

Staying safe online



Why is staying safe online important?

- At the moment everyone is spending more time online for a number of reasons:

1. Remote Learning.

2. More time at home with lock down.

3. Talking to friends.

- The internet has become more and more important over the last two decades but the current global pandemic has increased our need to stay safe online.

Increased Use of the internet

- Students are likely spending more time on social media and the internet due to lockdown and it is very important that you take the correct steps to keep yourself safe.



WHAT are the risks?

- People lying to others online
- Sending/receiving inappropriate messages (Digital Footprint)
- Bullying using the internet (Cyberbullying)
- Seeing inappropriate images and material
- Viruses and pop ups
- Sexting
- People using the internet to meet young people

Staying safe on WhatsApp



WhatsApp

AGE LIMIT CHANGE
Since May 2018, the minimum age for using WhatsApp is 16 years old if you live in the European Union, including the UK. Prior to this, the minimum age was 13, which still applies for the rest of the world. WhatsApp has not yet stated whether it will take action against anyone aged between 13 and 16 who already hold accounts under the old terms and conditions, such as closing their account or seeking parental permission.

SCAM MESSAGES
Occasionally on WhatsApp, people receive spam messages from unauthorised third parties or from fraudsters pretending to offer prizes to 'lucky people,' encouraging recipients to click on a link to win a prize. A common scam involves messages warning recipients that their WhatsApp subscription has run out with the hope that people are duped into providing their payment details. Other scam messages include instructions to forward the message in return for a reward or gift from WhatsApp or another person.

FAKE NEWS AND HOAXES
WhatsApp has been linked to enabling the spread of dangerous viral rumours. In India, for example, a number of attacks appear to have been sparked by false rumours shared on WhatsApp.

THE 'ONLY ADMIN' FEATURE AND CYBERBULLYING
Cyberbullying is the act of sending threatening or taunting text messages, voice messages, pictures and videos, with the aim to hurt and humiliate the receiver. The group chat and group video call features are great for multiple people to chat simultaneously, but there is the potential for people to hurt others with their comments or jokes. The 'only admin' feature gives the admin of a group chat greater control over who can send messages. Whilst this can be good for one-way announcements, the group admin has the power to block somebody from responding to an offensive message in a chat, which could result in a child being upset and unable to reply.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS
To start a chat in WhatsApp, you need to know the mobile number of the contact you want to speak to and they also need to have the app downloaded. WhatsApp can find contacts by accessing the address book of a device and recognising which of those contacts are using WhatsApp. If your child has shared their mobile number with somebody they don't know, they can use it to get in touch via WhatsApp.

LIVE LOCATION SHARING
WhatsApp's 'Live Location' feature enables users to share their current location in real time to their contacts in a chat, allowing friends to show their movements. The feature, which can be found by pressing the 'attach' button, is described by WhatsApp as a "simple and secure way to let people know where you are." Location-sharing is already a common feature on other social apps, including Snapchat's Snap Map and Facebook Messenger and can be a useful way for a child to let loved ones know they are safe. However, if your child is in a group chat with people they do not know, they will be exposing their location.

Staying safe on SNAPCHAT

EXPOSING YOUR CHILD'S EXACT LOCATION

The 'Snap Map' lets you share your EXACT location in real-time through a map on the app. The user's location updates when the app has been opened on the device. There is a warning on the Snapchat website about uploading images and videos to 'Our Story' stating that "snaps you submit to 'Our Story' can still show up on the Map, no matter which location setting you choose!" When uploading to 'Our Story,' your child's image or video could appear in "Search results and Stories on or off Snapchat - today or in the future."

ADDICTIVE SNAPSTREAKS

"Snap Streaks" are gained when snaps have been sent back and forth consecutively between friends. The longer that snaps are sent between users, the longer the streak becomes. Furthermore, Snapchat rewards users who have achieved high Snap Streaks, by gifting emojis, adding incentives for users to keep the streaks. Children invest time into making their streaks as long as possible, which can put an incredible amount of pressure on both themselves and their friendships.



SEXTING



While Snapchat's gimmick is that all photos, videos and text disappear eventually, users still have the capability to screenshot or record anything which has been sent to them. Users may sometimes forget that screenshotting is possible and send a compromising image or message to somebody who they think they trust. Due to 'Snaps' disappearing, (users can even send a one-second photo or video), Snapchat has become the chosen platform for children and young people to send sexually explicit images or 'selfies.' Once a photo/video has been screenshotted, or recorded using another device or software, this can lead to further dangers, such as blackmail and cyberbullying.

It is illegal to make, possess, download, store and share sexual images, photos and videos of a person under the age of 18. This also includes any sexual images, photos and videos that a child may have taken of themselves. However, if a young person is found creating or sharing images, the police can choose to record that a crime has been committed, but taking formal action isn't in the public interest.



EXTRAS TO MAKE YOU STAY

Aside from taking photos and videos, Snapchat has other elements to keep users coming back for more. 'Snap Games' is a feature within the app where users can play minigames with others on their friends list. The games function is easily accessed by tapping on the rocket button during a conversation. Another feature on the app is 'Snap Originals,' which allows users to watch content created by Snapchat, celebrities and other accounts, including a mixture of comedy shows, drama, news and more. These features are designed to encourage users to stay on the app, which may be quite addictive.

DAMAGE TO CONFIDENCE

Snapchat's selection of filters and lenses are seen as a great way to enhance your 'selfie game'. Although the filters are often created to promote entertainment and humour, using the 'beatify' filters on photos can set unrealistic expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Children may strive for admiration and appreciation by sending these 'edited' photos to their friend list. Judging themselves against other users on the app might threaten their confidence or self-worth.

WHO CAN HELP?

If you are worried about something or worried about another person you can speak to the following people:

1. Parents/Carers.
2. Advisor through class charts.
3. NSPCC NSPCC helpline for free support and advice. Call us on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000) or [contact us online](#).

Sending/receiving inappropriate messages (Digital Footprint)

- This is not just about inappropriate images. Once you put something on social media it is there for people to use against you.
- This includes Snapchat as people can easily screen shot any posts/images you might display.
- What you post could now impact on your future.
- The use of social media had a huge impact on the future of many people. There have been cases where people have lost their jobs as a result of what people post online.

Bullying using the internet (Cyberbullying)



Sending nasty messages or emails to someone to scare or upset them



Forming social media groups or hate campaigns about someone. Using social media to spread rumours or to contact someone to say nasty things

Sending images / photographs against their will

Using the computer, internet, mobile phone, IPAD, social media to cause hurt to someone. Stealing and using someone's login details



Who are you talking to?

You should always be aware that you may not be talking to the person that you think you are online.

- Never give away personal details online.
- Never agree to meet people you do not know.
- Never share accounts or passwords for other people to use.

Who Can Help Students?

**Parents Carers
Family**

School Staff

Friends

ChildLine

0800 1111



Trusted Adult

Who Can help me in school?

- If you have any concerns about your remote learning or any aspects of your social media or any issues online you can talk to your advisor or any of your teachers.
- At the moment you can do that through class charts.
- Safeguarding@Heworthgrange.org.uk