online and how they cannot hide behind the screen and whatever is said online they are accountable for.

If unkind messages are being sent via messaging apps, it is important to remember not to delete them and also not to respond back to them in an unkind manner, but to make a trusted adult aware so that the appropriate actions can be taken.

TikTok

TikTok is intended for users aged 13 and over and does contain inappropriate content that is not suitable for younger children. We have become aware that lots of Year 6's have access to this app and are coming across material such as self-harm, dangerous dares and inappropriate language use.

When you download the app users can see all the content without creating an account although they are not able to post, like or share anything until they've set up an account on the app. By default, all accounts are public so anyone on the app can see what your child shares. However, only approved followers can send them messages. Users can



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like or react to a video, follow an account or send messages to each other. There is the risk that strangers will be able to directly contact children on the app.

Children may be tempted to take risks to get more of a following or likes on a video so it's important to talk about what they share and with whom. Further information can be found here

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/esafety-news/tik-tok-app-safety-what-parents-need-to-know/>

Mobile Phone Policy

We have re-attached a copy of the mobile phone policy to this email which was sent out in July 2020 and urge you to read through it with your child again and ensure they are aware of the content. In particular to the section on inappropriate conduct referenced below:

Inappropriate conduct

Using mobile phones to bully or threaten children, staff or parents of Orleans Primary School will not be tolerated.

- Using technology to humiliate, embarrass or cause offence will not be tolerated; regardless of whether 'consent' was given.
- It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.
- Any child who uses derogatory or obscene language while using a mobile phone will be treated in line with our behaviour policy.

We are asking that all parents read through with their child and if your child is bringing their phone into school, they sign the Google Form via the link here. <https://forms.gle/5EErSa1X5rxHv9Zg9>

Acceptable usage policy

In light of some misuse of social media platforms from some pupils in Year 6, we are also requesting all parents re-read the acceptable usage policy with their child and return the paper form signed by both you as a parent and your child signs too. So that we are reinforcing the message that they must abide by our online safety rules and usage agreement. This is both attached for your reference and will also come home in paper form to, so it can be returned.

PC Amor, our Safer Schools Officer has visited school last week to remind children about how to stay safe in the community with regard to walking home alone and staying out with friends after school. He is booked in to do some further workshops with the children, and will be visiting school this week to remind the children of the dangers that can appear online and remind them that they are accountable for their actions when responding on online platforms.

We thank you in advance for supporting us with this matter and hope you understand that we have the best interests of the pupils in mind and that together we can assist them in using the internet safely and responsibly.

Finally, if you or your child needs further support with online safety aspects, please do get in touch with us as a school or if they feel more comfortable talking anonymously to someone at Childline. As a parent, you can also contact the NSPCC - O2 advice line on 0808 800 5002.

If you or they are concerned about an adult's behaviour towards a child online, report them to [CEOP](#).

Thank you for your support - do let us know if you have any questions.

Yours,

Beckie Bennett
Deputy Head